THE PRE-OPERATIONAL CHILD'S DEVELOPING

CONCEPT OF FAMILY

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Many studies have been conducted concerning the effect of the family context on the development of the child, but very little is known about the child's actual perception of the family. In order to be able to understand or predict the implications of the changes in the institution of family for children, we need to know more about how children define the family. Thomas and Thomas (1928) relate that a subject's view of the situation, or how he regards it, may be the most important element for interpretation. They state, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (p. 235). Hence, a child's perception of "family," or the child's definition of "what is real," may be of greater importance than the actual family content or structure. A clearer understanding of children's definition of "family" and various family roles and their perceptions of various dimensions involved in family life is needed in order to help us predict the effects of children's life experience in varying family forms.

The institution of the family has constantly undergone vast changes in the past, and continues to experience

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changes today. The idea of family has been defined as strictly kinship relationships (Bender, 1967) and as the basic unit of social organization in the society (Clausen, 1978). The report of Forum 14, "Changing Families in a Changing Society," in the Report to the President: White House Conference on Children (1970) highlighted the diversity in family structures and functions. The primary tasks of families were defined as: to socialize children, to enhance the competence of their members, to cope with the demands of other organizations, and to provide the satisfactions and a mentally healthy environment intrinsic to the well-being of a family.

Today's social changes impinge on the American family in a variety of different ways. Clausen (1978) cites the following changes. During the past decade we have witnessed an increase by one-third in the proportion of women who remain single to age 25, along with a marked decrease in the average number of children born in a family. The number of working mothers has more than doubled since the end of World War II and half of all mothers of school aged children are now in the labor force. As the rate of marriage has declined, the rate of divorce has increased at all class levels. The number of single-parent families (most often a mother and young children) has nearly doubled in this decade. Bane (1976) states that in 1974, the proportion of married women in the labor force with children under six had reached 40 percent. Bronfenbrenner (1976)

spoke of these dramatic changes in family and the possible

detrimental effects on children. He noted, in particular,

the isolation of children from the rest of society and a

fragmentation of the extended family resulting in a break-

down of growth of the individual and the survival of so-

ciety. However, Skolnick (1977) argues that the family is

only a relatively recent development of Western society,

and not a psychological necessity. She feels that society

tends to brand as deviant or as pathological this one-

parent family, the dual-career family, and any other changes

in the nuclear family unit. Bane (1976) states:

> hardly anyone argues that the divorce or death of
> parents is good for children, but the extent of
> the harm done has not been documented. Although
> evidence is scanty, it suggests that most chil-
> dren adjust relatively quickly and well to the
> disruption, and that in the case of divorce, the
> disruption may be better than the alternative of
> living in a tension-filled home (p. 14).

It is apparent that there is lack of agreement about

the effect of these social changes on family members. We

need to know more about how these changes may affect the

concept a child forms of the family and which ones may

play an important role in the definition. This knowledge

will be beneficial to parents, caregivers, teachers, coun-

selors, and others who are interested in helping children

develop to their fullest potential as human beings.

Studies investigating the child's perception of sex-

role characteristics associated with parental roles report

a greater differentiation of the perceptions of sex-role

characteristics with increasing age of the children (Aldous, 1972; Cox, 1962; Emmerich, 1959, 1961; Hartley, 1960; Hess and Torney, 1962; Kagan, 1956; Kagan and Lemkin, 1960; Schvaneveldt, 1970; Smith and Grenier, 1975). The specificity of the individual studies makes generalization of the results difficult.

Moore (1977) identified children at three Piagetian stages of development and then questioned them concerning their perception of the family. The data suggest a strong relationship between cognitive level and frequency of mention of eight dimensions of family--biology, co-residence, domestic functions, emotions, guidance of children, legal factors, membership, and social factors. She found that children from divorced families mentioned membership criteria less often than did children from intact families, and they mentioned emotional factors more often. Pre-operational children from divorced families mentioned domestic functions less than pre-operational children from intact families, while the reverse was true for children at higher cognitive stages.

Moore's data, although not conclusive, suggested trends regarding the influence of several variables and the child's concept of family. Briefly, she found that normatively defined, "family" is composed of two parents and a child. Divorced family children were much more likely to identify a single-parent-child grouping as a

family. Further, she suggested that girls and children from divorced families were more knowledgeable about mother's roles than boys and children from two-parent families. Children from divorced families were more likely to attribute cross-sex typed activities to mothers than children of two-parent families, while children of two-parent families were more likely to attribute cross-sex typed activities to the father. In consultation with Moore (1978) concerning follow-up of her research, her recommendation was that "a clear usable idea of the child's concept of family is preferable to a more elegant but less usable one" (Personal Communication, September 22, 1978).

Since a comprehensive study of all ages and developmental levels was beyond the scope of this investigation, a logical place to begin was with an in-depth investigation of the concepts of family of the preschool child, or the pre-operational child. Piaget (1967) defines the pre-operational level as,

> the stage of intuitive intelligence, or spontaneous interpersonal feelings, and of social relationships in which the child is subordinate to the adult (ages two to seven, or 'early childhood') (p. 5).

It is recognized that the thinking of the pre-operational child is characteristically different from children of other age groups and developmental levels.

After reviewing the limited literature on the development of children's concept of family, this author believes that there is a need for further research to identify the

progression of the formation of the concept of family by
a pre-operational sample of children.

The Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of the study was an in-depth ex-
ploration of several aspects of young children's percep-
tions of family. The study was primarily descriptive in
nature. Differences between pre-operational children's
concepts of: (a) family membership (Family Configuration
Concept), (b) dimensions involved in basic family defini-
tions and descriptions of family roles, and (c) flexibil-
ity of family role concepts were explored with regard to
differences which exist according to: (a) geographical
location, (b) family type, and (c) sex, as well as any
interactions between these factors which might have existed.
Where possible, work status of the mother and number of
siblings was also explored. In exploring family member-
ship or Family Configuration Concept, children were asked
to look at six separate possible configurations of family
and identify which ones make up a family. The dimensions
of family which were explored were those which psycholo-
gists, sociologists, and anthropologists have considered
to be involved in the institution of family. They are:
biological factors, co-residence, domestic functions, emo-
tional interactions, guidance of children, legal factors,
membership, and social roles and traditions. These

dimensions were used in Moore's (1977) initial study. An additional purpose of this study was to determine to what extent these eight dimensions appear to be useful categories for classifying children's perceptions of family life. The exploration of flexibility of family role concepts involved the nature and numbers of activities attributed to mothers, fathers, and families, as well as the numbers of cross-sex typed activities named for mothers and fathers.

Some general research questions which were addressed in this study were:

1. Of a number of possible family configurations, which configurations are most often defined as "family"?

2. What are the dimensions which children use to define family members and describe family roles? Are some dimensions used more frequently than others?

3. Are there significant differences in the numbers of various family related activities ascribed to mother, father, and family?

4. How flexible are children's concepts of family roles? Is there a significant difference in children's identification of cross-sex typed activities for mothers and fathers?

Data related to these questions were analyzed according to the independent variables, (1) geographical location, (2) sex, (3) family type, (4) work status of the mother, and (5) number of siblings.

Definition of Terms

Several terms which apply to this study have specific meaning. In order to avoid misinterpretation of these terms the following definitions are given:

1. <u>Concrete Operational Thought</u> - "The stage of concrete intellectual operations (the beginning of logic) and of moral and social feelings of cooperation (ages 7 to 11 or 12, or 'middle childhood')" (Piaget, 1967, p. 6).

2. <u>Conservation</u> - "A conserving child recognizes that certain properties of objects remain unchanged despite certain changes in the objects themselves" (Evans, 1975, p. 200).

3. <u>Pre-Operational Thought</u> -

   The stage of intuitive intelligence, of spontaneous interpersonal feelings, and of social relationships in which the child is subordinate to the adult (ages two to seven years, or 'early childhood') (Piaget, 1967, p. 5).

For purposes of this study, functional definitions of the various dimensions of the family are those used by Moore (1977). These are explained in detail in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Despite a growing concern over changes in the institu-

tion, little has been done to explore how children develop

the concept of family. Cox (1962) states that theorists in

the fields of learning, personality, and social psychology

agree that the attitudes a child has toward his parents will

generalize to other individuals. A positive correlation

between a child's attitudes toward his parents and the qual-

ity of his interpersonal relationships with others with

whom he enters into similar relationships was found in

Cox's (1962) study. Piaget (1951) relates this idea as

follows:

> Day to day observations and psychoanalytic exper-
> ience show that first personal schemes are after-
> ward generalized and applied to many people.
> According as the first individual experiences of
> the child who is just learning to speak are con-
> nected with a father who is understanding or dom-
> inating, loving or cruel, etc., the child will
> tend (even throughout life if these relationships
> have influenced his whole youth) to assimilate
> all other individuals to his father scheme (p. 1).

A child's perception of his parent-child relation-

ship is related to his adjustment, according to Serot

(1961). This study included 102 children ages 9 and 10 who attended the fourth grade. The <u>California Test of Personality</u>, the <u>Swanson Child-Parent Relationship Scale</u>, and an information questionnaire were used to identify the particular adjustment of the children and the parent-child relationship. The well adjusted children perceived the parent-child relationship as relatively happy, and near the theoretical ideal, whereas the maladjusted children's perception of the relationship was far from ideal. Serot concluded that the child's perception of parental behavior is related to his own behavior, the child's perception of the relationship is unrelated to his parent's perception of the same, and that the parent's perception of the relationship is unrelated to his offspring's adjustment.

The Pre-Operational Child's

Formation of Concepts

The pre-operational developmental level is defined by Piaget (1967) as:

> the stage of intuitive intelligence, of spontaneous interpersonal feelings, and of social relationships in which the child is subordinate to the adult (ages two to seven years, or 'early childhood') (p. 5).

In an early study by Piaget (1928) a parallel is made between the developing concept of family and the developmental stages. Piaget proposes that the child goes through three stages in labeling the family. He can first only

identify his family as those living in the same home in which he lives. Next he will use the idea of blood relationship, but will limit the family to members in the immediate vicinity. Thirdly, his definition is generalized to include all blood-relations. The pre-operational child will be in the first developmental stage when classifying his particular family.

A recent study (Bernstein and Cowan, 1975) attempts to link theory and research by using known developmental tasks as indices of general developmental position. Twenty boys and girls at each of three age levels (3-4, 7-8, 11-12) were given an interview focusing on their concepts of how people get babies (social causality). Piagetian-type tasks assessing physical conservation-identity, physical causality, and a new social identity task were administered. The performance on the tasks systematically increased with age, intercorrelations were high, and children tended to perform at the same absolute cognitive level on each task. Children's development of the concept of human reproduction proceeded through a Piagetian developmental sequence concerning physical and social causality and identity concepts. The content of the concepts formed was found to be related to the matrix of causality and identity concepts. A similar study could be conducted by using the known developmental tasks to indicate the pre-operational level and further exploring this stage by identifying the conceptualization of family.

Understanding Family Sex-Roles

A number of studies have investigated the child's
understanding of the sex-role characteristics associated
with parental roles. The research has examined several
dimensions of parenting behaviors and contrasted the per-
ceptions of boys and girls of different ages and social
classes.

Kagan (1956) studied the formation of behavior such
as dominance, submission, and other responses involved in
the identification of parent roles. The subjects included
217 children ages 6 to 10 in Columbus, Ohio. They were
interviewed to determine their perception of the parental
role. Kagan noted a trend in older children only, toward
a more threatening perception of the same-sex parent. The
majority perceived mothers as friendlier, less punitive,
less dominant, and less threatening than fathers. In terms
of sex of the child, he found only a slight difference be-
tween boys' and girls' views of parental discipline and
power in the first three grades of school.

Hartley (1960) interviewed 157 children of working
and non-working mothers regarding their conception of male
and female roles. Forty-seven boys and 110 girls, 5, 8,
and 11 years old, were equally divided between working and
non-working mothers. Two significant differences were re-
lated to the boys' responses. More sons of working mothers

gave work roles to women than did the sons of non-working mothers. The lower middle class and working class boys assigned more traditional "women's" domestic tasks to men than did upper class boys.

When describing the particular course of a child's identification it was suggested by Kagan and Lemkin (1960) that the choice of parental models is determined by a child's perception of the parental differences in power, competence, and nurturance. Sixty-seven children, ages 3 to 8, were interviewed to ascertain their perception of parenting attributes using three methods: (1) indirect, (2) direct picture, and (3) direct questioning. Results from this study showed the young child perceiving the father model as fear arousing, competent, and punitive, while the mother model was seen as "nicer" and gave presents.

Smith and Grenier (1975) used a revised form of Kagan and Lemkin's 1960 cartoon picture interview. Subjects interviewed were 160 children equally divided by sex, grade in school (first and third), religion (Protestant and Catholic) and English or French background. The children perceived mothers as nurturing and fathers as powerful and as agents of discipline. Girls saw mothers and fathers as equally likely to discipline them by taking away toys and privileges, while boys saw fathers as much more likely to use deprivational methods.

Emmerich (1959, 1961) found that age is a variable in shifting the child's perception of parental roles.

At an early age both boys and girls differentiate parental figures along specific dimensions. With an increase in age, there was an increased use of the power dimension to discriminate age roles. He noted that a facilitating behavior was linked with the mother sex role, and an interfering behavior linked with the father sex role.

In a study with 1,861 children ages 7 through 15 years, Hess and Torney (1962) studied the authority structure of the family as influenced by age, sex, social class, and religious affiliation of the child. The subjects included children of middle and working class, Catholic and Protestant. They were asked to complete a questionnaire including such questions as "Who's boss in your family?" The girls reported father to be head of the family significantly less frequently than the boys, and reported both parents to be in power more. The percentage of reports of fathers as "boss" increased with the age of the children.

A more recent study by Schvaneveldt (1970) dealt with perceptions of the mother and father roles of 86 middle and upper-middle class nursery school children in Utah. The nursery school boys and girls conceptualized and verbalized their perceptions of parents as "good." "Good" mothers were most often seen as nurturant. The children thought "good" mothers "take care of you," "feed you," and "kiss you." Typical "good" father responses were: "plays with you," "works," and "takes care of you when mother is gone."

Two hundred and ten low-income, preschool, white and
Negro children from father-absent and father-present homes
in Tennessee and Mississippi were interviewed by Aldous
(1972) concerning their sex appropriate role definitions.
Findings from this study showed that the perceptions of the
preschoolers of sex role assignments remains the same with
change of social class and family structure. Children are
not wholly dependent upon parental sources for information
concerning typical sex-roles. Even at a very early age the
child is aware of conventional roles, even when the con-
ventional roles are not enacted in his particular home
setting.

All of these studies concerning the child's percep-
tion of parental sex-role characteristics noted the greater
differentiation as the child became older. The young child
sees his family as those living with him and differenti-
ates between his parents along specific dimensions. As the
child grows older, his notion of family becomes more com-
plex and abstract. He will further define parental roles
by increasing the use of the dimensions of power, guidance,
and social role factors. A generalization from the studies
would be difficult to make, due to the specificity of each
study. This literature supports the developmental progres-
sion of a child's construction of the concept of a family,
but does not fully describe the progressions.

Understanding the Concept of Family

Children ages 11 through 18 years increase in abstractness in describing perceptions of family (McInnis, 1972). They will understand that there has to be two parents to start a family, but a family can be as few as a mother and a child or as many as ten children and parents. Using a sample of children at three Piagetian cognitive stages, Moore (1977) examined the effects of cognitive stage, sex, and intactness of family on the child's developing concept. An interview was given to a sample of 84 white, middle-class children ages 4 through 13, half from intact families and half from divorced families. The verbatim transcriptions were scored for frequency of mention on eight dimensions of family. The results indicate that the concept of family is developed through a succession of stages and that certain dimensions are important to the child's definition of the family. In classifying children's responses, Moore used the dimensions: (1) biological factors, (2) co-residence, (3) domestic functions, (4) legal factors, (5) social roles, (6) guidance of children, (7) membership criteria, and (8) emotions. The preoperational sample described the family in terms of directly observable phenomena, rigid understanding of the roles, physical descriptions of the members, domestic functions, and co-residence aspects. Children from divorced and intact families differed in their responses in

terms of membership, domestic functions, and knowledge of the parental sex roles as explained in Chapter I. The finding that girls had an advanced level of family concept was attributed to basic cognitive development and particular socialization experiences. The overall results of this study suggest that the concept of family is developed through a succession of stages and provide a basis from which the nature of the progression may be formed.

Summary

The institution of the family is changing dramatically, but little is known concerning the effects these changes are having. It is known that the attitudes a child forms about the family will generalize to other individuals, and these attitudes are directly related to his adjustment. Despite differences in age, sex, social class, work status of mothers, father-presence or absence, young children perceive parenting behavior in conventional ways. Fathers are perceived as powerful and as agents of discipline and mothers as nurturant. Few studies have been conducted to explore the effects that the various family types or the number of siblings may have on the child's concept. The progression of the formation of the concept of family by a pre-operational sample of children is not known. Moore (1977) has most closely investigated this area and made suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The overall purpose of the study was an in-depth exploration of several aspects of young children's perceptions of family. The study was primarily descriptive in nature. Differences between pre-operational children's concept of: (a) family membership (Family Configuration Concept), (b) dimensions involved in basic family definitions and descriptions of family roles, and (c) flexibility of family role concepts were explored with regard to differences which exist according to: (a) geographical location, (b) family type, and (c) sex, as well as any interactions between these factors which might have existed. Where possible, work status of the mother and number of siblings was also explored. In exploring family membership or Family Configuration Concept, children were asked to look at six separate possible configurations of family and identify which ones make up a family. The dimensions of family which were explored were those which psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists have considered to be involved in the institution of family. They are:

biological factors, co-residence, domestic functions, emotional interactions, guidance of children, legal factors, membership, and social roles and traditions. These dimensions were used in Moore's (1977) initial study. An additional purpose of this study was to determine to what extent these eight dimensions appear to be useful categories for classifying children's perceptions of family life. The exploration of flexibility of family role concepts involved the nature and numbers of activities attributed to mothers, fathers, and families, as well as the numbers of cross-sex typed activities named for mothers and fathers.

Subjects

Subjects were 84 children, ranging in age from three to six years, who had been determined to be at the pre-operational stage of development. Fourteen boys and 14 girls were from the Oklahoma State University Child Development Laboratories and other early childhood programs in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Fourteen boys and 14 girls were from the Louisiana Tech University Child Development Laboratory and other early childhood programs in Ruston, Louisiana. Moore (1977) conducted a similar study in Austin, Texas, which included 28 pre-operational children equally divided by sex. This was used as a comparison group. Each sample was further divided into children of single-parent families and children of two-parent families. The single-

parent families were headed by a mother. Description of the sample is presented in Appendix A.

Research Instruments to be Used

Cognitive Developmental Level Test

This instrument was used to determine the child's level of cognitive development as defined by Piagetian theory. The cognitive developmental level test used in this study was an adapted version developed from previous techniques used by Bernstein and Cowan (1975), Koocher (1972), and Moore (1977). This test classifies each child's performance according to the developmental levels (1) Pre-operational and (2) Concrete operational. These levels are defined by Piaget (1967) as:

> The pre-operational level is the stage of intuitive intelligence, of spontaneous interpersonal feelings, and of social relationships in which the child is subordinate to the adult (ages two to seven years, or 'early childhood'). The stage of concrete intellectual operations is the beginning of logic and of moral and social feelings of co-operation (ages seven to eleven or twelve, or 'middle childhood') (p. 5).

The subjects were tested in three areas of conservation: (1) mass, (2) number, and (3) volume. The subjects who failed two or more tasks were classified as pre-operational. Those who failed one task were classified as transitional. Those who passed all tasks were classified as concrete operational and were eliminated from the

sample. Only subjects who were classified as pre-
operational and transitional were involved in the study.
The Cognitive Development Level test is located in Appen-
dix B.

Family Concept Interview

Questions to assess family concept and dimensions
of the family were asked to pre-operational and transi-
tional children. Some of the questions were open-ended
and some involved use of pictures of potential family
groupings (Figure 1). The Family Concept Interview is
located in Appendix C. The original interview used by
Moore (1977) is located in Appendix D.

Data Collection and Scoring Procedure

Data pertinent to the independent variables of the
study, geographical residence, family type, sex of the
child, number of siblings, and work status of the mother,
was obtained through a parent questionnaire. The par-
ents were given a letter explaining the study (see Appen-
dix E), and the questionnaire (see Appendix F).

The author interviewed children in the preschool en-
vironment. Children were first categorized according to
cognitive stages of development. Only those determined to
be pre-operational or transitional level were given the
Family Concept Interview.
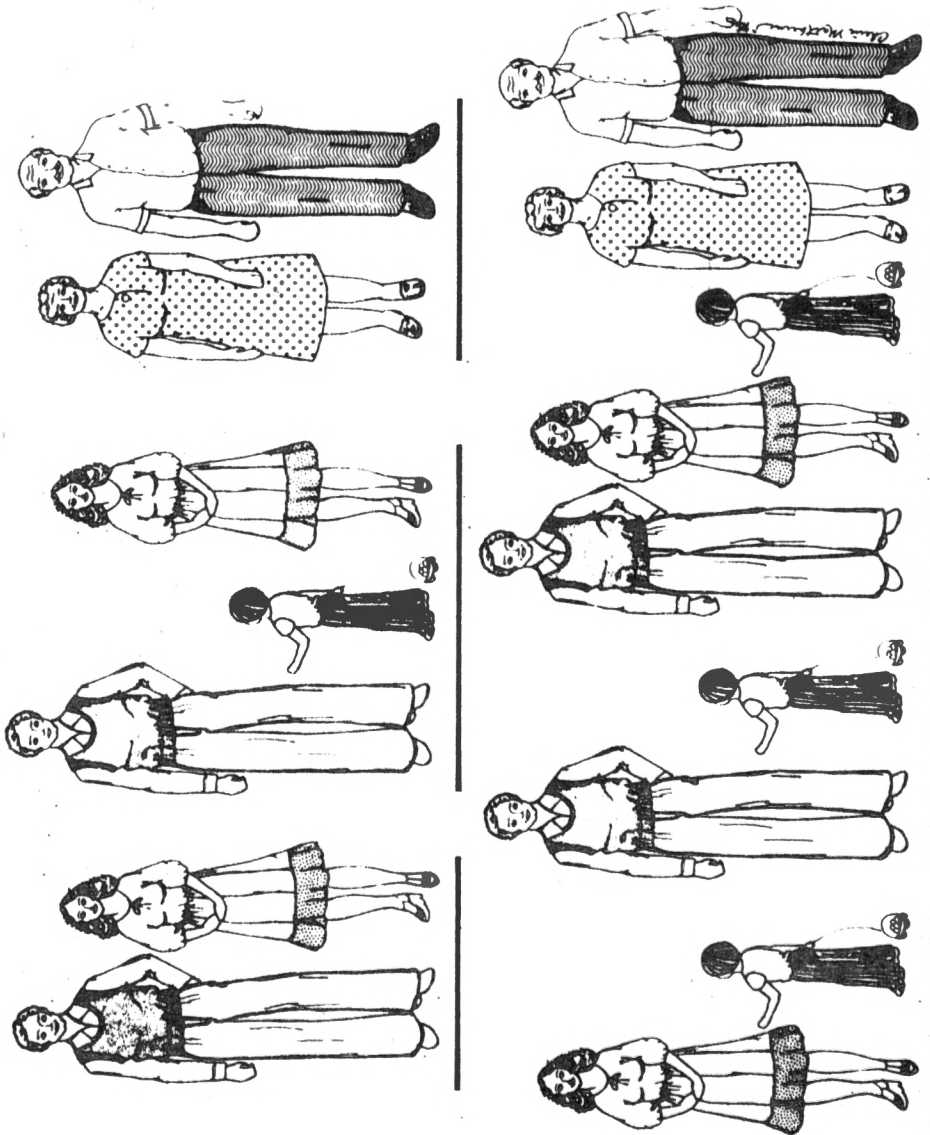
Figure 1. Family Configurations

The scoring instrument (Family Concept Interview Score Sheet) is located in Appendix G. In questions followed by specific categories or dimensions, a score was given for the presence or absence of that dimension in the answer given by the child. These dimensions, developed by Moore (1977), were defined in her study as follows:

Membership - The child gives a list of specific persons or roles when referring to the composition of the family.

Domestic Functions - The child mentions general family maintenance or activity (e.g., studies, cooking, earning money, going on a picnic).

Guidance - The child refers to family activity geared specifically toward the nurturance of children (e.g., taking care of children, helping with homework, or to solve problems).

Co-residence - The child's answer refers to the personal proximity or co-residence of persons (e.g., living together or having a house).

Biology - The child mentions things having to do with biological relationships or physical age (e.g., being a woman, being old, having a child).

Emotions - The child refers to affective factors (e.g., loving one another, being happy, being lonely).

Legal Factors - The child makes a reference to a legally defined status or process (e.g., being a wife, getting married, having custody of a child).

<u>Social Role Factors</u> - The child's answer explicitly includes mention of roles, expectations, or social customs (e.g., flowers at a wedding, being a good parent).

The interviews were tape-recorded for scoring purposes. The data gathered by Moore was included in this study. Verbatim transcription of the interviews were scored and analyzed according to the procedures of this study.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of variance was used to analyze children's responses to

1. Part I - Family Membership or Family Configuration Concept (score of items 1-6).

2. Part II - Dimensions involved in Basic Family Concept (total score for each dimension, items 7-10), Family Roles Concept (total score for each dimension, items 11-13, and number of activities mentioned (items 14-16).

Descriptive methods were used to analyze children's responses to:

1. Items which further explored the family dimensions of co-residence (items 17-19), legal factors (items 20-25), and guidance (items 26-27).

2. Items related to flexibility of family role concepts (Part IV, items 30-31 and 32-33).

Analysis of variance was used to analyze items 36 and 37, the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned

for "mother" and "father," or a measure of flexibility of role concepts.

Reliability and Validity

In order to perform a test for reliability, two researchers, the author and one other researcher, conducted ten independent scoring trials with ten taped interviews. Percentage of agreement was 97 percent.

Moore's (1977) interview was considered a valid measure of the child's concept of family, in that results fit into the established categories. One purpose of this study was to determine the usefulness of these categories.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The overall purpose of the study was an in-depth ex-
ploration of several aspects of young children's percep-
tions of family. The study was primarily descriptive in
nature. Differences between pre-operational children's
concept of: (a) family membership (Family Configuration
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ferences which exist according to: (a) geographical loca-
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actions between these factors which might have existed.
Where possible, work status of the mother and number of
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Results

Family Membership or Family Configuration Concept

The six possible configurations which could be identified as "family" were:

1. Mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, and child

2. Grandmother and grandfather

3. Mother and father

4. Mother, father, and child

5. Father and child

6. Mother and child

The various configurations were presented in randomized order for each subject, and the child was asked, "Is this a family?" The child's "yes" response to each configuration was recorded, and these were added to yield a Total

Family Configuration Score (Part I, Appendix G). Seventy percent or more of all subjects could identify all possible configurations as family (Figure 2). Analysis of variance indicated no significant effects in Total Family Configuration Scores due to sex, family type, or geographical location. Similarly, for the Oklahoma and Louisiana samples, where information was available, there were no significant effects due to work status of the mother or number of siblings. There were significant differences between the six family configurations identified as "family" by the total sample (x^2=32.9, 5df, p<.0001), by two-parent children (x^2=14.1, 5df, p<.01), and by one-parent children (x^2=21.1, 5df, p<.001) (Figure 2).

The family configurations identified as "family" by the largest percentage of both two-parent and one-parent children were:

1. Mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, and child

2. Mother, father, and child

These findings were similar to those of Moore (1977), whose research sample included children up to age 13, with the exception that in Moore's study the grandmother and grandfather configuration were identified as "family" more often than the father and child and mother and child. According to Moore (Personal Communication, 1978), it seemed that older children could more easily identify a family configuration in which one adult was missing. One example
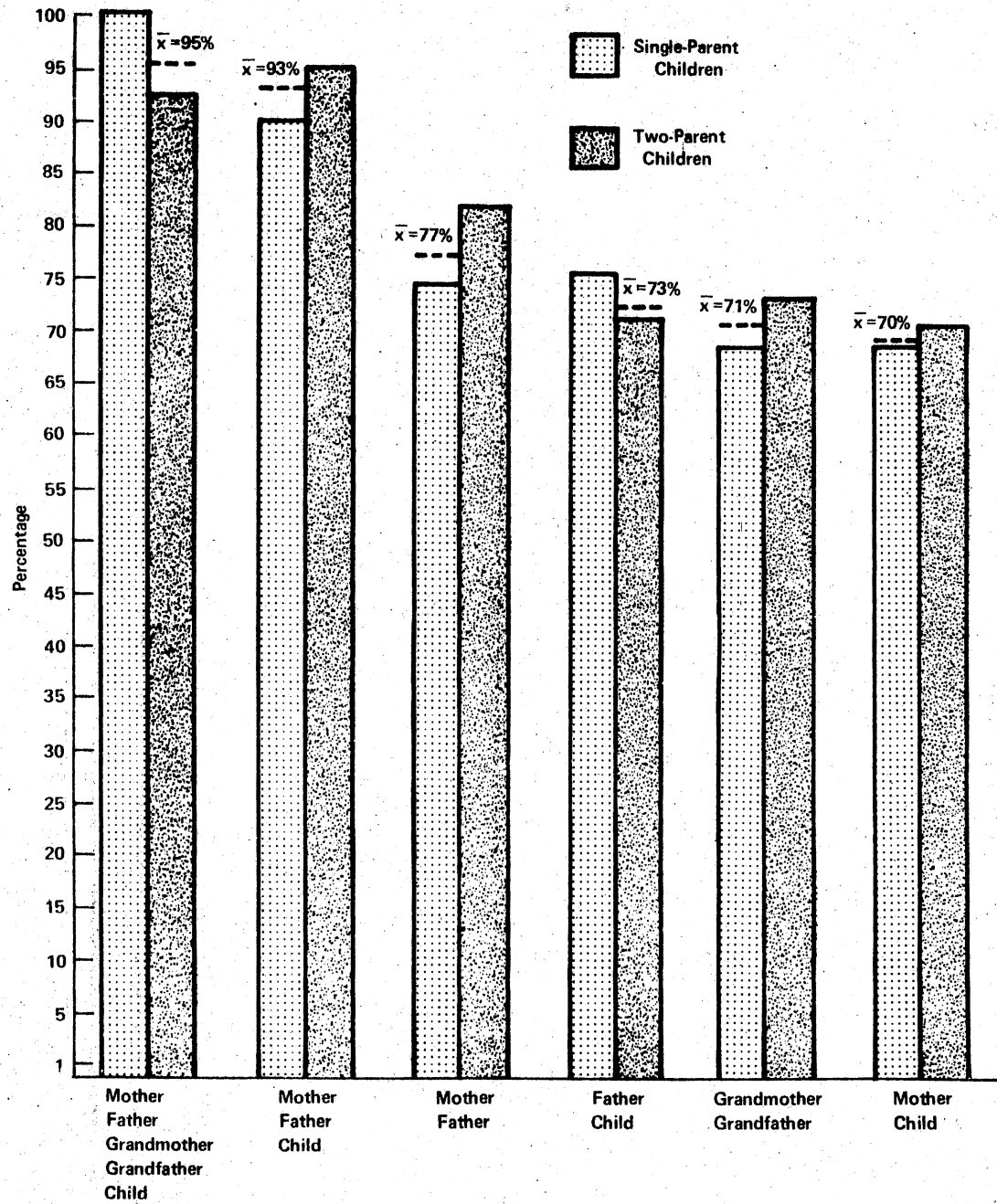
Figure 2. Percentage of Responses Related to
Family Configuration Concept

of this is a single-parent child who said, "This is a lonely family, like my mother and me."

Father and child configurations were identified as families slightly more often than mother and child configurations. Children from mother and child families were no more likely than children from two-parent families to identify the mother and child configurations as family.

In interpreting these findings, indications are that the majority of pre-operational children in this sample can identify a variety of family configurations as a family. They may be focusing on size of the group or number of adults, or the major criteria may be that there be an adult of both sexes included in order to be a family. The investigator's experience with the subject interviews tends to support the latter hypothesis. When children were presented the father and child configuration and the mother and child configuration and asked whether these represented a family, the common response was, "You need a mother" or "The daddy is missing."

In any case, an important finding is that children from single-parent families headed by mothers are no more likely to identify this configuration as "family" than children of two-parent families. It may be hypothesized that the child's own life experience, if it is at variance with the messages of the larger culture, may not be as potent as the message of the larger culture.

Dimensions Involved in Basic

Family Definitions

The responses to the following questions were classified according to the eight dimensions of family:

7. What is a family?

8. What is a mother?

9. What is a father?

10. Why do people have families? (Part II, Appendix G)

It is important to note that the mean scores for the dimensions for this set of questions are not reliably comparable across dimensions since the likelihood of mention may not have been equal for all dimensions, although all questions provided an opportunity to record any dimension mentioned by the child. The information available concerning the role played in the child's concept by the various dimensions is available only in analysis of group differences in frequency of mention of each dimension taken separately.

No significant main effects were found for sex, mother's work status, or number of siblings in mention of the eight dimensions. Significant main effects for family type were found for some dimensions. These are discussed in this section. For the total group of four basic family concept questions, the "membership" dimension was mentioned the greatest number of times, followed by

"biology" (Figure 3). Some examples of responses which indicated membership are, "A family is a mother, a grandmother, a daddy, and a grandaddy," and "Lots of people like moms and dads." In responding to the question, 48 children mentioned "membership" once, 14 mentioned it twice, and only 11 mentioned it as many as three times, while 25 children mentioned "biology" twice and 15 mentioned it once (Table I). Some examples of responses classified as "biology" are as follows: "A daddy is a tall boy," and "A mother is a girl who has babies."

Least mentioned were the dimensions of "legal factors," "social factors," and "co-residence." Examples of responses in these categories were:

1. Legal factors - "A mother is the person that married the daddy."

2. Social factors - "A daddy is the man that is supposed to take care of the family."

3. Co-residence - "A family lives together, all in one place."

These findings are consistent with the Part I finding that children chose most often those configurations with the greatest number of people as "family."

There was a significant difference (F=4.28, 3df, $p<.05$) in the mean number of dimensions mentioned in defining "family," "mother," "father," and "Why do people have families?" The highest mean number of dimensions
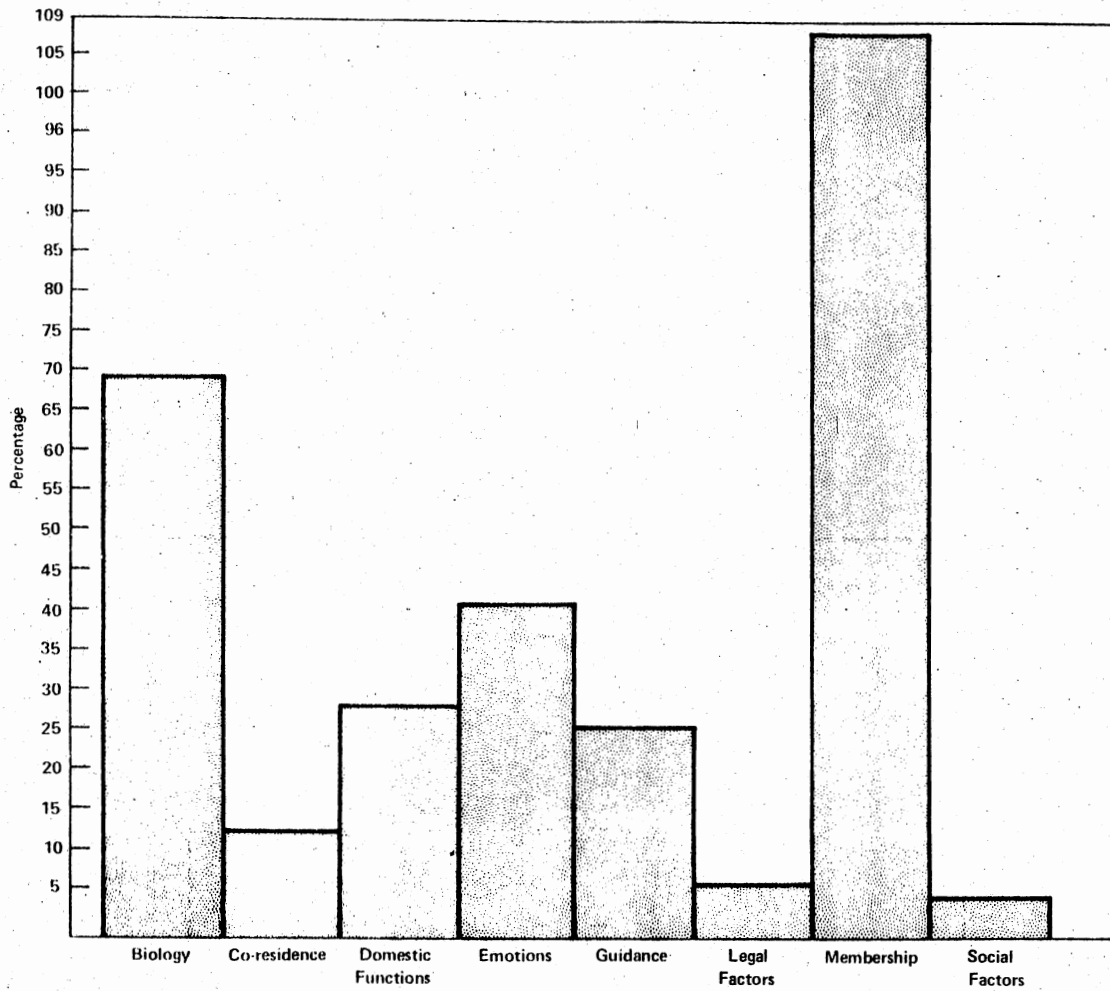
Figure 3.   Number of Dimensions Mentioned in
Basic Family Concept

mentioned was 1.07 for "family" compared to the lowest

mean for "Why people have families" (Table II).

TABLE I

FREQUENCY OF THE MENTION OF DIMENSIONS
IN BASIC FAMILY CONCEPT

Dimension	Total Responses	Number of Times Mentioned				
		4	3	2	1	0
Biology	69	1	0	25	15	43
Co-residence	17	0	0	1	16	67
Domestic Functions	27	0	3	4	10	67
Emotions	41	0	1	4	30	49
Guidance	25	0	2	5	9	68
Legal Factors	7	0	0	1	5	78
Membership	109	0	11	14	48	11
Social Factors	6	0	0	1	4	79

The low means for mention of specific dimensions may

have been partially related to the relatively high per-

centage of children who responded "don't know" (27.4%) to

"Why do people have families?" However, the highest per-

centage of "don't know" responses (30.9%) was given for

"what is a family?," the question which also had the high-

est number of responses (Table I) and the highest mean

number of dimensions mentioned. These results may also be
a reflection of the wide variation in subjects' ability to
verbalize.

TABLE II

AVERAGE NUMBER OF DIMENSIONS MENTIONED
IN DEFINING BASIC CONCEPTS
OF FAMILY

Questions	Total Responses	Mean of Dimensions Mentioned
7. What is a family?	84	1.07
8. What is a mother?	84	.89
9. What is a father?	84	.85
10. Why do people have families?	84	.79

Certain questions seemed to initiate or "call up" re-
sponses in distinctive dimensions (Figure 4). Mothers and
fathers were defined in terms of "biology," "domestic func-
tions," "membership," and "guidance of children." The
only differences were that percentages of responses were
higher for "mother," the most notable difference being in
responses related to guidance of children. While 15.5%
of the children defined mothers in terms of guidance, only
6% defined "father" in terms of guidance. Children were

What is a family?
N = 125

| 1% | 14% | 0% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 82% | 2% |
| Biology | Co-residence | Domestic Functions | Emotions | Guidance | Legal Factors | Membership | Social Factors |

What is a mother?
N = 96

| 37% | 1% | 13% | 6% | 15% | 6% | 14% | 1% |
| Biology | Co-residence | Domestic Functions | Emotions | Guidance | Legal Factors | Membership | Social Factors |

What is a father?
N = 92

| 38% | 0% | 10% | 2% | 6% | 2% | 26% | 0% |
| Biology | Co-residence | Domestic Functions | Emotions | Guidance | Legal Factors | Membership | Social Factors |

Why do people have families?
N = 97

| 6% | 6% | 10% | 39% | 6% | 1% | 7% | 6% |
| Biology | Co-residence | Domestic Functions | Emotions | Guidance | Legal Factors | Membership | Social Factors |

Figure 4.   Percentage of Mention of Dimensions
on Basic Family Concept

more likely to see fathers in terms of "membership" (26.1%),
than mothers (14.3%). Some examples of responses coded for
"membership" are as follows: "A father is the man who went
away and left the mom and kid." Responses coded in the
"biology" dimension for mothers and fathers are as follows:
"Mommy is a girl and daddy is a boy." "Families" were most
often defined in terms of "membership" and "co-residence."
In describing "why people have families," children re-
sponded most often in the "emotions" dimension, e.g.,
"You need a family so there'll be somebody to love you."
Table III indicates the means for mention of each of the
dimensions in responding to basic family concept questions.
While comparison across dimensions cannot be reliably made,
some significant effects for family type in use of the
eight dimensions were found. Single-parent family chil-
dren mentioned "co-residence" significantly less often
(F=3.84, 1df, p<.05) than two-parent children. Also, the
difference between single-parent and two-parent children
in the frequency of mention of "membership" approached sig-
nificance (F=3.65, 1df, p<.06). Single-parent children
were less likely to list various family members than two-
parent children. Thus, although "membership" appears to
be the most frequently used dimension to define "family,"
the issue of "co-residence" or "living together" and "mem-
bership," or "who is included," appears to be mentioned
less often by children of single-parent families.

TABLE III

MEANS FOR MENTION OF THE
DIMENSIONS OF FAMILY

Groups	Biology	Co-residence	Domestic Functions	Emotions
Boys (N=42)	.8810	.1667	.3095	.4524
Girls (N=42)	.7619	.2619	.3333	.5238
Single-Parent Children (N=42)	.9524	.3095	.1905	.4524
Two-Parent Children (N=42)	.6905	.1190	.4524	.5238
Mother Working* (N=38)	.6053	.1842	.1579	.5263
Mother Not Working* (N=18)	.4444	.2222	.3333	.3889
0 Siblings*(N=20)	.5500	.1500	.1500	.7000
1 Sibling*(N=24)	.7917	.2083	.1250	.2917
2 Siblings* (N=12)	.0833	.2500	.5000	.5000

TABLE III (Continued)

Groups	Guidance	Legal Factors	Membership	Social Factors
Boys (N=42)	.3333	.0714	1.2143	.0952
Girls (N=42)	.2619	.0952	1.3810	.0476
Single-Parent Children (N=42)	.3333	.0714	1.1190	.0476
Two-Parent Children (N=42)	.2619	.0952	1.4762	.0952
Mother Working* (N=38)	.1842	.0263	1.1842	.0526
Mother Not Working* (N=18)	.3889	.0000	1.4444	0.556
0 Siblings* (N=20)	.1000	.0000	1.5500	.0000
1 Sibling* (N=24)	.4167	.0417	1.0833	.0833
2 Siblings* (N=12)	.1667	.0000	1.1667	.0833

*Data not available for Austin, Texas.

Analysis of variance indicated a significant interaction between sex of the subject and the mother's working status when mentioning the dimension "emotion" (F=7.79, 1df, $p<.007$) (Figure 5). Boys of non-working mothers mentioned emotions more often than did boys of working mothers. Girls of working mothers mentioned emotions more than did girls of non-working mothers. The question that most often elicited responses, coded for both boys and girls with working and non-working mothers was, "why do people have families?" A tentative hypothesis suggested by this data is that the emotional relationship between family members may be more important to girls of working mothers, who may perceive their mothers as engaged in fewer domestic functions.

Further analysis for each separate question in this section is being conducted as part of the larger research project. Data analyzed thus far and summarized here is for the set of questions 7-10.

Dimensions Involved in Descriptions
of Family Roles

The responses to the following questions were classified according to the eight dimensions of family:

11. What does a family do?

12. What does a mother do?

13. What does a father do? (Part II, Appendix G).
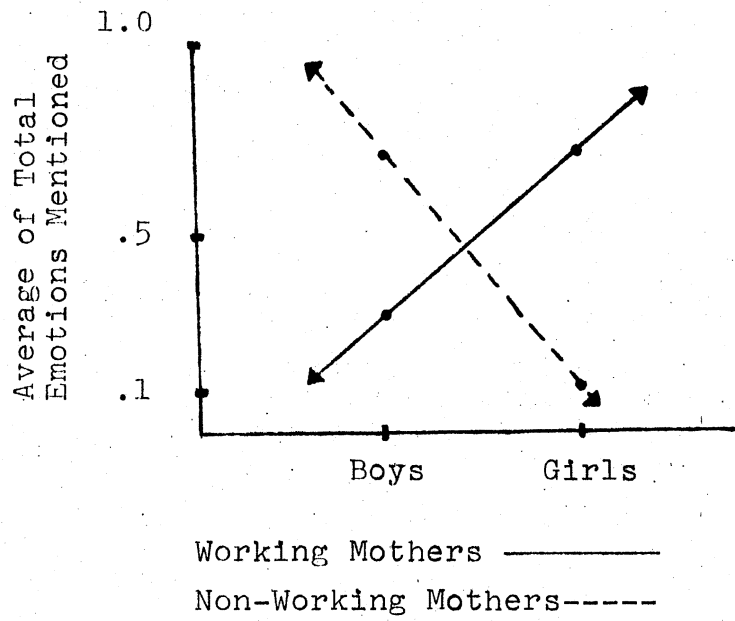
Figure 5. Interaction Between Sex of
            Subject and Work Status for
            Mother for Mention of Emotions

There were significant differences for the total sample in the number of dimensions (0,1,2) which were identified for family, mothers, and fathers (x^2=62.47, 4df, $\underline{p}$<.001), with the most dimensions mentioned for "what mothers do" (Table IV). The same pattern was found for single-parent children (x^2=38.81, 4df, $\underline{p}$<.0001) and two-parent children (x^2=30.96, 4df, $\underline{p}$<.0001). No significant differences by family type were found for the number of dimensions mentioned. Thus, regardless of family type, children described "what mothers do" in a wider variety of dimensions than fathers or family.

For this set of questions, there were no significant main effects for sex, geographical location, work status of the mother, or number of siblings in mention of any of the dimensions. Significant main effects for family type were found for the mention of "domestic functions" (F=5.82, 1df, $\underline{p}$<.01) with two-parent children having the higher mean for "domestic functions." Further analysis of this data will be conducted for means for mention of each dimension for questions 11-13.

An interpretation of this finding might be that cooking, housecleaning, and working together in the home are activities children see the parents engaging in most often. Two-parent children may have higher means for mention of domestic functions because they are observing both parents performing domestic functions in the home. However, it is

important to note that "domestic functions" was the dimension mentioned most by children of both family types. For all groups, "domestic functions" was followed by "guidance," e.g., "They spank you."

TABLE IV

FREQUENCY OF MENTION OF DIMENSIONS IN
BASIC FAMILY ROLES

Question	Total Responses	Emotions	Biology	Co-Residence	Domestic Functions	Guidance	Legal Factors	Membership	Social Factors	Don't Know	Other
11. What does a family do?	62	2	0	5	29	5	0	0	0	16	5
12. What does a mother do?	100	2	2	2	63	24	0	0	1	1	5
13. What does a father do?	88	1	0	1	55	16	0	0	2	5	8

Items 14, 15, and 16 totaled the activities for mother, father, and family (Table V). There were significant differences in the number of activities children identified for mother and father (F=14.92, 1df, $p<.0002$), more being mentioned for mothers. Because question 11, "What does a family do?" was not asked of children in Austin, Texas, analysis of variance was used excluding those children for these three items, and significant differences in number of activities were still found (F=6.72, 2df, $p<.001$).

TABLE V

ACTIVITIES MENTIONED FOR MOTHER,
FATHER, FAMILY

Variable	Total Responses	Number of Activities				
		0	1	2	3	4
Mother	131	5	44	21	11	3
Father	99	10	55	13	6	0
Family*	55	15	30	8	3	0

*Austin sample excluded.

Further Exploration of Family

Dimensions

In order to further explore children's perceptions of

the family, selected areas were chosen for further explor-
ation, based on both findings and recommendations of
Moore's (1977) earlier study. These particular areas in-
clude co-residence, legal factors, guidance of children,
and emotional interactions. Questions to probe the child's
understanding of these areas were asked. The findings re-
lated to this further probing are summarized in this
section.

Further Exploration of Children's
Understanding of Co-residence

Questions asked to children concerning co-residence
are as follows:

    17.   Can a family still be a family if they don't
           live together?

    18.   Can a mother still be a mother if she doesn't
           live with her children?

    19.   Can a father still be a father if he doesn't
           live with his children?

Children's responses of "yes," "no," and "don't know" were
recorded (Part III, Appendix G). These questions were de-
veloped after the Texas interviews were conducted; there-
fore, the Texas sample is not represented.

Half of the children felt that families could be a
family if they didn't live together and half did not
(Table VI). A slightly higher number of children felt a
mother was still a mother when not living with her chil-
dren than was a father still a father when not living with

TABLE VI

FURTHER EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S UNDER-
STANDING OF CO-RESIDENCE

Question	Total Responses	Frequency of Responses		
		Yes	No	Don't Know
17. Can a family still be a family if they don't live together?				
Total Sample*	56	28	28	0
Single-Parent Children	28	17	11	0
Two-Parent Children	28	12	16	0
18. Can a mother still be a mother if she doesn't live with her children?				
Total Sample*	56	37	19	0
Single-Parent Children	28	21	7	0
Two-Parent Children	28	17	11	0
19. Can a father still be a father if he doesn't live with his children?				
Total Sample*	56	34	21	1
Single-Parent Children	28	20	8	0
Two-Parent Children	28	15	13	0

*Children in Austin, Texas were not asked these questions.

his children. Children of single-parent families responded "yes" more often on all three questions. In previous questions coded for the dimension "co-residence," this dimension was mentioned very few times. Two-parent children did mention it significantly more often which would indicate that the idea of "living together" may not be as important for single-parent children. If it can be assumed that a correct response to these questions indicates a higher level concept, e.g., a mother maintains her relationship to the child regardless of the place of residence, then single-parent children may have a more sophisticated or higher level of understanding of the complexities of family relationships.

Further Exploration of Children's
Understanding of Legal Factors

20. What does it mean to get married?

21. What does it mean to get divorced?

22. What is a husband?

23. Can a man be a father and not a husband?

24. What is a wife?

25. Can a woman be a mother and not a wife?

Children's responses were evaluated and coded as "correct," "incorrect," or "don't know" (Part III, Appendix G).

Only 14 children gave a correct response to the question, "What does it mean to get married?" (Table VII). A total of 68 children either responded incorrectly or

TABLE VII

FURTHER EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S UNDER-
STANDING OF LEGAL FACTORS

Question	Total Responses	Correct	Incorrect	Don't Know	Didn't Ask
20. What does it mean to get married?	84	14	35	33	2
21. What does it mean to get divorced?*	56	4	8	44	28
22. What is a husband?	84	8	54	22	0
23. Can a man be a father and not a husband?	84	39	26	4	15
24. What is a wife?	84	10	51	23	0
25. Can a woman be a mother and not a wife?	84	40	26	5	13

*Children in Austin, Texas were not asked this question.

or answered "I don't know." Examples of incorrect responses are "You have a baby" and "It means you're a grownup." Even fewer children gave any response when asked to define divorce. Only 12 children even attempted an answer, and only four were considered correct. Of the four children answering this question correctly, three were children from single-parent families and one was from a two-parent family.

Only eight out of 84 children could correctly define "husband." Of the 54 incorrect answers, a very common response was, "It's a daddy." Only 10 children could correctly define a wife, with the common incorrect response of 51 children being, "It's a mommy." This data suggests that pre-operational children do not yet understand the meaning of legal relationships such as marriage, husband, and wife. Consistent with egocentric thinking, their use of "daddy" and "mommy" as synonymous with "husband" and "wife" indicates that children define their parents in relationship to them rather than in terms of any relationship to another person which may exist. Question 23, "Can a man be a father and not a husband?" and question 24, "Can a woman be a mother and not a wife?" were quite confusing to most children of this developmental level. Both questions received a high number of "yes" answers which were coded as "correct"; however, it is our opinion that children simply guessed when answering this question, and most guesses were a nod of the head to indicate a

"yes" answer. As interviews were conducted, confusion and frustration were observed when asked this question, after answering "What is a husband?" and "What is a wife?" incorrectly. Therefore, after testing several subjects, it was decided that if children answered questions defining husband and wife incorrectly, they would not be asked questions 23 and 24. The appropriateness of these questions with pre-operational children is questionable.

From this group of questions probing how much children know about legal factors, findings indicate that these are not understood or are simply not important to children at this cognitive level. These findings are supported by the earlier findings that "legal factors" were almost never mentioned in definining family.

Pre-operational children seem to understand the definitions of roles of mother and father much better than they understand any legal aspects such as husband and wife. Cowan (1978, p. 129) states, "pre-conceptual children have great difficulty representing and mentally coordinating simultaneous transformations of two or more dimensions." The children may not, therefore, be able to see a mother as a wife also, or a father as a husband also.

In identifying the sample of mother and child families in Oklahoma, approximately 10 pairs out of the first 24 were eliminated due to a male adult of non-legal relationship living in the home. Because pre-operational children place so little importance on legal factors, it

is the hypothesis of this author that the legal relationship of an adult male living in the home is of little or no importance to the pre-operational child. What is important is the present relationship the child has with this person, or what they presently see and feel in their immediate environment.

Further Exploration of Children's
Understanding of Guidance

The questions concerning the guidance of children are as follows:

    26. Who talks to children when they do naughty things?

    27. Who talks to children when they do nice things?

Possible answers that could be coded for responses include "mother," "father," "both," "other," or "don't know" (Part III, Appendix G).

Results for the total sample indicated that those who talked to children when they were naughty were "mothers and fathers" followed by "mothers" only (Table VIII). Both mothers and fathers were also seen as talking to children when they did something nice. "Others" were mentioned next often as talking to children when they had done nice things. Children of two-parent families felt that both mother and father talked to them when they were naughty, while children of single-parent families saw mothers only, as talking to them when they were

TABLE VIII

FURTHER EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S UNDER-
STANDING OF GUIDANCE

Question	Total Responses	Frequency of Response				
		Mother	Father	Both	Other	Don't Know
26. Who talks to children when they do naughty things?*						
Total Sample	56	13	6	20	11	6
Single-Parent Children	28	10	2	7	7	2
Two-Parent Children	28	3	4	13	4	4
27. Who talks to children when they do nice things?*						
Total Sample	56	10	7	16	15	8
Single-Parent Children	28	3	5	5	11	4
Two-Parent Children	28	7	2	11	4	4

*Children in Austin, Texas were not asked these questions.

were naughty. Two-parent children again saw both parents
talking to them when they had done something nice, while
children of single-parent families saw "others" as talking
to them when they had done something nice. The "other"
mentioned for question 27 often consisted of teachers,
friends, and siblings, not fathers. Single-parent chil-
dren in this sample seemed to see mothers as more involved
with discipline and less involved with positive reinforce-
ment for "nice" behavior, compared to two-parent children
who saw both parents as agents of discipline and rein-
forcers of "nice" behavior. This finding is supported by
the previous finding that children mentioned the dimension
"guidance of children" more often in reference to mothers
than in reference to fathers.

When asked the aforementioned questions, many chil-
dren first responded by naming the guidance technique
such as "They whip me," or "You get kissed." The chil-
dren seemed to need to define the behavior which was
"naughty" or "nice" before they could identify the per-
sons associated with the behavior.

Further Exploration of Children's Under-
standing of Emotional Interactions

Questions concerning emotional interactions are as
follows:

28. How do people in families make each other
    feel happy?

29. How do people in families make each other
feel sad?

Children's actual responses were first recorded for these
open-ended questions, then the author and two other re-
searchers independently established categories for respon-
ses and found that they could reach agreement. These
categories are as follows:

Material Things - The child mentions the giving or
withholding of material items.

Family Functions/Activities - The child refers to
participating in family activities and routines.

Feelings - The child's answer includes expressing or
not expressing feelings.

Rules - The child makes reference to following or
not following rules.

Physical Contact - The child mentions acting or not
acting in a physical manner.

Membership - The child makes reference to belonging
or not belonging to the group.

Autonomy/Independence - The child mentions allowing
or not allowing independent behavior.

The answers were scored for the presence or absence of
these dimensions. The child's response was classified in
one of these categories, or was classified in "other,"
"don't know," or "didn't ask."

Feelings seem to be an important aspect in emotional
interactions (Table IX). When asked how people in families

make each other feel happy, children mentioned feelings,
e.g., "They love you and want you," and next often, ma-
terial goods, e.g., "They give you candy and presents."
When asked how people in families make each other feel
sad, children mentioned feelings, e.g., "They hate you,"
and next often, physical contact, e.g., "They hit you."
These findings are consistent with the earlier findings
that when asked why people have families, children men-
tioned emotions most often. The caring and loving aspect
of why one has a family and how they make each other feel
is recognized as important by children at this develop-
mental level.

Flexibility of Family Role Concepts

In order to define how flexible children's concepts of
mother and father were, a group of questions to explore
this flexibility were asked. The investigator wished to
note whether the changes in society's definition of the
mother role and the father role has had an influence on
how children perceive these roles. Children were first
asked a group of questions concerning whether a mother or
a father can perform an activity considered to typically
be performed by a member of the opposite sex. A second
group of items were related to previously asked questions,
"What does a father do?" and "What does a mother do?" to
check for children's use of cross-sex typed activities.

TABLE IX

FURTHER EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S UNDER-STANDING OF EMOTIONAL INTERACTIONS

Question	Total Responses	Material Goods	Family Functions	Feelings	Rules	Physical Contact	Membership	Autonomy	Didn't Ask	Don't Know	Other
		Frequency of Responses Classified in Each Category									
28. How do people in families make each other feel happy?	84	16	19	34	6	6	8	8	1	9	8
29. How do people in families make each other feel sad?*	56	1	4	21	5	15	7	4	29	8	0

*Children in Austin, Texas were not asked this question.

Questions concerning the flexibility of family role concepts are as follows:

30. Can a father do all the housecleaning?

31. Can a mother fix the car when it needs it?

32. Is a father still a father if he does all the housecleaning?

33. Is a mother still a mother if she fixes the
    car when it needs it?

Children's responses of "yes," "no," "didn't ask," "don't
know," and "why or why not?" were recorded (Part IV, Ap-
pendix G). Table X indicates responses for the total
sample as well as family type. There was no significant
difference in responses by family type.

More children of both family types said that a father
can do all the housecleaning than said that a mother can
fix the car. Many children who said a father can not
do all the housecleaning explained, "No, mothers have to
do that." These questions concerning flexibility were the
original questions asked by Moore (1977). It is the opin-
ion of this investigator that the tasks of housecleaning
and fixing a car require different levels of skill. A
more equal pair of tasks, e.g., housecleaning for the
feminine activity and mowing the grass for the masculine
activity, might be more comparable. Children may have
been able to see fathers in the housecleaning task more
easily than mothers in the car repair task because house-
cleaning does not seem to require the level of skill that
fixing a car would. Also, since children appear to be
more aware of domestic functions, they might more easily
compare two more common domestic functions.

These findings seem to indicate that it is more ac-
ceptable for a father to participate in an activity usu-
ally performed by the opposite sex than for a mother to

TABLE X

FLEXIBILITY OF FAMILY ROLE CONCEPTS

Questions	Total Responses	Frequency of Responses			
		Yes	No	Don't Know	Didn't Ask
30. Can a father do all the housecleaning?					
Total Sample	84	52	30	2	0
Two-Parent Children	42	25	16	1	0
Single-Parent Children	42	27	14	1	0
31. Can a mother fix the car when it needs it?					
Total Sample	84	36	45	3	0
Two-Parent Children	42	16	23	3	0
Single-Parent Children	42	20	22	0	0

TABLE X (Continued)

Questions	Total Responses	Frequency of Responses			
		Yes	No	Don't Know	Didn't Ask
32. Is a father still a father if he does all the housecleaning?					
Total Sample	84	77	5	2	0
Two-Parent Children	42	40	2	0	0
Single-Parent Children	42	37	3	2	0
33. Is a mother still a mother if she fixes the car?					
Total Sample	84	68	8	6	2
Two-Parent Children	42	33	5	4	0
Single-Parent Children	42	35	3	2	2

do this. All but five children said that if the father did do all the housecleaning, he would still be a father. More children felt that a mother cannot fix the car when it needs to be fixed. When asked, "Why not?" children answered, "You take it to a garage," or "She doesn't know how." All but eight children thought that the mother was still a mother if she fixed the car. Therefore, according to this data, these children maintain a more flexible concept of the father role than they do for the mother role.

Questions 32 and 33 concerning whether a mother or father changes identity when performing an atypical task, is testing the child's ability to maintain identities when roles are changed. According to Piagetian theory, pre-conceptual children generally do not see things or people as having a core and consistent identity over time (Cowan, 1978). This sample of pre-operational children were sophisticated in their ability to maintain the identity of the mother or father, even when they performed an atypical task.

<center>The Assignment of Cross-Sex

Typed Activities</center>

Moore (1977) analyzed questions 34 and 35 by scoring as cross-sex typed any activity mentioned for a mother other than caretaker for the family. Any activity mentioned for the father other than sole provider for the

family was scored as cross-sex typed. In this study, we used Moore's system of analysis, hereinafter referred to as Scoring System 1, and developed a new scoring sytem hereinafter referred to as Scoring System 2. Using Scoring System 1, significant differences were found in the cross-sex typed activities mentioned for mothers and fathers for the total sample (x^2=8.2, 1df, p<.004), and differences approached significance for two-parent children (x^2=5.2, 1df, p<.06), and one-parent children (x^2=3.3, 1df, p<.06). All groups mentioned more cross-sex typed activities for fathers. No significant differences according to family type in the cross-sex typing of activities was found.

Items 36 and 37 totaled the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned. Scoring System 1 produced a significant difference in the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned for mother and father for the total sample (x^2=8.9, 2df, p<.01). A total of 21 children mentioned one or more cross-sex typed activities for mother, while 39 children mentioned one or more cross-sex typed activities for father. There were no significant differences in number of activities mentioned for mothers and fathers by children from single-parent families (x^2=3.48, 2df, p<.17). Of 42 single-parent children, 32 did not mention any cross-sex typed activities for the mother and 25 did not mention any cross-sex typed activities for the father.

For children of two-parent families, there was a significant difference in the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned for mothers and fathers, with significantly more children mentioning cross-sex typed activities ($x^2 = 5.7$, 2df, $p < .05$) for fathers.

In developing the new scoring method, Scoring System 2, all actual answers given by the children to the questions, "What does a mother do?" and "What does a father do?" were listed beside a seven point scale, ranging from most masculine to most feminine. The standardization group was composed of 100 college students, 50 males and 50 females, enrolled in classes in Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University. These students were asked to rate the parental activities according to masculinity and femininity. One-half of the sample was asked to begin with item 1 and work through to item 64. The other half was asked to begin with item 64 and work to item 1. Subjects were told to rate these activities as they felt that the typical American parent would rate them. The Masculinity-Feminity Activity Scale is located in Appendix H.

The mean and standard deviation for each activity is shown in Figure 6. The mean for the total scale was 4.24. The activities appearing on the scale were classified as follows: activities between one and three were classified as masculine, those between three and five were classified as neutral, and activities between five and seven were
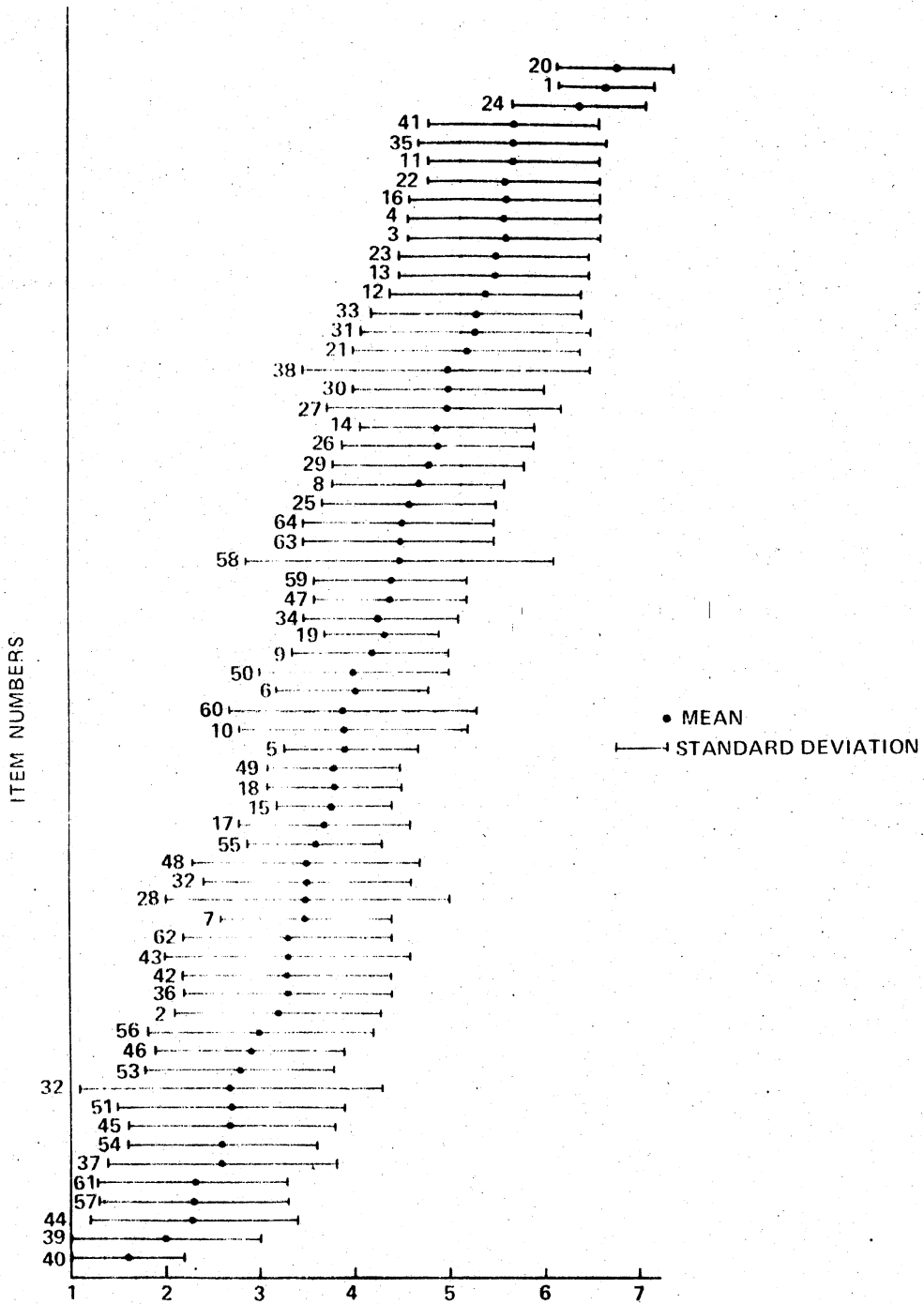
Figure 6. Means and Standard Deviations for Placement of Parental Activities on Masculinity/Femininity Scale

classified as feminine. The mean for each activity and the areas into which they fell are shown in Table XI.

Figure 7 indicates the significance of the variation of each item, beginning with those activities with the greatest amount of variation. The means for the male and female answers are shown, along with a total mean for the question. Males and females varied significantly at the .01 level when rating the following activities: fights, plays sports, drives a car, makes money, mows grass, and gets wood. Males and females varied significantly at the .05 level when rating the following activities: spanks, eats, wakes up the child, rakes leaves, salesman, and teaches. These particular activities fall along the masculine side of the scale. This may indicate an uncertainty or disagreement between males and females pertaining to masculine activities.

Figure 8 displays the coefficients of variance for males and females for each particular activity. These are placed in order of significance of variation.

A test was run to consider sex bias in the 64 activities. Analysis of variance indicated significant differences in the rating of these activities ($F=20.1$, 1df, $p<.0001$) as masculine or feminine according to sex of the rater. Females tended to rate feminine items as more feminine than males did and males rated masculine items as more masculine than females did.

TABLE XI

ITEMS ON THE MASCULINITY/FEMININITY
ACTIVITY SCALE

Masculine Items	Feminine Items	
40. Welds	20. Has babies	13. Washes dishes
39. Works on C.B.'s	1. Puts on makeup	12. Takes care of
44. Feeds cows	24. Makes clothes	you
57. Mows grass	41. Plans food	33. Stays home
61. Gets wood	35. Makes the beds	31. Screams
37. Fixes stuff	11. Washes the clothes	21. Wakes up the
54. Salesman	22. Feeds you	child
45. Rakes leaves	16. Puts plants in vase	38. Works at home
51. Makes you strong	4. Cleans house	30. Goes to the
52. Lives with a mother	3. Cooks	store
and a child	23. Buys clothes	27. Makes kids
53. Plays sports		pick up
46. Canoes		14. Types

TABLE XI (Continued)

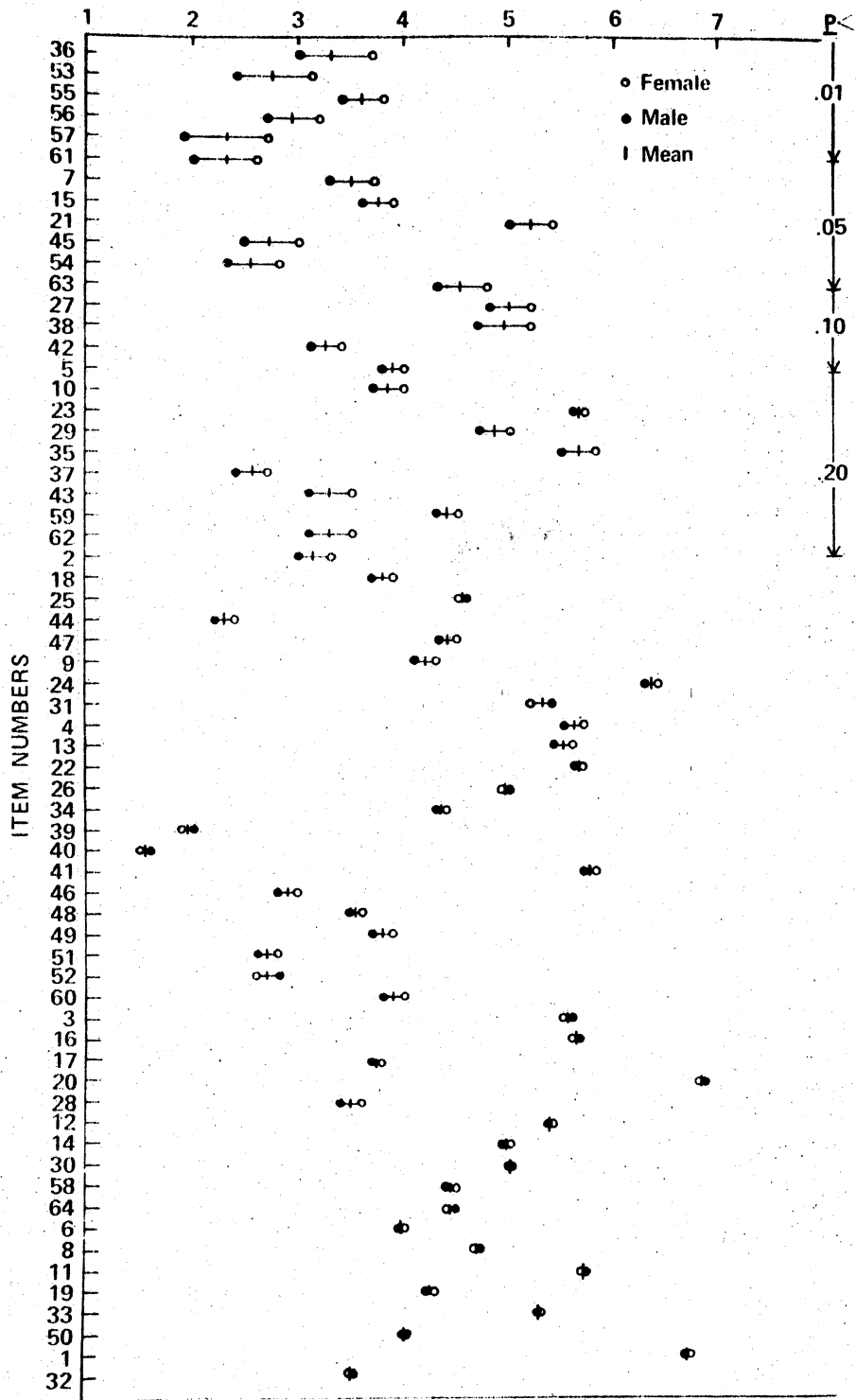| Neutral Items			
56.	Makes money	60.	Does <u>not</u> go to school
2.	Goes to work		
36.	Fights	7.	Goes to school
42.	Reads papers	50.	Works in the garden
43.	Paints		
62.	Polishes shoes	9.	Helps
7.	Spanks	19.	Loves you
28.	Helps father	34.	Plays
32.	Hits my brother	47.	Checks the mail
48.	Protects children	59.	Goes to church
55.	Drives a car	58.	Helps mother
17.	Watches T.V.	63.	Teaches
15.	Eats	64.	Spends money
18.	Tests somebody	25.	They're nice
49.	Studies	8.	Tucks you in bed
5.	Swims	29.	Takes you to school
10.	Gets something down for you	26.	Raises a child

Figure 7. Significance of Variation of Male
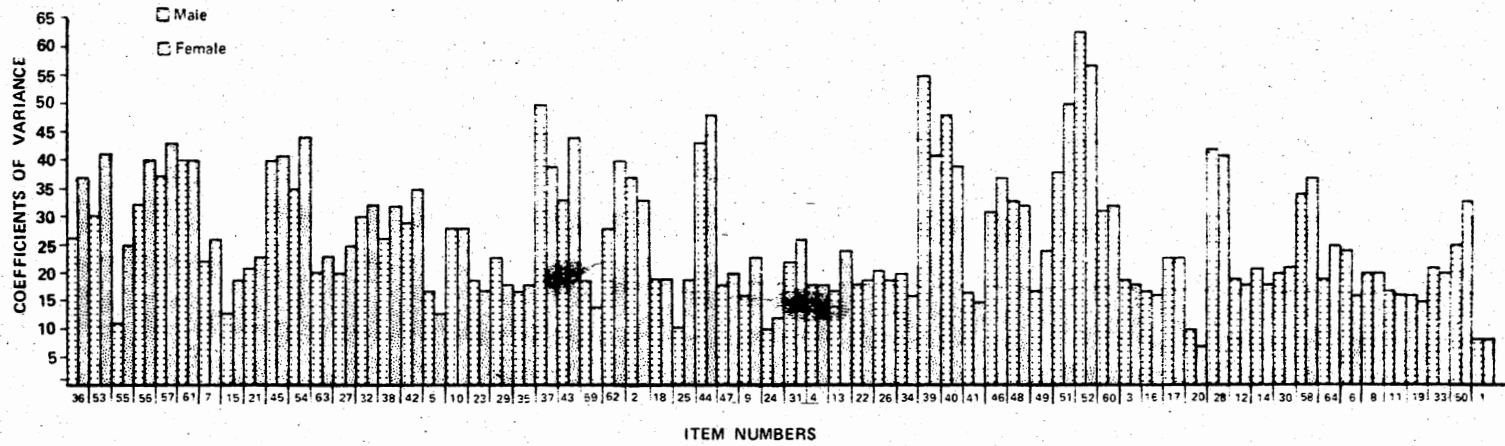and Female Rating of Parental
Activities

Figure 8.   Coefficients of Variance for Male and Female
Rating of Parental Activities

The actual scoring of questions 34 and 35 was conducted in the following manner. The activities a child listed for questions 12 and 13 were noted. If the answer to question 12, "What does a mother do?" was an activity labeled as masculine, the answer was then considered to be cross-sex typed. If the answer to question 13, "What does a father do?" was an activity labeled feminine, the answer was considered to be cross-sex typed. If the answer was in any other category, for either question, it was considered to not be a cross-sex typed activity.

Scoring System 2, a more restrictive system, defined no cross-sex typed activities for mothers. Of 84 children, 17 mentioned cross-sex typed activities for fathers, 12 from two-parent families, and only five from single-parent families. One major difference in this scoring system and Scoring System 1 is the classification of "works" as a neutral activity by Scoring System 2. More cross-sex typed activities for mothers would have been coded had "works" been defined as a masculine activity by Scoring System 2.

In comparing the two scoring systems in identifying cross-sex typed activities, for fathers there were significant differences between System 1 and System 2, in the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned by the total sample (x^2=14.3, 1df, p<.0002), two-parent children (x^2=6.2, 1df, p<.01), and single-parent children (x^2=8.8,

1df, $p<.002$). In all cases, System 1 produced more cross-sex typed activities for fathers.

Scoring System 2, even though more restrictive, would seem to be a more empirical method of labeling activities as masculine or feminine. The rating by the standardization group was done for the actual responses children gave to questions concerning parental roles. The grouping into masculine, neutral, and feminine was agreed upon by several researchers. Classifying fathers as sole providers for the family and mothers as caretakers for the family may be inappropriate for today's society. Nevertheless, Scoring System 1 and Scoring System 2 both resulted in few or no cross-sex typed activities for mothers, and both produced cross-sex typed activities for fathers.

From this study of children's assignment of cross-sex typed activities to mothers and fathers, one may conclude that children are maintaining very traditional views of parental roles. The hypothesis that children of single-parent mothers view the mother's role in a less traditional way is not supported by the finding that children see mothers engaging in few cross-sex typed activities. Children answered the questions, "What does a mother do?", "What does a father do?", and "What does a family do?", using the dimension "domestic functions." The activities children seem to take note of are the actual things parents do in the home. Mothers are observed cooking and

cleaning, while fathers help with the household chores
and go to "work." A conclusion concerning how pre-
operational children assign roles to family members is
that they assign these roles to mothers and fathers on
the basis of what they observe in their immediate environ-
ment. If this is the case, the logical outcome of trying
to determine whether children assign cross-sex typed
activities to parents will result in their assigning cross-
sex typed activities to fathers and not mothers, since
domestic functions are basically classified as feminine
activities.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Purpose and Methods of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe how pre-operational children perceive the family. The differences in family membership (Family Configuration Concept), dimensions involved in basic family definitions and roles, and flexibility of family role concepts were explored in regard to difference in: (a) geographical location, (b) family type, (c) sex, and where possible, (d) mother's work status, and (e) number of siblings. The sample was comprised of 84 children, ranging in age from three to six years, from Austin, Texas; Ruston, Louisiana; and Stillwater, Oklahoma. The children were equally divided by sex and by single-parent families and two-parent families. The sample was first classified as pre-operational using a Piagetian based Cognitive Developmental Level Test which included techniques previously used by Bernstein and Cowan (1975), Koocher (1972), and Moore (1977). Children so classified were then given the Family Concept Interview (Appendix C).

Results

In the preparation of the study, four research questions were formulated. Following are the major results related to the research questions:

1. Of a number of possible family configurations, which configurations are most often defined as "family"?

The family configurations identified as "family" by the largest percentage of both two-parent and one-parent children were:

    a. Mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, and child

    b. Mother, father, and child

Seventy percent or more of all subjects could identify all possible configurations as a family. Children from mother-child families were no more likely than children from two-parent families to identify the mother-child configuration as family.

2. What are the dimensions which children use to define family members and describe family roles? Are some dimensions used more frequently than others?

The dimension mentioned most often by children concerning the basic family definitions was "membership," followed by "biology." Least mentioned were the dimensions of "legal factors," "social factors," and "co-residence." Significant main effects for family type were found for the mention of "domestic functions," with two-parent

children mentioning it more often. There was a significant
difference in the mean number of dimensions mentioned in
defining "family," "mother," "father," and "why do people
have families?" The highest mean number of dimensions
mentioned was 1.07 for "family" compared to the lowest
mean for "Why people have families." Mothers and fathers
were defined in terms of "biology," "domestic functions,"
"membership," and "guidance of children." The only differ-
ences were that percentages of responses were higher for
"mother"; the most notable difference being in responses
related to guidance of children. Single-parent children
were less likely to list various family members than two-
parent children. Thus, although "membership" appears to
be the most frequently used dimension to define "family,"
the issue of "co-residence" or "living together" and "mem-
bership," or "who is included," appears to be mentioned
less often by children of single-parent families.

In the further exploration of family dimensions
(Part III, Appendix G), the following results were found.
With regard to "co-residence," half of the children felt
that families could be a family if they did not live to-
gether, and half did not. A slightly higher number of
children felt a mother was still a mother when not living
with her children than was a father still a father when
not living with his children. Children of single-parent
families responded "yes" more often on all these questions.
When questioned concerning their understanding of "legal

factors," only 14 children gave a correct response to the question, "What does it mean to get married?" A total of 68 children either responded incorrectly or answered "I don't know." Even fewer children gave any response when asked to define divorce. Only 12 children even attempted an answer, and only four were considered correct. Of the four children answering this question correctly, three were children from single-parent families and one was from a two-parent family. Only eight out of 84 children could correctly define "husband" and only 10 children could define "wife."

In the further exploration of children's understanding of "guidance," results for the total sample indicated that those who talked to children when they were naughty were mothers and fathers, followed by mothers only. Both mothers and fathers were also seen as talking to children when they did something nice. "Other" people were mentioned next often as talking to children when they had done nice things. Children of two-parent families felt that both mother and father talked to them when they were naughty, while children of single-parent families saw mothers only, as talking to them when they were naughty. Two-parent children again saw both parents talking to them when they had done something nice, while children of single-parent families saw "others" as talking to them when they had done something nice. In regard to emotional

Interactions, when asked how people in families make each other feel happy, children mentioned "feelings," followed by "material goods." When asked how people in families make each other feel sad, children again mentioned "feelings," followed by "physical contact."

3. Are there significant differences in the numbers of various family related activities ascribed to mother, father, and family?

There were significant differences in the number of dimensions identified for family, mothers, and fathers, with the most dimensions mentioned for "what mothers do." There was also a significant difference in the number of dimensions identified for family, mothers, and fathers for two-parent children, with most dimensions mentioned for mothers. No significant differences existed by family type for the number of dimensions mentioned. Regardless of family type, children described "what mothers do" in a wider variety of dimensions than fathers or family. There were significant differences in the number of activities children identified for mother and father, with more activities identified for mother.

4. How flexible are children's concept of family roles? Is there a significant difference in children's identification of cross-sex typed activities for mothers and fathers?

More children of both family types said that a father can do all the housecleaning than said that a mother can

fix the car. All but five children said that if a father did do all the housecleaning, he would still be a father. All but eight children thought that the mother was still a mother if she fixed the car.

In the identification of cross-sex typed activities, Scoring System 1 produced significant differences in the cross-sex typed activities mentioned for mothers and fathers for the total sample, and differences approached significance for two-parent children and one-parent children. All groups mentioned more cross-sex typed activities for fathers. There was a significant difference in the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned for mother and father for the total sample. A total of 21 children mentioned one or more cross-sex typed activities for mother, while 39 children mentioned one or more cross-sex typed activities for father. There were no significant differences in number of activities mentioned for mothers and fathers by children from single-parent families. Of 42 single-parent children, 32 did not mention any cross-sex typed activities for mother and 25 did not mention any cross-sex typed activities for the father. For children of two-parent families, there was a significant difference in the number of cross-sex typed activities mentioned for mothers and fathers, with significantly more children mentioning cross-sex typed activities for fathers. Scoring System 2, a more restrictive system, defined no

cross-sex typed activities for mothers. Of 84 children, 17 mentioned cross-sex typed activities for fathers, 12 from two-parent famlies, and only five from single-parent families. Scoring System 1 and Scoring System 2 both resulted in few or no cross-sex typed activities for mothers, and both produced cross-sex typed activities for fathers.

Conclusions

Despite the rapid changes taking place today in family structure and function, youngest children, or children at the pre-operational level of cognition, appear to be maintaining fairly rigid and traditional views in their definitions of family. Results of the present study support those of Moore (1977) that family composition appears to be defined normatively as at least two parents and a child, with one-parent/child families identified least often as families. In this study, mother/child families were the least often identified as families even by children who lived in this type of family. Cowan (1978, p. 130) comments, "we should remember that pre-conceptual children are not usually bothered by the resulting fluctuations and inconsistencies; from their point of view, that's just the way the world is arranged."

Since over 70% of the sample identified all six configurations as family, there may be need for further validation of the research method by presenting to children

some configurations (such as combinations of toys or in-
animate objects) which could not be considered families.
Also, from the data of this study, it is not possible to
determine whether children perceive that parents of op-
posite sex need to be included, or just two adults and a
child. Presenting children with more family configuration
choices, e.g., two women or two men and a child would
further clarify the nature of the child's understanding of
what it takes to have a family. In any case, it is im-
portant to note that children living in single-parent fam-
ilies appear to be defining family in much the same way
as children in two-parent families. Children at this
stage of cognitive development may be so involved in de-
fining and understanding the "regularities" of life (e.g.,
two parent/child families) that they may not yet be able
to "accommodate" their concepts of family to their own life
experience.

Furthermore, while seeing mother's activities in more
family dimensions, children from both two-parent and
single-parent families in this study were more likely to
see mothers in very traditional ways, while seeing fathers
in more cross-sex typed activities. We believe that since
children use directly observable phenomena as the basis
for the formation of concepts at the pre-operational level,
children understand mothers and fathers in terms of what
is observed at home and in interaction with the child.

Since "domestic functions" was an important part of chil-
dren's definitions of mother and father, and domestic func-
tions is usually considered a feminine activity, it follows
that research attempts to determine cross-sex typed activ-
ities for mothers and fathers may result in classification
of cross-sex typed activities for fathers and not for
mothers. Interestingly, this appears to be the opposite
situation in regard to many adult perceptions of male/
female roles in today's society.

Children at this cognitive level seem to understand
little about roles which parents play outside the home
and children have little chance to observe. Subjects in
this study used the same dimensions to define mothers and
fathers--biology, membership, domestic functions, and
guidance. To use these dimensions to summarize pre-
operational children's perceptions of mothers and fathers,
we might say that children perceive mothers and fathers as
"adults of a particular sex who live together with chil-
dren, perform domestic functions and take care of chil-
dren." Implications of this would be that for young
children, the additional activities and roles which either
parent assumes outside the home may not essentially change
the pre-operational child's perception of that parents'
roles and functions.

One of the purposes of this study was to further ex-
plore and validate the usefulness of the approach of

classifying children's perceptions of the family according to the eight dimensions of "family" suggested by Moore (1977). Results indicate that children's responses can be classified in this manner, and further, that those dimensions most salient for pre-operational children appear to be "membership, "biology," "domestic functions," and "guidance." Those least salient are the dimensions which appear to be related to higher levels of social cognition, i.e., "legal factors," and "social factors." Further research with children at different cognitive levels, or a longitudinal study will be necessary to support the hypothesis that there is a developmental progression in the impact and salience of these dimensions of family for children. For example, at what point will children become aware of social convention to a sufficient degree to be concerned about the presence of a live-in male of non-legal relationship in their home?

No significant effects due to sex of child, geographical location, mother's work status, or number of siblings was found for most of the dependent variables in this study. Effects due to family type suggest that although two-parent and single-parent children have similar perceptions of family and mother and father, single-parent children may be less concerned than two-parent children with "membership" criteria, "who lives together."

Suggestions for Further Research

This study was an initial attempt to further define and describe the pre-operational child's perception of "family" using a basic social and anthropological framework suggested by Moore (1977). While providing a beginning point for describing the pre-operational child's concept of family, results of this study suggest more research questions than they answer. Further research in the following areas is suggested:

1. When presenting the family configurations to children for their decision of whether the grouping represents a family, several other groupings should be added to the ones presented. A group composed of items that could in no way be labeled "family," e.g., a tree, a ball, and a dog, would determine whether the child is responding "yes" to all configurations being presented. A configurtion composed of two women and a child or two men and a child would be helpful in determining whether the child feels the family must have an adult of both sexes in the family.

2. Difficulty was experienced in distinguishing between the dimensions "co-residence" and "membership" when coding certain answers, e.g., "A daddy lives with a mommy and a child." In coding such a response, it is difficult to determine whether the response should be coded for "membership"--daddy, mommy, child, or "co-residence"--lives

with. Further research in delineating the dimension "membership" and "co-residence" is needed.

3. In developing Scoring System 2, the standardization group for establishing children's responses as "masculine sex-typed" or "feminine sex-typed" was 100 university students. Having pre-operational children serve as a standardization group and comparing ratings of adults and young children would aid in the establishment of an empirical method for rating masculine and feminine activities. There is currently no valid and reliable system for rating activities as masculine or feminine sex-typed.

4. Since it appears to be relatively easy to identify samples of mother/child single-parent families with a male adult of non-legal relationship living in the home, a sample of these family types should be included in further research, as well as samples of other non-traditional family forms such as group families.

5. Several questions included in the research instrument appear to be inappropriate for children of pre-operational research samples. Question 23, "Can a man be a father and not a husband?" and 25, "Can a woman be a mother and not a wife?" appear to be too difficult for young children. These questions should be retained for samples of older children. As previously discussed, revisions should be made in Questions 30 and 31 so that they would reflect atypical, but more comparable domestic tasks.

Suggestions might be to change these questions as follows:
"Can a father do all the housecleaning?" and "Can a mother
mow the grass?"

6. Research methodologies which would be less de-
pendent on children's verbalizations would be desirable.
The researchers are acutely aware that children's words are
not be be equated with concepts. The conceptual notions
underlying the pre-conceptual child's use of words have
very different structures from the same words used by
adults (Cowan, 1978).

7. Certainly, research studies with children of dif-
ferent cognitive levels, or preferably, longitudinal stud-
ies are needed in order to be able to trace the development
of the child's concept of family.

Hopefully, this study will serve as a catalyst to
others in developing a body of knowledge which will help
parents, teachers, counselors, and others who care about
children to help them grow in healthy ways in these rapidly
changing times.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

TABLE XII

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Location	Single-Parent	Two-Parent	Totals
Austin, Texas	7 boys 7 girls	7 boys 7 girls	28
Stillwater, Oklahoma	7 boys 7 girls	7 boys 7 girls	28
Ruston, Louisiana	7 boys 7 girls	7 boys 7 girls	28
		Total	84

APPENDIX B

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL TEST

Mass

Investigator: "I have two balls of clay for you to look at." Place before the child two balls of clay of equal size. Ask the child, "Are the balls of clay the same size?" If the child does not feel that the balls are equal, ask the child, "Which one is bigger?" Take a little off of the bigger one and place it on the smaller one until the child agrees that they are the same. Then in front of the child roll one of the balls out into a sausage shape. Now ask the child, "Are they still the same size?" Yes, "How do you know?" No, "Which one is bigger?"

Scoring: When the one ball of clay is rolled out into a sausage shape the pre-operational child will say they are not equal. The concrete operational child will be able to say that they are still equal.

Number

Investigator: Place before the child four red disks in a row and then just below that row in one-to-one correspondence another row of four blue disks. Ask the child, "Do these two rows have the same number of disks?" Then the investigator will take the red row of disks and put them into a pile in front of the child. Now ask the child, "Do they still have the same number?" Yes, "How do you know?" No, "What one has more?"

Scoring: The pre-operational child will not be able to say the rows are the same after one has been made into a pile. The concrete operational child will be able to say that they are the same even after the shape has changed.

Volume

Investigator: Place before the child two beakers of water, the same size beakers and the same amount of water in each. Ask the child, "Do these two beakers have the same amount of water?" If the child doesn't think they are equal ask the child, "Which one has more?" Adjust the beakers until the child agrees that they are the same. In front of the child pour one beaker of water into a taller and smaller cyclinder type container, than ask the child, "Do they still have the same amount of water?" Yes, "How do you know?" No, "Which one has more?"

Scoring: The pre-operational child will not be able to say that the amount of water is equal after the shape has been changed. The concrete operational child will be able to agree they are still equal even after the shape has been changed.

APPENDIX C

FAMILY CONCEPT INTERVIEW

1. Is this a family?   (Present **six family** groupings in random order)

    a. Mother, Father, Child, **Grandmother**, Grandfather

    b. Grandmother, Grandfather

    c. Mother, Father

    d. Mother, Father, Child

    e. Mother, Child

    f. Father, Child

2. What is a family?   What do **you have** to have to have a family?

3. What is a mother?

4. What is a father?

5. What does a mother do?

6. What does a father do?

*7. What does a family do?

8. Why do people have families?

*9. Can a family be a family if **they don't** live together?

*10. Can a mother still be a mother **if** she doesn't live with her children?

*11. Can a father still be a father **if** he doesn't live with his children?

12. Can a father do all the housecleaning?   Is he still a father if he does?   Why **(or) why not?**

13. Can a mother fix the car when **it** needs it?   Is she still a mother if she does?   Why (or) why not?

*14. Who talks to children when **they** do naughty or bad things?

*15. Who talks to children when **they** do nice things?

*16. What does it mean to get **married?**

*17. What does it mean to get **divorced?**

18. What is a husband?

19. What is a wife?

20. Can a woman be a mother and **not a wife?**

21. Can a man be a father and **not a husband?**

22. How do people in families make **each** other happy?

*23. How do people in families make **each** other feel sad?

*Questions added to the Moore Family Concept Interview (1977).

APPENDIX D

MOORE'S FAMILY CONCEPT INTERVIEW

The Child's Concept of Family

Dimensions of Focus	Question
(Global)	1. What is a family? (Alternate: What do you have to have to have a family?)
Membership	2. Which of these pictures shows a family? Who are the people in that picture? Is there anything special or different about that family? Do any of the others show a family, too? (Repeat of the questions about who the people are, or if there is anything special or different, or why isn't that a family?) (The pictures were cards with drawings of six different potential family groupings: [a] an adult male, adult female, child, elderly female, elderly male; [b] adult male, adult female, child; [c] adult male, adult female, [d] elderly male, elderly female; [e] adult female, child; [f] adult male, child.)
Biology, Domestic Functions, Guidance	3. What is a mother? (Repeated for father, grandmother, grandfather) (Alternate: What do you have to do to be a mother?)
Biology, Domestic Functions, Guidance	4. What does a mother do? (Repeated for father, grandmother, grandfather)
Residence	5. Can a family still be a family if it doesn't have a house or a home to live in? How (or) Why not?

Dimensions of Focus		Question

Biology, Domestic
Functions, Guidance

6. Can a mother still be a mother if she never (whatever the child first said mothers do on #4.) How (or) why not? (Repeated substituting father)

Biology, Domestic
Functions, Guidance

7. Can a father do all the housecleaning? Is he still a father if he does? How (or) Why not? Can a mother always fix the car when it needs it? Is she still a mother if she does? How (or) Why not?

Social Roles

Legal Factors

8. What does it mean to get married?

Legal Factors
Biology

9. What is a husband? Can a man be a father and not a husband? How (or) Why not? (Repeated for wife/mother)

Social Roles

10. How many grandmothers does a child usually have? Why? Do a child's two grandmothers usually have the same last name as each other? Why (or) Why not?

(Global)

11. Why do people have families?

Emotional

12. How do people in families make each other happy?

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO PARENTS

January, 1979

Dear Parents:

We would like to request your cooperation in a research project involving children's concept of "family." This research is being conducted by the Department of Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University.

I would greatly appreciate your help in this research project. If you agree to participate, I will give you an inventory that either parent may fill out. Information about your family is needed so that I will be better able to interpret my findings. We are interested in both two-parent and one-parent families. The information we need is attached and will be kept confidential.

Your child will then be interviewed concerning his/her perception about families. Questions such as, "What is a mother?", "What is a father?", and "How do people in families make each other feel happy?" will be asked. We will show you all of the questions if you would like to see them. A summary of the research findings will be available upon completion of the project in summer, 1979.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. We really appreciate your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

B. Denise Jones
Home Phone: (318) 255-3417 - Ruston, LA.
              (405) 377-6528 - Stillwater, OK.

Judith A. Powell, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor, FRCD
Adviser

APPENDIX F

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Child's name _____ Subject number _____

Date: _____ Child's age _____

Sex of child _____ Female _____ Male

Number of siblings: Work status of the mother:

_____ None   _____ Working

_____ One   _____ How long?

_____ Two   _____ % of time

_____ Three   _____ Non-working
          or more

Does the child:

_____ Have one parent living in the home?

_____ Have two parents living in the home?

_____ Have one parent and other adults in the home?

_____ Have two parents and other adults in the home?

If there has been a change from two parents living in the
home to one parent living in the home, how long has it
been since this change:

_____ Six months or less

_____ More than six months

If there has been a change from one parent living in the
home to two parents living in the home, how long has it
been since this change:

_____ Six months or less

_____ More than six months

If there is one parent in the home, how often does the
child see the other parent:

_____ Frequently (once a week or more)

_____ Sometimes (once a month; holidays, vacations)

_____ Seldom or almost never

_____ Never

Are there other characteristics of your child's family
experience that you feel you would want us to know in
order to interpret the research findings? (For example,
are there step-parents, step-brothers and sisters; has
there been the death of a parent, etc.?)

APPENDIX G

FAMILY CONCEPT INTERVIEW

SCORE SHEET

SUBJECT NUMBER_____
PIAGETIAN TASKS PASSED:
    Conservation of Mass_____   Total tasks passed_____
    Conservation of Number_____   Pre-operational_____
    Conservation of Volume_____

FAMILY CONCEPT INTERVIEW SCORE SHEET

Part I. Family Membership or Family Configuration Concept

Is this a family? (Drawings)	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	IF NO, WHY NOT?
1. Mother, Father, Grandmother, Grandfather and Child				
2. Grandmother, Grandfather				
3. Mother, Father				
4. Mother, Father, and Child				
5. Father, Child				
6. Mother, Child				
Total Family Configuration Score				

Part II. Dimensions Involved in Basic Family Definitions and Descriptions of Family Roles

Basic Concept	Biology	Co-residence	Domestic Functions	Emotions	Guidance of Children	Legal Factors	Membership	Social Factors	Don't Know	Other
7. What is a family? What do you have to have to have a family?										
8. What is a mother?										
9. What is a father?										
10. Why do people have families?										
Total Score										

Family Roles Concept	Dimensions									
	B	C	DF	E	G	L	M	S	DK	OTHER
11. What does a family do?										
12. What does a mother do?										
13. What does a father do?										
Total Score=										

14. Number of activities mentioned for mother in item #12:_____
15. Number of activities mentioned for father in item #13:_____
16. Number of activities mentioned for family in item #11:_____

Part III. Further Exploration of Family Dimensions

Co-residence	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
17. Can a family still be a family if they don't live together?			
18. Can a mother still be a mother if she doesn't live with her children?			
19. Can a father still be a father if he doesn't live with his children?			

Legal Factors	CORRECT	INCORRECT	DON'T KNOW
20. What does it mean to get married?			
21. What does it mean to get divorced?			
22. What is a husband?			
23. Can a man be a father and not a husband?			
24. What is a wife?			
25. Can a woman be a mother and not a wife?			

Guidance of Children	MOTHER	FATHER	BOTH	OTHER	DON'T KNOW
26. Who talks to children when they do naughty things?					
27. Who talks to children when they do nice things?					

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Emotional Interactions

	Material Goods	Family Functions	Family	Feelings	Rules	Contact	Physical	Membership	Autonomy	Didn't Ask	Don't Know	Other
28. How do people in families make each other feel happy?												
29. How do people in families make each other feel sad?												

Part IV. Flexibility of Family Role Concepts

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	WHY OR WHY NOT?
30. Can a father do all the housecleaning?				
31. Can a mother fix the car when it needs it?				
32. Is a father still a father if he does all the housecleaning?				
33. Is a mother still a mother if she fixes the car when it needs it?				

	YES	NO
34. Did they mention cross-typed activities for the mother in item #12?		
35. Did they mention cross-typed activities for father in item #13?		

36. How many cross-typed activities were mentioned
for the mother in item #12?

_____

37. How many cross-typed activities were mentioned
for the father in item #13?

_____

TOTAL TIME CHILD TALKED _____

APPENDIX H

MASCULINITY/FEMININITY ACTIVITY SCALE

Please rank the following activities according to masculinity and feminity.

		Most Masculine					Most Feminine

1. Put on makeup
2. To to work
3. Cook
4. Clean
5. Swim
6. Go to school
7. Spank
8. Tuck you in bed
9. Help
10. Get something down for you
11. Wash clothes
12. Take care of child
13. Wash dishes
14. Types
15. Eats
16. Put plants in vase
17. Watches T.V.
18. Test somebody
19. Love you
20. Has babies
21. Wake up the child
22. Feed you
23. Buy clothes
24. Make clothes
25. They're nice
26. Raises a child
27. Makes kids pick up
28. Help father
29. Take you to school
30. Go to the store

	Most Masculine					Most Feminine
31. Screams						
32. Hits my brother						
33. Stay home						
34. Play						
35. Make the beds						
36. Fight						
37. Fix stuff						
38. Work at home						
39. Work on C.B.s						
40. Welds						
41. Plan food						
42. Read papers						
43. Paints						
44. Feed cows						
45. Rake leaves						
46. Canoes						
47. Check the mail						
48. Protect children						
49. Study						
50. Work in the garden						
51. Makes you strong						
52. Lives with a mother and a child						
53. Play sports						
54. Salesman						
55. Drive a car						
56. Make money						
57. Mows grass						
58. Help mother						
59. Go to church						
60. Does not go to school						
61. Get wood						

Most   Most
Masculine   Feminine

62. Polish shoes   ├──────┼──────┼──────┼──────┼──────┤
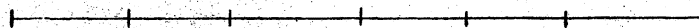
63. Teach   ├──────┼──────┼──────┼──────┼──────┤
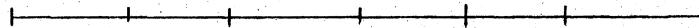
64. Spends money   ├──────┼──────┼──────┼──────┼──────┤
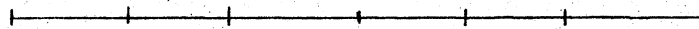
VITA

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