

MINISTERS' WIVES: MARITAL SATISFACTION  
AND THE ITINERANT LIFE STYLE

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The modern family faces many possible crises and stresses in the course of living. But as McKain (1973, p. 205) points out, "One of the more pronounced environmental situational stresses encountered by modern families is geographic mobility." According to Neuhaus and Neuhaus (1974, p. 2) ". . . a crisis in the life of the family may exert pervasive and far reaching effects on the individual, the stability of the family, and the pattern of emotional balance and interchange." The crisis of geographic mobility is one that the families of ministers go through quite often. The implications of the crisis of geographic mobility for the family stability have been little understood and little studied. The research literature on this topic is very limited. This researcher has attempted to locate information concerning mobility and its effects on ministers and their families and has found no research studies dealing with mobility and its effects on ministers and the family of the minister.

#### Need for the Study

People are looking to the minister and the family of the minister for a pattern of family stability and emotional balance. Therefore, it is desirable to obtain knowledge concerning how the geographic



mobility affects the minister's family, and in particular the wife of the minister. Although there have been studies in the area of geographic mobility for the society in general, there has been little, if any, scientific research of the factors involved in the mobility of ministers and their families and the relationship between this mobility and marriage satisfaction. To determine what the relationship is between geographic mobility and the perceptions of ministers' wives concerning marital satisfaction would contribute to a better understanding of marriage relationships and problems in the lives of those who are in the itinerant ministry.

#### Definitions of Terms

The following definitions will serve to clarify the study:

1. Annual Conference: The annual meeting (usually the last week in May or the first week in June) of the ministerial and lay members where the business of the ministers is conducted. At this conference the appointments are made for ministers to their charges (The Book of Discipline, 1976).

2. Bishop: The minister who has the particular ministry of general superintendency of the ministers under his care in the conference (The Book of Discipline, 1976).

3. Charge: The particular church or parish sometimes made up of two or three churches to which a minister is assigned (The Book of Discipline, 1976).

4. Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations: The committee in the local church that is responsible for, among other things, the conferring in matters of change in ministers with the District Superinten-

dent (The Book of Discipline, 1976).

5. District Superintendent: The minister who has a particular ministry to oversee the total ministry of the pastors in the charges within the district boundaries (The Book of Discipline, 1976).

6. Elder: Ministers who have completed their seminary studies and who are members in full connection of the Annual Conference (The Book of Discipline, 1976).

7. Geographic mobility (itinerancy): In the context of the society it is the change of residence. In the context of the United Methodist Church this mobility is ". . . the itinerant system (which is) the accepted method by which ministers are appointed by the bishop . . . and all ministers shall accept and abide by these appointments" (The Book of Discipline, 1976, ¶ 452, p. 206).

8. Marital Needs Satisfaction Scale (MNSS): An instrument developed by Nick Stinnett of Oklahoma State University. The component parts of the MNSS are: (a) love; (b) respect; (c) communication; (d) integration of past life experiences; (e) personality fulfillment; and (f) meaning in life (Stinnett, Collins, and Montgomery, 1970).

9. Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church: The Oklahoma Conference, as in other conferences, is a geographical boundary that includes the entire state of Oklahoma. Within this conference there are 14 districts each headed by a district superintendent.

10. Parsonage: The home of the minister and his family. This home is to be ". . . respected by the ministerial family as the property of the church. . . ." (The Book of Discipline, 1976, ¶ 260, 2d4, p. 148).

## Purposes

The purposes of this study were to examine the relationship between perceived marriage satisfaction (assessed by the Marital Needs Satisfaction Scale--MNSS) in a selected group of ministers' wives and the following variables:

1. frequency of mobility in the itinerant ministry
2. adjustment to the itinerant life style
3. amount of influence in the mobility decision-making process
4. vocation of husband at time of marriage
5. self-report of marriage happiness
6. background characteristics of age, number of children,

present vocation, and educational attainment.

Another purpose of the study was to examine several of the pressures that were related to the itinerant ministry as seen by the selected group of ministers' wives.

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be examined:

1. There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to the number of times moved in the itinerant ministry.
2. There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to how well they have adjusted to the itinerant ministry.
3. There will be no significant difference in perceived marital

satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to (a) influence in the decision when to move and (b) influence in the decision where to move.

4. There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to vocation of husband at time of marriage.

5. There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to a self-report of marriage happiness.

6. There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to the following: (a) age of respondent; (b) present vocation of respondent; (c) educational attainment of the respondent; and (d) number of children of the respondent.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research indicates that several factors influence the adjustment of women to geographic mobility. One area of importance would be the reasons for geographic mobility of the family. Another factor in adjustment is the involvement of the wife in the geographic mobility decision-making process. A third factor to be explored is the frequency of geographic mobility and how this relates to the woman's adjustment. The type of employment of the wife is also a factor in her adjustment to mobility. With the above factors in mind the review of literature is presented.

#### Reasons for Vocational Mobility

One of the reasons for geographic mobility in society as stated by research conducted by Jones (1973) is an increase in salary or more job responsibilities for the husband. Jones (1973, p. 214) also found that, "The women agree with the statement that it is 'better to accept an opportunity for transfer than damage chances for upward mobility'".

Within the United Methodist Church in the Oklahoma Conference, a change in residence associated with a change in the minister's charge is indicative of any combination of three basic factors: the minister, the charge, and the bishop. The minister may decide that he wishes to move usually for a better salary, more job responsibilities, a "better"

church, or family reasons. Another factor is that the church may be dissatisfied with the minister and ask that another minister be assigned. The first two factors are subordinate to the decision of the bishop who has the final authority over the assignments. The bishop may for reasons of ineffectiveness, moral lapse, divorce, bad health, age, etc. decide to move a minister when in effect the charge and the minister of that charge want the assignment to stay as it is (Cooke, 1973).

#### Wife's Impact on Geographic Mobility Decision

In general society an important consideration in the move is the wife. Jones (1973, p. 213) discovered that "The happiness of the wife in the new community is related to the degree of her involvement in the planning stages of the move."

Within the United Methodist Church, the wife of the minister has little, if any, input into when to move or where to move. Any influence she may have is diffused through her husband, to the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations within the church, to the District Superintendent, and finally to the Bishop of the Conference. The pastor meets with the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations of the charge to which he is assigned, and they jointly decide if the pastor shall stay in his present position or move. The recommendations of the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations go to the District Superintendent of the particular district. From there "The Bishop shall appoint, after consultation with the District Superintendent, ministers to their charges" (The Book of Discipline, 1976, ¶ 59, Article X, p. 37).

### Adjustment to Geographic Mobility

Research indicates that ". . . the best source of learning how to cope with the problem of moving is the actual experience of moving" (Jones, 1973, p. 214). There is little formal education on how to move and one must learn through experience how to become successful. Finding out about the new community prior to moving and making an exploratory trip or two are very helpful and important in the success of the adjustment process (Jones, 1973).

When moving to a new place of residence, there is usually an increase in social activity (McAllister, Butler, and Kaiser, 1973). Jones (1973) found that women who moved saw no reason why social relations should not continue and many experienced a feeling that in forming new relationships their skills have increased. The preschool child and the school age child are helpful in allowing their parents to meet other people (McAllister, et al., 1973). The best time to move when children are taken into consideration, is in the summer months--not only because of good weather and summer vacation time from school, but also because people are in their yards and meeting the neighbors in the neighborhood is easier (Jones, 1973).

According to Barrett and Noble (1973, p. 188) families should ". . . focus on their adaptive strategies rather than seek out ways to avoid stress." Some people--because of their particular histories of mobility--can adapt better than others (McAllister, et al., 1973). Some families, especially those who are "close knit" find moving as an activity that unifies them, gets them away from any maladjustments they may have had in the old community, and allows them to fulfill a family goal in a new way (Burgess, Locke, and Thomas, 1963). Some

women who have adapted to the moving cycle feel that:

- (1) they have grown in their ability to cope with stress as a result of their experiences in moving
  - (2) they have become more flexible and adaptive
  - (3) they have broader ranging interests
  - (4) they have developed skills in meeting people and making friends
  - (5) they are more understanding of and accepting of other people, cultures, and customs
- (Jones, 1973, p. 214).

Research also has indicated that there are factors which do allow for easier adjustment after the move has taken place. In her study, Jones found that women who have moved often list the following factors as being helpful in making the adjustment to a residential change (these are listed in order of helpfulness):

- (1) The arrival of furniture and other familiar objects
  - (2) the return to a "normal" schedule
  - (3) the neighbors in the new neighborhood
  - (4) favorite chain stores and restaurants
  - (5) favorite family T.V. programs
  - (6) real estate agents
- (Jones, 1973, p. 216).

Geographic mobility can also create negative effects on the women who do not adjust well to the mobility. Moving can create mental disturbances (Butler, McAllister, and Kaiser, 1973), greater disruptions of social relationships, and more mental stress (Butler, Van-Arnsdol, and Sabagh, 1970), and feelings of being severely limited in time and opportunities for social interactions (McAllister, et al., 1973).

When geographic mobility is the fact (when the people involved are given no choice but to move) there are usually negative effects on the women. Involuntary geographic mobility leaves some women with feelings of being lonely, remote, depressed, and unhappy, and in addition, they "cry a lot" (Jones, 1973). Others in the situation of moving involun-



tarily feel alienated, not included, experience more role tensions (especially with their husbands), and may have many psychiatric symptoms (McKain, 1973). The very fact of moving may often serve to isolate family members and strong social contacts they may have had in the old community (Burgess, et al., 1963). By not taking time to find acceptable new social contacts, the wife may " . . . become discontented, irritable, and nervous. Situations which once would have caused no difficulty, now create tension and strain, and the inner unity of the family may be imperiled" (Burgess, et al., 1963, p. 376).

Involuntarily moving also creates other problems for the women. In the research conducted by McKain with women who had to move, he has found that:

Having been forced to move, they apparently experience the event as a major problem-riddled life crisis in the midst of an already wretched existence, cut off from and unable to reach out to formal or informal support (McKain 1973, p. 209).

Women who move involuntarily report symptoms of mental disorders, report symptoms of disturbances and are generally adversely affected by the move (Butler, et al., 1973).

There have been no research studies to date that explore the factors which allow for satisfactory adjustment to the life style of itinerancy to which the United Methodist Church's Ministers are subjected. In a report to the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church by the Task Force on Ministry to Clergy and their families they state:

Most of the early circuit riders were not married and lived on their horses, or where ever they could find a bed. Bishop Asbury never married and felt that remaining single was a part of the discipline of the "call" for all his men. . . . The demand to be allowed to marry became irresistible, and finally this privilege was reluctantly conceded to the men (Oden, 1975, p. 7).

In the United Methodist Church in the Oklahoma Conference, it is very much frowned upon for a minister, the wife of the minister, or any member of the minister's family to visit the new charge before the actual move, except by the invitation of the present minister of that charge. When a family moves to the new charge, there is usually an increase in social activity. The new minister and his family are taken out to eat or food is brought in to them for the first few days in the new community. The task of seeing that the minister and his family are fed the first few days is usually taken care of by one or more of the various groups or committees in the church. There are get-acquainted dinners and luncheons that are also a part of the increased social activity that is experienced by the minister and the family of the minister. Usually on the first Sunday in the new charge, the family of the minister joins the church and are formally introduced to those in the congregation present at that worship service. All of the previous mentioned items of getting the minister and his family integrated into the new community in social ways usually take place within the first week or week and a half in the new charge.

In the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church, moving, except in cases of emergency (like the death of a minister, which causes changes at times other than usual), takes place the first Thursday after the ending of Annual Conference. At that time in June, approximately one week after the reading of the assignments at

the Annual Conference, every family who is to move does so. The "old" family usually leave early on Thursday morning and the "new" family usually enter the parsonage vacated that same day.

The general policy of social relationships in the old community is not explicitly written down for all ministers to follow. The ministers are "told" not to return to the old community and to break all the old ties with the community he had just left. The minister and members of his immediate family are not to return for social functions, weddings, church gatherings, etc. except by the formal invitation of the present minister of that charge. The minister and his family are to break all social and emotional ties with the "last" charge and begin to develop new social and emotional ties with the present charge and the people there.

Within the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church, the families of ministers move from parsonage to parsonage in each charge. The parsonages are owned by the church and are furnished. The family of the minister has the added adjustment of coping with the furniture in the parsonage and the location of the parsonage within the community. The furniture and the location of the parsonage are things that the family of the minister cannot change and therefore they must learn to cope with them. Some parsonages are located next door to the church while others are located in other parts of the community.

The furniture and the general condition of the parsonage are an added stress to the wives of the ministers. Often there is a gap between what a woman wants and what the church is willing and able to provide (Oden, 1975). It is often difficult to place a family of

six into a small parsonage and often wasteful to place of family of three into a large parsonage. In a recent questionnaire channeled through the Committee on Ministry to Clergy and their Families, it was discovered that all parsonages were furnished with a range and a refrigerator, but that is where the uniformity of furnishings stops. Of the 219 questionnaires returned, it was discovered that in the parsonages studied, only 68 percent had a clothes washer, 56 percent had a clothes dryer, 41 percent had a kitchen sink disposal, 37 percent had a dishwasher, and only nine percent had a freezer in the parsonage (Oden, 1975). It was recommended by the Committee on Ministry to Clergy and their Families that parsonages have furnishings that would include such items as drapes, carpeting, bookshelves, storage space for seasonal items and tools, beds with good springs and mattresses, a desk, and even a regular policy of insect extermination (Oden, 1975). Although parsonages are furnished, a stressor item in the adjustment of ministers' wives to mobility within the itinerant ministry could be greatly reduced if the parsonages would be more uniformly furnished.

#### Vocational Impact on Geographic Mobility

Present statistics indicate that more and more women are working. Killian reported that ". . . women now constitute more than one-third of the national work force. . . ." (1971, p. 4), while a later study indicated that ". . . 48 percent of the work force in our country is female. Of that number 60 percent have children" (Oden, 1975, p. 23).

Women work for various reasons. One reason that women who are

living with their husbands and children work is to supplement the family income (Killian, 1971). The amount of education a woman has attained is also a factor in her working. Killian found that the more education a woman has the more likely she is to be working outside the home (1971). Burgess, et al. report that the unified family has the characteristic of emphasizing ". . . the individuality of its members and their personality development" (1963, p. 283).

The home life of the working women is another factor in the employment of the women outside the home. As Killian stated, about women, "The keys to her remaining happily married and gainfully employed are the degree of understanding she receives at home and her self-discipline in carrying out her responsibilities in both areas" (Killian, 1971, p. 27-28). Burgess, et al. reported that, "Marital-adjustment studies indicate that those with a high level of education have a higher level of marital adjustment than those with a low educational status" (1963, p. 323-324). The general picture that research has discovered is that ". . . the more education. . . the more likely that they have an unrestrictive happy view of their marriage" (Veroff and Feld, 1970, p. 94). "The more-educated spouses seem to be reporting both active self-involvement and a generally satisfactory response to the marital satisfaction" (Veroff and Feld, 1970, p. 94).

Not too many years ago the understanding that several ministers had was that if a minister's wife was employed outside the home, her income was deducted from the amount of salary her husband received from the church where he was assigned (Thompson, 1963). But the times have changed and when the practice of deducting the wife's salary from

her husband's salary stopped, women began to work outside the home in great numbers. Nationally 45% of the clergy spouses were gainfully employed in 1973 as opposed to 22% in 1963 (Oden, 1975). In the year 1975 it was discovered that "Within the Oklahoma Annual Conference 162 wives of 397 full-time ministers (40.8%) are employed outside the home" (Oden, 1975, p. 23).

#### Summary

It has been demonstrated that geographic mobility (residential mobility or itinerancy) is very often a disruptive force, a crisis or a producer of stress in a family. This disruption is especially stressful on the women in the families. The women are the key components in allowing their families to move to a new residence smoothly. Research has shown that there are some women who adjust well to mobility, while there are others who do not adjust well to mobility. This difference in the adjustment to mobility might be explained by the number of times the family has changed their place of residence or by the reasons for their vocational mobility.

Another difference in the adjustment to geographic mobility among the women that have been studied could be the use of adaptive strategies and the helpful components listed by those women who have moved often. Research has also shown that the amount of involvement that the wife has had in the mobility decision making process has been a factor in her adjustment to geographic mobility. The vocational or educational involvement of the wife has also been a factor in the geographical mobility adjustment of the wives that have been studied.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the perceived marital satisfaction scores in a selected group of ministers' wives and variables that dealt with (1) background characteristics of the respondents; (2) itinerant life style characteristics of the respondents; and (3) self-report of marriage happiness of the respondents. In order to achieve the above purpose, the following steps were followed: (1) selection of the subjects; (2) selection of the instrument to be used; (3) administration of the instrument; and (4) analysis of the data.

#### Selection of Subjects

The subjects for this study were selected from the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Only the wives of full-time Elders, under appointment within the geographical boundaries of the Oklahoma Annual Conference, for the 1976-1977 conference year were considered. The conference year began June 1, 1976 and ended May 31, 1977. All of the ministers' wives who fell into this category were mailed a questionnaire in February, 1977. There were approximately 280 ministers who fell into this category, and the questionnaires were mailed to the wives of the ministers at the church address. There were questionnaires mailed to every county of the state of Oklahoma.

### The Instrument

The questionnaire had three component parts. The first part of the questionnaire supplied the background information (age, number of children, vocation, and education) and itinerant life style information (number of times moved; adjustment to itinerancy; influence in the decision making process; and vocation of husband at the time of the marriage) as well as the self-report of the marriage happiness.

The second part of the questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions. These questions furnished information dealing with some of the specific pressures in relation to the itinerant life style.

The third part of the questionnaire for the study was the MNSS (Stinnett, Collins, and Montgomery, 1970). The MNSS, a Likert-type scale, consisting of 24 items was developed by Stinnett, Collins, and Montgomery. There are five degrees of response ranging from "very satisfied" to "very unsatisfied". The 24 items represent six basic needs in the marital relationship: (a) love, (b) personality fulfillment, (c) respect, (d) communication, (e) finding meaning in life, and (f) integration of past life experiences. On the MNSS if all 24 items were rated "very satisfactory" the MNSS score would be 120; if all 24 items were rated "satisfactory" the MNSS score would be 96; if all 24 items were rated "undecided" the MNSS score would be 72; if all 24 items were rated "unsatisfactory" the MNSS score would be 48; and if all 24 items were rated "very unsatisfactory" the MNSS score would be 24.

All items in the scale were found to be significantly discriminating at the .001 level (Stinnett, et al., 1970). Two indicators of the validity of the MNSS which were noted are: (a) that the first



four need categories were conceptualized in final form on the basis of a factor analysis, and (b) the findings that husbands and wives who perceived their marriages as improving received significantly higher scores on the MNSS than did those who perceived their marriages as being unhappy.

#### Administration of the Instrument

The questionnaires were mailed to 280 wives of full-time Elders in the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in February, 1977. A self-addressed, stamped, reply envelope was included with the questionnaires. Because only the church addresses were available, the questionnaire envelopes were also stamped with the word PERSONAL in red. Each respondent was asked to return the completed questionnaire by April 1, 1977, which was approximately two weeks after the date the subjects received the questionnaire.

#### Analysis of the Data

Frequency and percentage data were used to analyze the background variables of: (a) age; (b) number of children; (c) present vocation; and (d) educational attainment. Frequency and percentage data were also used to analyze the itinerant life style variables of: (a) the frequency of mobility; (b) adjustment to the itinerant system; (c) amount of influence in the mobility decision-making process; (d) the vocation of husband at time of marriage; and (e) self-report of the marriage happiness.

A total score was obtained for the MNSS. Single-classification analysis of variance was utilized to examine the relationship between

the MNSS scores and the nine variables relating to the itinerant life style and background characteristics.

The second part of the questionnaire, the open-ended questions, was analyzed by means of frequencies and percentages based on the items listed by the respondents. This frequency and percentage information was analyzed after a careful grouping by the researcher of all the responses from the 148 respondents.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Description of the Subjects

The questionnaires were mailed to the wives of 280 ordained Elders in the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The most accurate listing of addresses within the Conference was the church address, therefore the questionnaires were mailed to the wife of the minister at the church address (e.g., Mrs. John Doe, and the church address). The given names of the wives were not used as there was no complete listing of all the wives' given names available to the researcher. There was no way of finding out how many of the questionnaires actually were taken home from the churches to the wives. Of the 280 questionnaires mailed 163 were returned in time to be included in the study (Note: There were another ten questionnaires returned as late as June 6, 1977, well after the statistical analysis was completed and long since the April 1, 1977 requested return date.). From the 163 returned questionnaires, ten were unusable (incomplete or inadvertently mailed to deacons and not elders) and another five questionnaires were returned because the minister had no wife. The statistical analysis therefore was completed with 148 respondents, which was 53% of the total number of questionnaires mailed.

Information about the respondents in the study is presented in TABLE I. The respondents ranged in age from 21 to 68 years, with

TABLE I  
DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

DESCRIPTION	N	%
<u>Age</u>		
less than 31 years old	12	8.11
31 to 40 years old	41	27.70
41 to 50 years old	40	27.03
51 to 60 years old	39	26.35
more than 60 years old	16	10.81
<u>Number of children</u>		
none or 1 child	15	10.14
2 children	44	29.73
3 children	57	38.51
4 children	18	12.16
more than 4 children	14	9.46
<u>Length of marriage</u>		
up to and including 10 years	18	12.16
11 to 20 years of marriage	46	31.08
21 to 30 years of marriage	39	26.35
31 to 40 years of marriage	37	25.00
more than 40 years of marriage	8	5.41
<u>Education</u>		
high school	29	19.60
2 years college or technical school	37	25.00
bachelor's degree	64	43.24
master's degree	18	12.16

TABLE I (Continued)

DESCRIPTION	N	%
<u>Employment</u>		
not presently working	81	54.73
presently working full-time	43	29.05
presently working part-time	24	16.22
teacher	26	17.57
secretarial-clerical	18	12.16
professional training required	12	8.11
other	11	7.43

81.08% of the respondents in the age range between 31 - 50. There were 38.51% of the respondents with three children, followed by 29.73% with two children. Forty-six respondents (31.08%) had been married from 11 - 20 years, 39 respondents (26.35%) had been married 21 - 30 years, and 37 respondents (25%) had been married 31 - 40 years. Those married up to and including ten years numbered 18 (12.16%) and those married more than 40 years numbered eight (5.41%). Almost half of the respondents (43.24%) had a bachelor's degree with another 25% having had at least two years of college or technical school training. There were 19.60% of the respondents with a high school education and only 12.16% of the respondents had completed a master's program and presently hold a master's degree.

Concerning employment of the respondents, 81 (54.73%) were, at the time of the questionnaire, not employed outside the home. Of the 67 respondents who were working, 29.05% work full-time with the remaining

16.22% working part-time. The working respondents are teachers (17.57%), secretaries or work at clerical jobs (12.16%), work where there is some type of professional training required (e.g., nursing or pharmacy - 8.11%), and 7.43% of the respondents listed jobs other than the above mentioned such as sales, house cleaner, clerk, and church work for which there is remuneration.

A description of certain characteristics of the respondents' husbands is presented in TABLE II. Husbands of 127 of the 148 respondents are full-time ministers (85.81%) and nine husbands of respondents (6.08%) are connectional ministers. Of the 14 District Superintendent's wives 12 returned the questionnaire which is 86% return for the total number of D. S.'s. This group represents 8.11% for the total sample. Of the total sample 69.60% of the respondents' husbands have one church, 16.89% have two churches, 1.35% have three or more churches, and 12.16% are not assigned to a church (this includes the D. S.'s and some connectional ministers).

TABLE II also shows that 44.60% of the ministers were in some vocation other than ministry when they were married to the respondent. The remaining 55.41% of the husbands of the respondents were already in ministry or seminary at the time of their marriage to the respondents.

TABLE II  
CHARACTERISTICS OF HUSBANDS OF RESPONDENTS

DESCRIPTION	N	%
<u>Under assignment as</u>		
full-time minister in a charge	127	85.81
connectional minister	9	6.08
district superintendent	12	8.11
<u>Number of churches in the charge</u>		
one church	103	69.60
two churches	25	16.89
three or more churches	2	1.35
no churches	18	12.16
<u>Vocation at time of marriage</u>		
in seminary	35	23.65
in the ministry	47	31.76
in some other vocation	66	44.60

#### Examination of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I - There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to the number of times moved in the itinerant ministry. Utilizing the single-classification analysis of variance the MNSS scores were not found to be significantly related to the number of times moved. This variable approached significance with an  $F$  score of 2.32 which yielded a significance level

of .059. As the number of times moved increased, the marriage satisfaction scores on the MNSS decreased as shown in TABLE III.

TABLE III

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES OF MEAN  
MNSS SCORES ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF TIMES MOVED

DESCRIPTION	N	$\bar{X}$ MNSS	df	SS	F	p*
no moves	8	106.00				
1 to 4 moves	39	100.03				
5 to 8 moves	54	99.70	4	2545.09	2.32	N.S.*
9 to 12 moves	42	96.67				
more than 12 moves	5	79.60				

\* $p = .059$  which approached significance as the cut off for significance was set at .05.

Hypothesis II - There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to how well they have adjusted to the itinerant ministry. By utilizing the single-classification analysis of variance a significant relationship was found to exist between the marital satisfaction scores on the MNSS and the adjustment to the itinerant system of ministry. TABLE IV shows an  $F$  value of 2.72 which was significant at the .05 level ( $p = .045$ ). This shows that as the positive feelings of adjustment to the itinerant ministry increase, the marriage satisfaction also increases. More than three-fourths of the respondents (81.76%) or 121 reported their adjustment to the itinerant ministry as well adjusted or very well adjusted. Whereas, only 27 respondents (18.24%) reported little



adjustment to the itinerant system or were undecided regarding their adjustment.

TABLE IV

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES OF MEAN MNSS  
SCORES ACCORDING TO ADJUSTMENT TO ITINERANT SYSTEM

DESCRIPTION	N	$\bar{X}$ MNSS	df	SS	F	p
little adjustment	13	93.54				
undecided	14	94.86				
well adjusted	56	95.64	3	2242.30	2.72	.045
very well adjusted	65	102.94				

Hypothesis III - There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to (a) influence in the decision when to move and (b) influence in the decision where to move. Single-classification analysis of variance indicated that there was no significant relationship between perceived marital satisfaction and influence in the decision when or where to move.

Hypothesis IV - There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to the vocation of husband at time of marriage. By utilizing the single-classification analysis of variance no significant relationship was found to exist between MNSS scores and the vocation of the husband at the time of the marriage to the respondent.

Hypothesis V - There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to a self-report of marriage happiness. A significant relationship was found to exist between the scores on the MNSS and the self-report of marriage happiness when tested with the single-classification analysis of variance. TABLE V shows an  $F$  value of 25.22 was obtained which was significant at the .0001 level. The MNSS scores rise as the happiness of the marriage on the self-report rises.

TABLE V

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES OF MEAN MNSS SCORES ACCORDING TO SELF-REPORT OF MARRIAGE HAPPINESS

RESPONSES*	N	$\bar{X}$ MNSS	df	SS	$F$	p
1	1	43.00				
2	7	75.00				
3	12	79.50	4	17304.20	25.22	.0001
4	60	95.88				
5	68	107.59				

\* This is a self-report where "1" represents the least degree of marital happiness and "5" represents the greatest degree of marital happiness.

HYPOTHESIS VI - There will be no significant difference in perceived marital satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores among a selected group of ministers' wives according to the following: (a) age of respondent; (b) present vocation of respondent; (c) educational attainment of respondent; and (d) number of children of the respondent. The single-classification analysis of variance revealed no

significant relationship between the perceived marital satisfaction scores as reflected in the MNSS and the following characteristics: (a) age of respondent; (b) present vocation of respondent; (c) educational attainment of respondent; and (d) number of children of the respondent.

### Pressures Associated With the Ministry

#### As Responses to Open-Ended Questions

When the respondents were asked to list the major pressures that they felt were associated with the ministry, the responses were placed into four general categories by the researcher. The categories dealt with: (a) time demands and pressures; (b) expectations of the wife and the children; (c) financial pressures; and (d) parsonage and the itinerant system pressures. The following is an analysis of those pressures listed by the respondents as responses to the open-ended questions.

#### Time Demands and Pressures

Pressures related to time demands were the most common types of pressures reported with 86 (58.11%) respondents listing this as a problem related to the ministry. As can be seen in TABLE VI, 47 respondents related problems having to do with not enough time for family activities, family special days, time with the children, and time together as a couple. Other time pressures listed dealt with meetings and activities that took the husband away from the home (14 responses); long hours and being on call 24-hours a day, seven days a week (12 responses); disruptive time scheduling (10 responses); and

non-specific general time pressures (21 responses). Also 17 respondents listed a general need for a "day off" once in a while. Since many respondents gave more than one response to the open-ended questions, the frequencies and percentages reported for each category may total more than 100%.

TABLE VI  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE 86 RESPONDENTS  
LISTING TIME DEMANDS AND PRESSURES  
IN RELATION TO THE MINISTRY

DESCRIPTION	N	%*
Not enough time for family, children, special days, and couple time	47	54.65
General, non-specific time demands	21	24.42
Day-off needed	17	19.77
Meetings and activities too demanding on time	14	16.28
Being on 24-hour call (long hours)	12	13.95
Disruptive time schedule, can't plan family activities and times	10	11.63

\*Multiple responses from each respondent resulted in percentages totalling more than 100%.

Statements by the respondents included such feelings as wanting to "have my husband occasionally put the needs of the family ahead of the demands of the congregation," and "people have little or no regard for the minister and his family having personal time regularly for family life purposes." There was also a great deal of concern over the little time for family activities, "weekends with the families," etc., without "feeling guilty about taking time from the church." Meetings and activities being scheduled for the daytime, evenings,

nights, and weekends were also concerns brought out in the responses to the questions of pressures within the itinerant ministry system as a life style.

#### Expectations of the Wife and the Children

Expectations of the family and especially of the wife of the minister were listed by 73 (49.32%) respondents as a major pressure. As shown in TABLE VII, the wife felt certain pressures in her role as the wife of the minister (18 responses), directed toward the area of meeting pre-conceived roles of what ministers' wives should be and should do. Unrealistic expectations felt by the respondents had to do with such things as the congregation expecting the minister's wife to be superhuman (22 responses), to be at every meeting--every time and usually being classified as "other than human." In 13 responses there seemed to be standards for the people in the congregation and standards for the wife of the minister (double standard). As one respondent stated, "fighting the expectations of church members about who and what a minister is, a minister's wife is, and who and what their children should be" is a common pressure.

TABLE VII  
 FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE 73 RESPONDENTS  
 LISTING EXPECTATIONS ON WIVES AND CHILDREN  
 IN RELATION TO THE MINISTRY

EXPECTATION OR PRESSURE	<u>Ministers' Wives</u>		<u>Ministers' Children</u>	
	N	%*	N	%*
Expectation to be "superhuman"	22	30.14	15	20.55
Expectation to do certain things	18	24.66	25	34.25
Pressure of the double standard	13	17.81	11	15.07
Pressure of the "fishbowl" life	12	16.44	9	12.38
Lack of parishoner concern	9	12.33	16	21.92

\* Multiple responses from each respondent resulted in percentages equalling more than 100%.

Pressures on the children are quite often unnoticed by the parents because they are having to deal with their own set of unrealistic expectations. There are pressures on the children to excell (15 responses); always to be in church (25 responses); live exemplary lives (11 responses); etc., One respondent stated it this way, "allowing my children the freedom to be children, not parsonage kids or not little preachers. Why shouldn't my children say a 'bad word' if they hit a thumbnail with a hammer, it hurts them as much as the neighborhood kids in the same situation."

Children and wives of ministers are all under pressure. The most common pressure seems to be in the area of double standards, being

"superhuman," a lack of concern for them as human beings, and the concern over living in a "fishbowl," for all to observe.

#### Financial Pressures

Finances were listed as another general category of pressures by 31 respondents. Low salaries were the most common type of pressures listed in this category. Along with low salaries was the pressure to spend money for certain types of dress and attending meetings they could not afford to attend. There was also a concern in the financial area for retirement security and being disappointed and concerned over not being able to finance their own retirement. Also of concern was the pressure some wives felt when they had to work. They stated they would rather not work, but financially, when considering the financial obligations and pressures, they had to continue to be employed outside the home for pay to help stabilize the family budget.

#### Parsonage and Itinerant System Pressures

Other pressures were categorized as parsonages and the itinerant system. The parsonage had 15 of the 27 listings in this area of pressures. Many respondents felt that the parsonage was the church's "prison for minister's families." The respondents also felt that the furnishings in the parsonage are a problem in that they "do not fit the needs of the family," and the parsonage families "are not free to make our surroundings fit our personality." One respondent stated, "With each move it is harder and harder to accept both the condition and type of furnishings which a committee has deemed appropriate."

Of the 27 respondents listing pressures dealing with the parsonage and itinerant system, 15 dealt with the itinerant system as a life style. Many of these pressures concerned the insecurity of having "no place of our own in which to retire." Other pressures dealt with a lack of opportunity for career opportunities for the respondents and the instability of schools for the children. The general theme of insecurity and having no "roots" was a thread that ran through all the pressures listed by the respondents in the open-ended questions.

The entire questionnaire and the letter of transmittal are located in the APPENDIX. This researcher decided not to compute all parts of the questionnaire with the single-classification analysis of variance at the time of the present study. Therefore, some parts of the questionnaire sent to the ministers' wives will not be found in the analysis of the data.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The purposes of this study were to examine the relationships between perceived marriage satisfaction as reflected in the MNSS scores in a selected group of ministers' wives and the following variables: (1) frequency of mobility in the itinerant ministry; (2) adjustment to the itinerant life style; (3) amount of influence in the mobility decision-making process; (4) vocation of husband at time of marriage; (5) self report of marriage happiness; and (6) background characteristics such as age, number of children, present vocation, and educational attainment of the respondents.

The sample was composed of 148 wives of full-time Elders under appointment for the 1976-1977 Conference Year by the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The respondents' ages ranged from 21 to 68 years, with 81.08% from 31 to 50 years of age. The majority (68.24%) of the respondents had two or three children. A slight majority (51.35%) had been married between 21 and 40 years. Almost half (43.24%) of the respondents had obtained a bachelor's degree and 25.00% had completed two years of college or technical school. Full-time work was reported by 29.05% of the respondents with 83.59% working at a job that required some special skills or special training.

The questionnaire was composed of three parts. The first part

was an information section for securing background data and data regarding the itinerant ministry and its life style. The second part of the questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions for securing information regarding the pressures related to the ministry. The third, and final part, of the questionnaire was the Marital Needs Satisfaction Scale (MNSS) developed by Stinnett, et al. (1970). It was designed to measure marital needs satisfaction and represents the following six basic needs in the marital relationship: (a) love; (b) personality fulfillment; (c) respect; (d) communication; (e) finding meaning in life; and (f) integration of past life experiences.

Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the background variables of: (a) age; (b) number of children; (c) present vocation; and (d) educational attainment. Frequencies and percentages were also used to analyze the itinerant life style variables of: (a) frequency of mobility; (b) adjustment to the itinerant system; (c) amount of influence in the mobility decision-making process; (d) vocation of the husband at time of marriage; and (e) self-report of marriage happiness.

A total score was obtained for the MNSS. Single-classification analysis of variance was utilized to examine the relationship between the MNSS scores and the nine variables relating to the itinerant life style system and background characteristics.

The second part of the questionnaire, the open-ended questions, was analyzed by means of frequencies and percentages on the items listed by the respondents. This frequency and percentage was analyzed after a careful grouping by the researcher of all the responses that the respondents listed to answers to the open-ended questions.

The results of this study were as follows:

(1) There was no statistical significant relationship between the MNSS scores and the number of times moved in the itinerant ministry in a selected group of ministers' wives. Although not significant, but approaching significance, it was found that as the number of times moved under appointment as an itinerant minister's wife increases the marital satisfaction decreases. Those respondents who had moved up to 12 times had remarkably higher mean MNSS scores than those respondents who had moved more than 12 times. Cooke (1973) found that a minister was often moved because of his dissatisfaction with the charge or the charge's dissatisfaction with him. The Bishop may also move ministers because of moral lapse, divorce, bad health, etc., which could possibly cause strain on the marriage relationship, and may not be related directly to the itinerant system.

(2) A significant relationship at the .05 level was found to exist between the mean MNSS scores and the adjustment to the itinerant life style. The better the respondents felt they had adjusted to the itinerant life style, the higher their scores on the MNSS. This finding supports the research of: (a) McAllister, et al. (1973) in that some people can adapt better than others; (b) Burgess, et al. (1963) in that mobility may unify a family and fulfill family goals; and (c) Jones (1973) in that women who have moved often develop skills to cope with mobility. This finding is in contrast to studies by Butler, et al. (1973); Butler, et al. (1970); McAllister, et al. (1973); Jones (1973); and McKain (1973) whose research states many of the negative effects of mobility on women. This finding suggests that there may be a factor in adjustment within the United Methodist Church not studied.

(3) There was no significant relationship between the mean MNSS scores in a selected group of ministers' wives and their influence as to when to move or where to move. This finding may indicate that the respondents have "bought into" the system of itinerancy and realize mobility as a way of life in which the Bishop has the final authority, as opposed to the study by Jones (1973) which found that the happiness of the wife was related to her involvement in the planning stages of the possible move.

(4) There was no significant relationship between the mean MNSS scores in a selected group of ministers' wives and the vocation of their husband at the time of their marriage. This would indicate that the wives of United Methodist Ministers adjust well to a life style of itinerancy in that 44.60% of the husbands of the respondents were in some vocation other than ministry or seminary at the time of their marriage. Those respondents may or may not have been prepared for the life of the itinerant ministry, but must have learned how to cope with it.

(5) Significant at the .0001 level was the relationship between the mean MNSS scores and the self-report of marriage happiness. This further validates the MNSS developed by Stinnett, et al. (1970), where previously all items on the scale had been found to be significantly discriminating at the .001 level between the upper quartile and the lower quartile. This further indicates that the six basic needs in the marital relationship: (a) love; (b) personality fulfillment; (c) respect; (d) communication; (e) finding meaning in life; and (f) integration of past life experiences, as tested by the MNSS, are valid indicators of marriage happiness.

(6) There was no significant relationship between the perceived marital satisfaction scores as reflected in the mean MNSS and the following characteristics: (a) age of respondent; (b) present vocation of respondent; (c) number of children of respondent; and (d) educational attainment of respondent. This would indicate that such personal characteristics as those mentioned earlier (age, etc.) have little to do with marriage satisfaction--at least in the itinerant ministry life style.

The present study indicated several important factors in relation to the itinerant life style of the United Methodist Ministers' Wives in the Oklahoma Annual Conference. The relationships found to be significant (self-report of marriage happiness and adjustment to the itinerant life style) and the relationship that approached significance (the number of times moved under appointment) point to the assumption that the mobility itself is a stressor in the lives of the ministers' wives. The items relating to mobility had an effect on marriage happiness and satisfaction and not the items such as age, vocation, number of children, education, and a number of other items.

As drawn from the statements on pressures it may be concluded that time demands and role expectations are great for ministers and their families. Further research into this area would lend much needed information for the policy making bodies of the church. Such policy making bodies and even the local churches could be made aware of the pressures and begin to work through some of the implications in terms of what they expect from the minister and his family in order to allow the minister to have a more effective ministry.

The respondents stated that even an occasional day off would be

helpful. Perhaps it would be advisable to have a certain number of days off every week and every year, on a flexible schedule (because dying persons can not die always on a "working day"). This would be a time when--if there was an emergency--there would be people from the congregation who could be "para-ministers" and allow the minister and the ministers' families to have their much needed time together.

Expectations, whether necessary role expectations or merely felt role expectations are difficult with which to deal. If the minister's wife "buys" the role expectations directed toward her by those in the congregation and even by other ministers' wives, she would experience fewer problems. The pressure of expectations is experienced when the wife of the minister does not "buy" the role expectations others place on her. This leads to feelings of anger and guilt. In dealing with congregations and other ministers' wives and their expectations of the minister's wife and the minister's children, it might be helpful for the congregation to become aware of the expectations the minister's wife feels. These may be totally unfounded and they may not be, but at least this might begin communications in this area and relieve some of the pressures. Another possible source of action would be a study of "humanness" in which people would be freed from "role expectations" and the double standard that exists in the church between the congregation of people and the parsonage of people.

Further implications could be drawn from the study in the area of the itinerancy. When feelings of adjustment to the system of itinerancy were better, the higher the mean scores on the MNSS. Also the itinerant system was shown to be a factor in marriage happiness in that

as the number of times moved increased, the marriage happiness decreased. The policy makers and the persons in charge of making the appointments (District Superintendents and the Bishop) could begin to consider ways in which they could minister to ministers and their families. They could begin to consider ways in which ministry could be carried out such that ministers would not have to move so many times in their careers in ministry.

One reason found for moving ministers (Cooke, 1973) was to secure an increase in salary. If the salaries were to go from the churches to the conference office and then to the ministers, it would then be possible for a minister to receive a salary commensurate with the experience, expertise, and need which would also consider the cost of living increases, and more importantly, could remain in a church that possibly could not afford to pay that salary from its own resources. This practice could greatly reduce the number of moves for purely financial reasons, which would insure a solid financial base for the family, and would also allow the wife to pursue a career if she so wished. This would also allow the minister and his family to add to or even begin a savings account for their retirement and thus reduce another problem that families of ministers face.

From this study there appears some limitations and the need for further research into the area of itinerancy as a life style of the ministers and their marriage satisfaction. The first limitation of the present study was that out of necessity it was limited to the spouses of "male" ministers, because there are not enough spouses of "female" ministers to do otherwise. Another limitation of the study was that it only used single-classification analysis of variance.

There is a need for further research using multiple-classification analysis of variance. This would relate such items as education to vocation of the wives and such items as adjustment to the itinerant system with the number of times moved. This would add a much needed dimension to the findings of the research presented.

To further develop the present study it would be important to do further investigation using the same questionnaire. It is also suggested that the same questionnaire be mailed only to those ministers' wives whose husbands were moved at the Annual Conference in June. A certain amount of anonymity would be lost, but the results would yield another dimension to the present study.



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**APPENDIXES**

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Department of Family Relations  
and Child Development  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

February 12, 1977

Dear Ministers' Wife,

With more ministers' families experiencing stress today than ever before, many in the church are asking the question, "How can family life in the ministry be made stronger and more satisfying?" The Department of Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University is conducting a state-wide research project which is attempting to find an answer to this question. You have been recommended as a United Methodist Ministers' Wife that would be interested and qualified to help us gain greater understanding of family relationships within the itinerant ministry.

We would like to ask you to participate in this research by completing the enclosed questionnaire. Would you complete the questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, pre-paid envelope by April 1, 1977?

Your answers are anonymous and confidential since you are asked not to put your name on the questionnaire. Please answer each question as honestly as you can. We are not interested in how you think you should answer the questions, but we are interested in what you actually feel and do in your family situation.

It is expected that the information gained from this research will be of benefit to ministers and their families and also of benefit to persons in the helping professions. The results of the research will be available after June 1, 1977. For a copy of the results send a self-addressed, pre-paid envelope (after June 1) to Sandra Creason Cooke, Department of Family Relations, O.S.U., Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074.

We appreciate your participation in this research. It is only through the contribution of persons such as you that we can gain greater understanding of marriage and family relationships within the itinerant ministry.

Sincerely yours,

Sincerely yours,

Althea Wright, Ed.D.  
Associate Professor  
Department of Family Relations  
and Child Development

Sandra Creason Cooke, B.S.  
Graduate Student  
Department of Family Relations  
and Child Development

Oklahoma State University  
College of Home Economics

Department of Family Relations  
and Child Development

Your cooperation in this research project is greatly appreciated. Your contribution in a research project of this type helps us to gain greater knowledge and insight into family relationships.

Please check or fill in answers as appropriate to each question. Your answers are confidential and anonymous since you do not have to put your name on the questionnaire. Please be as honest in your answers as possible. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. What is your husband's status in the Oklahoma Conference?  
 Elder \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deacon \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lay Minister \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is he assigned as a:  
 Full-time minister \_\_\_\_\_  
 Part-time minister \_\_\_\_\_  
 Connectional minister \_\_\_\_\_  
 District Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_  
 other \_\_\_\_\_ (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_
3. If your husband is assigned to a charge, how many churches does he serve?  
 one \_\_\_\_\_  
 two \_\_\_\_\_  
 three \_\_\_\_\_  
 more than three \_\_\_\_\_
4. If your husband has graduated from seminary where did he attend?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many times have you moved with your husband under appointment by the Bishop? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How well do you feel you have adjusted to the itinerant system? (Please circle the amount of adjustment.)  
 not at all      little      undecided      well      very well  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5
7. How much influence do you think you have in the decision as to WHEN to move? (Please circle how much influence you have.)  
 none              little              undecided              some              much  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5

8. How much influence do you think you have in the decision as to WHERE to move? (Please circle how much influence you have.)
- |      |        |           |      |      |
|------|--------|-----------|------|------|
| none | little | undecided | some | much |
| 1    | 2      | 3         | 4    | 5    |
9. How long have you been married to your present husband? \_\_\_\_\_
10. If this is not your first marriage, was your previous marriage ended by:
- divorce \_\_\_\_\_
- death \_\_\_\_\_
11. At the time of your marriage to your husband was he:
- in seminary \_\_\_\_\_
- in the ministry \_\_\_\_\_
- in some other vocation \_\_\_\_\_
- (please specify what vocation \_\_\_\_\_)
12. Your age \_\_\_\_\_
13. Who earns the greatest proportion of income for your family?
- husband \_\_\_\_\_
- you \_\_\_\_\_
- other \_\_\_\_\_
14. Do you work outside the home for pay?
- yes \_\_\_\_\_
- no \_\_\_\_\_
15. If you work outside the home for pay do you work
- full-time \_\_\_\_\_
- part-time \_\_\_\_\_
16. If you work outside the home for pay, describe your employment.
17. Residence:
- on a farm \_\_\_\_\_
- town under 25,000 \_\_\_\_\_
- city of 25,000 - 49,999 \_\_\_\_\_
- city of 50,000 - 99,999 \_\_\_\_\_
- city of over 100,000 \_\_\_\_\_
18. Do you live in a parsonage
- yes \_\_\_\_\_
- no \_\_\_\_\_

19. Is the parsonage  
completely furnished \_\_\_\_\_  
partly furnished \_\_\_\_\_  
unfurnished \_\_\_\_\_
20. Approximately what percentage of the furnishings, presently in use in the parsonage, are owned by your family?  
0 - 9% \_\_\_\_\_  
10 - 24% \_\_\_\_\_  
25 - 49% \_\_\_\_\_  
50 - 74% \_\_\_\_\_  
75 - 100% \_\_\_\_\_
21. What is the highest educational level you have attained?  
6th grade \_\_\_\_\_  
9th grade \_\_\_\_\_  
high school \_\_\_\_\_  
2 years of college \_\_\_\_\_  
2 years of trade or business school \_\_\_\_\_  
bachelors degree \_\_\_\_\_  
masters degree \_\_\_\_\_  
doctorate degree \_\_\_\_\_
22. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
23. What are the ages of your children? \_\_\_\_\_
24. Please rate the happiness of your marriage on the following 5 point scale (5 representing the greatest degree of happiness and 1 representing the least degree of happiness). Circle the point which most nerely describes your degree of happiness.  
1 2 3 4 5
25. What would you most like to change about your marriage relationship?
26. What is most satisfying about your marriage relationship?

27. What do you feel has contributed most to making your marriage a satisfying one?

28. What do you consider to be the major pressures (associated with the ministry) on your family life?

29. Now we would like to find out how satisfied you are with your mate's performance of certain marriage roles at the present time. Please answer each question by circling the most appropriate letter at the right of each item.

Circle VS if you feel very satisfied; circle S if you feel satisfied; circle U if you feel undecided; circle US if you feel unsatisfied; and circle VUS if you feel very unsatisfied.

How satisfied are you with your mate in each of the following areas?

- |    |  |    |   |   |    |     |
|----|--|----|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. | Providing a feeling of security in me.   | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 2. | Expressing affection toward me.  | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 3. | Giving me an optimistic feeling toward life.   | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 4. | Expressing a feeling of being emotionally close to me.                               | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 5. | Bringing out the best qualities in me.   | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 6. | Helping me to become a more interesting person.                                      | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 7. | Helping me to continue to develop my personality.                                    | VS | S | U | US | VUS |
| 8. | Helping me to achieve my individual potential (become what I am capable of becoming) | VS | S | U | US | VUS |



9.	Being a good listener.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
10.	Giving me encouragement when I am discouraged.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
11.	Accepting my differences.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
12.	Avoiding habits which annoy me.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
13.	Letting me know how he really feels about something.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
14.	Trying to find satisfactory solutions to our disagreements.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
15.	Expressing disagreements with me openly and honestly.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
16.	Letting me know when he is displeased with me.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
17.	Helping me to feel that life has meaning.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
18.	Helping me to feel needed.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
19.	Helping me to feel that my life is serving a purpose.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
20.	Helping me to obtain satisfactions and pleasure in daily activities.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
21.	Giving me recognition for my past accomplishments.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
22.	Helping me to feel that my life has been important.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
23.	Helping me to accept my past life experiences as good and rewarding.	VS	S	U	US	VUS
24.	Helping me to accept myself despite my shortcomings.	VS	S	U	US	VUS

VITA<sup>2</sup>

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Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: MINISTERS' WIVES: MARITAL SATISFACTION AND THE  
ITINERANT LIFE STYLE

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, July 22, 1947, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Creason. Married to Marvin Lee Cooke, December 23, 1967. Mother of one son, Francis Wesley.

Education: Graduated from Midwest City High School, Midwest City Oklahoma, in May 1965; attended Oklahoma State University, 1965-66; received Bachelor of Science degree in Education with a major in Home Economics and a minor in English from Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma, in May, 1969; enrolled in master's degree program at Oklahoma State University, 1975; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1977.

Professional Experience: Teacher, Oklahoma City Public Schools, 1969-70; teacher, Center School District, Kansas City, Missouri, 1970-72; Administrative Assistant to the Long Range Task Force of the Graduate Seminary, Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma, 1974; Administrative Secretary to the Dean of the Graduate Seminary, Phillips University, 1974-75; preschool teacher, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1975-77.

Professional Organizations: Member Omicron Nu, National Home Economics Honor Society; member Tulsa Area Association on Children Under Six; certified teacher of Human Sexuality, the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1973-present; Chairperson, Senior High Sexuality Committee, the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church; member Young Adult Sexuality Committee, United Methodist Church; member Christian Educators Fellowship, United Methodist Church; member of the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Placement and Counseling Services.