THE FAMILY AS PERCEIVED BY DIVORCE-EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND RECOGNITION OF THESE PERCEPTIONS BY TEACHERS

by

NANCY O'DONNELL

Bachelor of Arts
Panhandle State University
Goodwell, Oklahoma
1963

Master of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1980

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
May, 1988

THE FAMILY AS PERCEIVED BY DIVORCE-
EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND RECOG-
NITION OF THESE PERCEPTIONS
BY TEACHERS

Thesis Approved:

Thesis Adviser

Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This person, mother, teacher, and student is indebted to the many people who have participated in the fulfillment of these multiple roles.

For the direction, the encouragement, the revelations, and the understanding of things human, the writer, student, and person expresses sincere gratitude to Dr. Russell L. Dobson, major adviser. Appreciation is also expressed to the other committee members, Dr. Judith E. Dobson, Dr. Kenneth St. Clair, and Dr. Randall Koetting, for sharing their wisdom throughout the doctoral program.

The mother, teacher, and student wishes to thank her mother, Jo Ann Walker, who unselfishly contributed time and energy to the many tasks that enabled this project to become a reality. Also, appreciation is expressed to Joey and Debbi whose support and encouragement gave their mother the strength to continue.

Finally, gratitude and compassion are extended to the teacher's many students who taught this educator to look beyond what appears to be and discover the uniqueness of a becoming child.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Rationale for the Study	1
	Purpose of the Study	8
	Basic Assumptions	10
	Definition of Terms	11
	Limitations of the Study	11
II.	REVIEW OF THE FAMILY	13
	Purpose of the Family	13
	Definition of the Family	16
	Structure of the Family	22
	Function of the Family	31
	Summary	53
III.	THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHANGING FAMILY AND THE DIVORCE-EXPERIENCED CHILD	56
	The Changing Family	56
	The Divorce-Experienced Child	68
	Summary	78
IV.	DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY	80
	Introduction	80
	Methodology and Theory	80
	Sample	82
	Data Collection	84
	Interviews	88
	Divorce-Experienced Child Subjects	88
	Related-Teacher Subjects	94
	Data Analysis	96
V.	RESULTS	99
	Definition of the Family	99
	Structure of the Family	105
	Characteristics of Family Members	112
	Function of the Family	115
	Purpose of the Family	126

Chapter Page

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 128

Summary..... 128
Conclusions..... 132
Children..... 132
Teachers..... 134
Recommendations..... 135
Pedagogical Considerations..... 136

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 140

APPENDIXES 152

APPENDIX A - PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM..... 153

APPENDIX B - INTERVIEW PROCEDURE WITH CHILDREN AND EXCERPT FROM VERBATIM TEXT..... 155

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

I. Demographics of the Child Sample..... 85

II. Demographics of the Teacher Sample..... 86

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Study

A perusal of educational literature demonstrates that among educators there is an ever-increasing tendency to favor current curriculum mandates, popular reform movements, and standardized pedagogical practices that concentrate on cognition while virtually ignoring affective concerns. The result is a mechanized state of affairs that refutes the sensitivity of the learner to societal influences, denies the uniqueness and value of each child's personalized perceptions of the world, and eliminates the recognition of genuine interpersonal student/teacher relationships as valid concerns for those educators committed to the principles of equity and excellence. This view of recent educational trends is corroborated by Eisner (1985):

> Our infatuation with performance objectives, criterion-referenced testing, competency-based education, and the so-called basics lends itself to standardization, operationalism, and behaviorism as the virtually exclusive concern of schooling. Such a focus is, I believe far too narrow and not in the best interests of students, teachers, or the society within which students live. Empathy, playfulness, surprise, ingenuity, curiosity, and individuality must count for something in schools that aim to contribute to a social democracy (p. 363).

Clearly, Eisner delineates the components of schooling that are receiving attention and concern in a nationally proclaimed effort to meet the needs of human students and a human society. Yet, the human element is not a central focus or consideration evidenced by the manifestations of the prevalent, dominating pedagogical theory. Further, Schwab (1969) suggests that educators critically view the limitations of applying the theoretical notions of the social scientists without dealing with the particular reality of the moment. He states:

> If then, theory is to be used well in the determination of curricular practice, it requires a supplement. It requires arts which bring a theory to its application; first, arts which identify the disparities between real theory and theoretic representation; second, arts which modify the theory in the course of its application, in light of the discrepancies; and third, arts which devise ways of taking account of the many aspects of the real thing which the theory does not take into account (p. 12).

Often, current practices in the schooling of the young are not taking into account the many aspects of the real thing, the human student and the multiplicity of factors that influence growth and development of unique, living creations.

Because of this growing movement toward a mechanistic, anti-person posture, there exists a need to recognize the relationship between the cognitive and affective aspects of learning, the extent of familial influences on children's well-being, and the significance of understanding children's perceptions of those matters relevant to their per-

sonal worlds. This view is supported by May (1969) as he states: "There is no such thing as truth or reality for a living human being except as he participates in it, is conscious of it, has some relationship to it" (p. 17). Comer (1988) implores educators to heighten concern about the affective processes and the significant role of interpersonal relationships. He contends:

> Teaching and learning are too often considered mechanical processes. This view, reinforced by the emergence and growth of technology, sees students minds as computers. Teachers input information; students process the input and respond.
>
> Despite the lessons of John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, and others who have recognized the importance of feelings and relationships in fostering student growth and development, this mechanical view of the learning process has prevailed (pp. 34-35).

Comer (1988) provides a clear picture of the widely accepted movement to regard learning as a mechanical cognitive function void of involvement, relationships, and interpersonal development.

Despite the educational community's current preoccupation with the implementation of an industrial model (McDonald, 1965), the vivid fact remains that teaching is ultimately about learning and learning occurs only with living subjects rather than assembly-line molded objects. All learners have come to the teachers from families which have provided the materials, methodology, philosophy, and environment for the learner's initial experiences with learning. In fact, the family was the

child's first teacher and various characteristics of the learner were extensively patterned after those of the family (Pringle, 1974).

In recognition of the family's great influence, it is vital that the teacher understand the child's perception of the family and the family functions that have impact on the child's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Rubin (1974) recognized the value of understanding children's perceptions when he offered educators the following instructional advice:

> Children's perceptions, and the emotions they attach to these perceptions, once recognized by the teacher can be used with telling effect to better understand the child and to invent learning activities that facilitate cognitive growth, that enhance emotional stability, and that strike at the very heart of what the child considers relevant (p. 15).

Preceding the school encounter, experiences within the family have shaped the child's conception of self and the world. Now as formal schooling enters the child's domain, the interrelatedness of the school experiences and the family experiences have profound influence on continued development. Continually, researchers stress the sensitivity to children's personal lives that must accompany the designing and the implementation of all aspects of the educational program. Dobson and Dobson (1976) contend:

> The first step in building or designing an educational program that is sensitive and relevant to youngsters' personal lives is to identify the needs, interests, and concerns of those youngsters. As one observes the heavy concentration that has been placed on cognitive

> learning at the expense of affect, one can question the commitment of educators to the above stated premise. To declare that there is one set of needs that are unique to all children would be as ridiculous as to sit idly by and never assume any professional expertise concerning needs of young children (p. 4).

Furthermore, Montessori (1970) urged educators to recognize the uniqueness of each child's view of the world. She stated:

> The child who loves wakes not only to the morning but also to his father and mother who sleep too much and often are asleep throughout their lives. We all have a tendency to sleep through things, yet, with the coming of a child, there is a new being who awakens us and keeps us awake with means that are not ours, a being who operates in a way different from our way and who appears every morning as if to say, "Look, there is another life; you can live better than you do" (p. 13).

The child's perception of living within the family world is central to understanding meanings the child attaches to various aspects of life.

The family, however defined in different cultures at different times, has generally provided the setting in which children experience growth and development until young adulthood and often beyond. Our laws and social institutions have reflected recognition that the family has provided children with better opportunities than any alternative society might advocate (Anthony and Koupernik, 1970). However, in the past two decades, sweeping, expanding influences have altered the once traditional family structure in which children have received 'preschool' institutional experience. This was evident in the fact

that in 1950, seven out of ten families in the United States consisted of a full-time working father, a stay-at-home mother, and at least one school-age child. In the early 1980's, only one family in seven conformed to this pattern (Yankelovich, 1981). Among the agents of family transformation were cohabitation, desertion, single parenthood by choice, and the divorce, which appeared to be the most frequent and most influential force instigating change in the lives of children. Thus, it is apparent that the child's first teacher, the family, has continued in a period of radical modification (Goldstein and Solnit, 1984).

In this decade, the American family unit has been rapidly changing in structure, function, and effect as the result of a continually mounting rate of divorce. Recently, the National Education Association (1987) supported the reality of this type of family change by reporting:

> The U.S. Census Bureau projects that half of all marriages will end in divorce.... and teachers report that children bring the emotional trauma of divorce to school.
>
> In a 1985 poll of teachers conducted by Learning 86 magazine, 92 percent of the respondents said they have to give students whose parents are recently separated or divorced either a lot or a moderate amount of extra attention. Only 8 percent said these children need just a little extra attention. Eighty percent of the teachers polled said teachers should take an active role in helping children who are experiencing emotional difficulties. And 81 percent said a family-life curriculum could help (p. 31).

Although divorce is continually identified as the most prevalent and influential agent of the family's transformation, the divorce-experienced child's perception of the family remains virtually ignored by most researchers.

Previous research concentrated on varying family changes in a multitude of areas but Serot and Teevan (1966) suggested that this research does not reflect the whole of reality in that. . . "they have failed to take into account the fact that the child reacts to his perception of the situation and not directly to the situation itself" (p. 377). Support for this premise comes from Carl Rogers (1951) in that . . . "the best vantage point for understanding behavior is from the internal frame of reference of the individual himself" (p. 494). Thus, it is the divorce-experienced child's perception of the changing family structure, roles and functions that would offer new insights into family effect.

To understand the child, to build interpersonal relationships, and to consider affective influences, teachers need to recognize and comprehend the child's perceptions of this influential, social, teaching entity know as the family. Van Manen (1986) offers support for the recognition of the total existence of children and for the influence of adult/child personal relationships:

> A teacher is a child-watcher. That does not mean a teacher can see a child 'purely' without being influenced by the philosophic view that teacher holds of what it means to be human. One cannot adequately observe children without reflecting on

> the way one looks at them. All I am saying here is that a teacher must observe a child not as a passerby might, or a policeman, or a friend. A teacher must observe a child pedagogically. That means being a child-watcher who keeps in view that total existence of the developing child.
>
> In some sense, the most personal relationship between adult and child is the parenting relationship. Only a father and mother can watch a child with truly fatherly and motherly eyes. But a teacher too enters a very personal relationship with a child. At the same time, there is a distancing which makes the teacher a special pedagogic observer. By knowing <u>this child</u>, a teacher can hold back superficial judgment about him or her. The word 'observing' has etymological connections to 'preserving, saving, regarding, protecting' (pp. 18-19).

Teachers should establish those interpersonal relationships with students that allow for recognition of students' perceptions of matters that influence behavior, growth, performance, and being.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to examine the divorce-experienced child's perception of the family and the related teacher's recognition of this perception. Specifically, this study sought to determine the divorce-experienced child's perception of the changing family's purpose, structure and membership, and function. After identification and description of these variables as perceived by the child, the study sought to examine the related teacher's recognition and understanding of the divorce-experienced child's perception in each of the previously mentioned dimensions salient to the family concept.

By examining the divorce-experienced children's perceptions, the study may directly influence teachers to reexamine various curricular issues. By examining the teachers' recognition of the divorce-experienced children's perceptions, the study may indirectly influence teachers to acknowledge the role of interpersonal relationships and to include sensitivity, relevance, compassion and empathy in increasing proportions when contemplating educational matters. By examining the divorce-experienced children's perceptions together with the teachers' recognition of these perceptions, the study should heighten an awareness of the connectedness between teachers and students. As a result of this study, teachers should recognize that the formal or informal data provided by experience inevitably alters human perception and therefore, the representations of reality that are constructed. Consequently, perception should be viewed as an evolutionary phenomenon continually influencing educational practices.

The words of Berger (1985) offer encouragement and compassion for the pursuit of this study:

> The sociologist will occupy himself with matters others regard as too sacred or as too distasteful for dispassionate investigation. He will find rewarding the company of priests or of prostitutes, depending not on his personal preferences but on the questions he happens to be asking at the moment. He will also concern himself with matters that others may find much too boring. He will be interested in the human interaction that goes with warfare or with great intellectual discoveries, but also in the relations between people employed in a restaurant or between a group of little girls playing with

> their dolls. His main focus of attention is not the ultimate significance of what men do, but the action in itself, as another example of the infinite richness of human conduct. . . .
>
> People who like to avoid shocking discoveries, who prefer to believe that society is just what they were taught in Sunday School, who like the safety of the rules and the maxims of what Alfred Schuetz has called the "world-taken-for granted," should stay away from sociology. People who feel no temptation before closed doors, who have no curiosity about human beings, who are content to admire scenery without wondering about the people who live in those houses on the other side of that river, should probably also stay away from sociology. They will find it unpleasant or, at any rate, unrewarding. People who are interested in human beings only if they can change, convert or reform them should also be warned, for they will find sociology much less useful than they hoped. And people whose interest is mainly in their own conceptual constructions will do just as well to turn to the study of little white mice. Sociology will be satisfying, in the long run, only to those who can think of nothing more entrancing than to watch men and to understand things human. . . . (pp. 8-9).

Thus, the purposes of this study are centered within the realm of human relationships and human perceptions in an effort to observe children and to simply, understand things that are human.

Basic Assumptions

The basic assumptions for this study are:

1. Educational planning and practice are affected by the recognition of children's perceptions of reality.

2. Divorce is an experience which directly influences the child's total development.

3. Each child is unique in the response to divorce based on an interwoven set of individual characteristics.

4. The school-age child's development is directly influenced by the nature and depth of the student/teacher interpersonal relationship.

Definition of Terms

In this study, several terms used have unique meanings. A consistent interpretation of these terms will be provided by implementation of the following definitions:

1. Related-teacher - The teacher who is presently working on a daily basis with the divorce-experienced child within a self-contained classroom.

2. Divorce-experienced child - The child who has been involved in the disruption of the family environment as a result of having parents who have obtained a legal divorce.

3. Nuclear family - The core unit of kinship, consisting of husband, wife and their unmarried children.

4. Extended family - A household consisting of a nuclear family and various other relatives.

Limitations of the Study

Application of the findings of this research should be made with due recognition of the limitations of the study. The uniqueness of each child in terms of personality traits, tolerance for stress, adaptive behaviors and areas of competence must be viewed as factors influencing perceptions. Therefore, at best portions of this research can

only imply probabilities and possibilities rather than absolute generalizations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE FAMILY

This review of family literature is offered as a foundation for understanding the total family concept and as a point of reference for understanding the recent family modifications. The purpose of the family, the definition of the family, the structure of the family, and the function of the family are discussed in this chapter.

Purpose of the Family

The family has long been extolled as the primary and basic institution of our social structure. In fact, many sociologists insist that the family is indispensable and that no society can survive without this social entity (Appel, 1985; Kephart, 1977). For ages before the massive volumes were written and the multiple issues were contemplated regarding the nature of the collective life, the family continued to function as a viable social unit, providing for continuance and maintenance of human life and serving as the pivotal point for the transfer of culture from one generation to another (Anshen, 1949). The univer-

sal nature of the family concept was explicated by Sussman (1974) as a social system existing throughout the world although varying in preferred form from society to society.

The centrality of the family to human society was stated by Reed (1932) as she directed attention to the unique contributions and characteristics of this social unit. She considered the family as the only acceptable agency for the biological perpetuation of each generation, for the caring of the young, and for the passing on of the fundamentals of civilization. The family was described as inextricably intertwined with other social institutions in such a way that each influenced the form and development of the other. It was concluded that any fundamental change in the family affected every other aspect of society and that, in turn, the family was conditioned by societal changes.

Thus, the family was viewed as an intrinsic, valuable and functional instrument of society. Support for this position was strengthened as Nye (1967) stated:

> There is little doubt that the institution of the family is <u>here to stay</u>, not because this basic unit of social structure is valuable per se, but because it is instrumental in maintaining life itself, in shaping the infant into the person, and in providing for the security and affectional needs of people of all ages (p. 248).

The family unit appeared to serve purposes, fulfill needs, and provide for resources that no other social institution could attempt to duplicate successfully. Of all the basic institutions of humankind, the family may be the most remarkable in its continual quest to provide the foun-

dation of socialization that prepares its members to participate satisfactorily in other institutionalized areas of society. Adams (1971) commented on the remarkable nature of the family enterprise when he delineated the home, the church, and the school as the three great institutions of the community. He believed the family to be the social institution charged with relating the individual to all other institutionalized aspects of society.

Therefore, the strategic significance of the family was recognized to be found in its mediating function in the larger social structure. The value of the family in the perpetuation of society was discussed by Goode (1964) as he reported:

> A society will not survive unless its many needs are met, such as the production and distribution of food, protection of the young and old, the sick and the pregnant, conformity to the law, the socialization of the young, and so on. Only if individuals are motivated to serve the needs of the society will it be able to survive (p. 3).

The prominence, significance, and ultimate value of the family unit to the longevity and perseverance of civilized society has continually been attested by the experts. Even the quality of the existing society appeared to hinge on the accomplishments of the family institution (Goode, 1964; Arnold, 1985; Biller and Solomon; 1986).

Further, Anshen (1949) commented on the family purpose by examining its fundamental state and its primary mission in the unification of the various aspects of society. The family unit was viewed as a basic indicator of the

strength, stability and general character of civilization and consequently of its regard for humanity.

Undoubtedly, the human family constitutes an intrinsic, indispensable element of society. This essential nature and purpose of the family was further characterized as Kahn and Kamerman (1982) stated: "Clearly, the family is and remains a central societal institution, a major factor in the life chances of children" (p. 226). Further, White (1975) supported the indubitable value of this institution when he delegated the family as "the first and most fundamental educational delivery system" (p. 4). Moreover, Foote and Cottrell (1955) concluded: "Whether one's interest. . . is in influencing single persons or whole societies, the point of greatest leverage for intervention is the family" (p. 14).

The magnitude and dimensions of the realm of the family influence have been attested and proclaimed by scholars for decades of history and generations of family life. Clearly, the family is the pinnacle, as well as the hub and the generator to which society at large must acknowledge dependence and reliance for sustenance, perpetuation, and ultimately even worthy existence.

Definition of the Family

Although the worth of this social entity was relatively indisputable, the definition of the family has not found universal agreement but has been offered from

many points of view (Kahn and Kamerman, 1982; Bricklin and Bricklin, 1970). The scholars have created multiple definitions of the family structure and function along with varying perceptions regarding the nature of the modern family.

Caplan (1978) concentrated on the family as a support system when he defined this primary social group as

> Collector and disseminator of information about the world; feedback guidance system; source of ideology; guide and mediator in problem-solving; source of practical service and concrete aid; haven for rest and recuperation; reference and control group source and validator of identity; and contributor to emotional mastery (p. 168).

The U.S. Bureau of the Census (1980) was more concerned with a formal, legal definition of the family. This government agency defined the family as "a group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, and residing together" (p. 123).

The symbolic interaction conceptual approach to defining the family was preferred by many sociologists who believed that this type of emotional and intellectual communication through verbal or nonverbal means was necessary to maintain a group to know the roles expected by a society or group, and to transmit folkways and mores. Therefore, this view contended that the family should be defined as a unity of interacting personalities (Mead, 1934; James, 1890; Cooley, 1902). Burgess (1926) commented on the symbolic interaction concept of the family when he described the

family as a living, changing, growing unit of interacting personalities.

Burgess, Locke, and Thomas (1971) contended that a reasonable definition of the family must consider what is common to the numerous and varied human groups to which the term family has been acceptably applied. These writers studied families from all times and all places in an effort to discover those characteristics which are common to the human family and which differentiate the family unit from other social groups.

Thus, Burgess et al. (1971) have offered the following definition of the family based on the delineation of group characteristics:

> The family may now be defined as a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood, or adoption; constituting a single household; interacting and communicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister; and creating and maintaining a common culture (p. 7).

Another vantage point from which to derive a definition of the family is suggested by the sociologists who consider the structure and function as basic components essential to clearly defining this social group (Murdock, 1949; Merton, 1957; Davis, 1950). Reiss (1971) combined his research regarding structure and function as essential elements in considering the family concept to produce a definition of family that he contended has universal application. He stated:

> Thus, although the biological tie is most often present, it is the social definition of who is 'descended' from whom or who 'belongs' to whom that carries the most weight. If that definition includes people who are not biologically related, these people are still viewed as kin (1971, p. 19).

Coale (1965) and Radcliffe-Brown (1959) supported this definition as they stressed that the nuturance function must result in an internalized set of norms defining the obligations of kin to their newborn child and the failure of any one generation to provide this nuturance would severely limit the ability of its children to grow into adults who could function in the society. Moreover, Reiss (1971) explained the severity of the nurturant socialization component as he contended that the nurturant function was essential to the survival of a society.

Thus, the nurturant socialization concept would appear to be widely accepted and an essential factor inherent to the definition of the family.

Murdock (1949) attempted to organize a conception of the human family and kinship through his research involving 250 societies. At that time, Murdock contended that the nuclear family was universal and that it had four essential functions. Later, Spencer (1976) joined Murdock in these contentions and listed the central functions of the family as: (a) providing for regular, stable, sexual access and reproduction; (b) socializing the children; (c) protecting the children; and (d) providing for affectionate interpersonal relationships" (p. 349). Spencer upholds the propos-

als of Murdock and Reiss in that the matters of structure and function are essential to assimilating an appropriate and accurate definition of the family.

A concise, universally acceptable definition of the family has been difficult to construct, and certainly, a current definition has been affected by the fact that the American family now appears to be in a state of flux. A more liberal view by the courts coupled with sweeping changes in the law have drastically altered in a variety of ways the structure of the family and as a consequence, the family functions. Henry (1981) reported the fact that parents and children can actually legally divorce each other in the state of Connecticut. Family responsibilities were legally disengaged by 105 parents and teenagers in 1980 as a result of this law. Castillo (1981) reported the entanglement of the legal system with family matters that resulted in the following variations of both family structure and function:

> A Pennsylvania judge allowed a twenty-three year-old woman to change her family name and be adopted by a couple not related to her, in spite of objections by her parents. A New York City justice let one adult homosexual man legally adopt another. A woman in California won the right to prevent her husband from giving their children his surname. Grandparents in Pennsylvania won custody of a fourteen-year-old girl in a court fight with the girl's parents (p. E9).

Moreover, Conklin (1984) explicated family variation of this decade by adding increasing rates of divorce, illegitimacy, and later marriages by young adults to the list of prominent agents of family change. Even though

Conklin acknowledged full recognition of the alteration of the traditionally defined and accepted family structure and function, his research offered a definition of the family that included a socially defined set of relationships between at least two people related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Further, the structure-functionalists' assertions regarding the family as a social system have been modified by the work of Hill (1971) and Aldous (1970) to produce the following characteristics:

> (a) family members occupy various positions which are in a state of interdependence, that is, a change in the behavior of one member leads to a change in the behavior of other members; (b) the family is a relatively closed, boundary-maintaining unit; (c) the family is an equilibrium-seeking and adaptive organization; (d) the family is a task performing unit that meets both the requirements of external agencies in the society, and the internal needs and demands of its members (Hill, p. 305).

Further espousing the view of the family as a social system, Hill (1971) emphasized the interrelatedness of parts which exists in the family association. He believed the idea of family system to indicate a strong state of interdependency involving interacting positions and reciprocal roles. Therefore, the change in one part of the system brought about changes in other parts.

Thus, two dimensions of the family system appear salient to understanding this intimate social group. Continually, acceptable definitions of the family have varied somewhat but the structure and function dimensions have in-

variably surfaced as essential to the elucidation of the family concept.

Structure of the Family

According to Bales (1951) as humans interacted, they often developed a group structure that gave their relationship meaning, predictability and stability. Moreover, Hare (1976) and McGrath (1978) contended that the characteristics of a group structure could be noted by consideration of the group's boundaries, size, pattern of interaction, and decision-making process.

Conklin (1984) has suggested that groups such as the family unit could be distinguished from the social environment by considering the group as having a defined membership, a set of interrelated roles, common norms and an identity. He contended that repeated interaction and communication must exist for groups to survive. Through this interaction human groups then developed a distinct feeling of becoming a unit with a unique identity. Therefore, in an effort to maintain this group cohesiveness, these group units constructed and defended their own boundaries. Conklin (1984) commented on the boundary maintenance structural characteristic of groups: "Some boundaries are natural, such as those based on territorial location, but other boundaries are more arbitrary" (p. 155).

If the family is viewed as a boundary maintaining system, then it follows that the family when coping with internal matters would have relied on family linkages to resolve its issues. The shared expectations that linked family members resulted in a network of relationships. While these shared expectations and consequent relationships tended to unite the family, they also served to differentiate the family unit from other associations (Hill, 1971; Schneider and Homans, 1985; Reiss, 1971).

Thus, the family group was concerned with boundary maintenance and was likewise influenced by the size of the group structure. Simmel (1950) and Blau (1977) suggested that the number of members in a group was an important structural characteristic that influenced the behavior of that group's members in a variety of ways.

Further, Conklin (1984) suggested the impact of a group of two as he stated: "A 'dyad', or group of two people, is fragile, because the group ceases to exist if one person leaves" (p. 155). Thus, the family of two may be deeply and intimately intertwined but may be equally concerned about the fragile nature of the relationship. Reciprocity may enhance the relationship but the addition of other members may drastically alter personal interactions.

Caplow (1969) contended that the triad, or group of three people, offered the possibility of coalitions and complicated new relationship dimensions. Coalitions could

be formed that would virtually establish two members in conflict with the remaining member. However, conflict resolution was enhanced by the potential of a third member serving as mediator. In addition, stability could be intensified by the realization that even if one member were eliminated the group could continue to exist.

Therefore, the size of the group appeared to be an influential characteristic of group structure which ultimately influenced group functioning.

Together with boundary maintenance and size of the group, the pattern of interaction, roles, and decision-making process were considered as important aspects of the group structure. Therefore, the family group because of its rapidly changing age composition and frequently changing size coupled with its boundary maintenance preference, must be concerned with its development of an equilibrium seeking and adaptive process within the structure (Burgess, 1968).

Hill (1971) has offered a scheme that progressed from equilibrium to disequilibrium to reorganization to new equilibrium in order to delineate the structural process within the successful family system. He contended:

> The family as a system of interdependent actors develops a network of interaction patterns over time in conformity to shared norms. Through these patterns it performs the tasks that enable it to meet the needs of its members and to fulfill the requirements of society (p. 307).

Within Hill's conception of equilibrium maintenance, the family system could function and adapt along a wide

range of possibilities. The family structure could survive as long as the system kept the interaction within equilibrium to disequilibrium to reorganization to new equilibrium range. It was only when the point was reached that a family member chose alienation of other members and withdrew from the system that the network was disrupted. As a result of withdrawal, the development of a new network within the system was prevented and the family structure ultimately destroyed.

Thus, the family structure must be viewed as an adaptive, equilibrium-seeking system, conscious of changes wrought by size composition, and concerned with boundary maintenance (Hill and Hansen, 1960). Recognition of the focus and nature of the family structure is a prerequisite to understanding the human relevance and societal significance of the family functions, as both aspects of the family system are delicately intertwined in the essence of this complicated social organism.

The structural and functional aspects of the family must be viewed concurrently when considering the integral, yet somewhat abstract notion of family roles. The concept of roles within the family was first proposed by the sociologist W.I. Thomas (1923). He suggested that the family ultimately defined and determined the behavior expected by its members and, consequently, the roles played in the changing episodes of family life.

Roles have been defined in a variety of ways. Adams (1971) suggested that expectations, personality, and experimentation joined forces to create emergent patterns of expected behavior. Then, these behavior patterns resulted in role assignment and definition.

Further, Parsons (1962) was concerned with the role differentiation that resulted from the economic production function becoming largely removed from the family setting. Parsons was sensitive to the shifting of role assignments in families within a modern industrial community. He contended that if the elimination of one family function resulted in differentiation roles, it would follow that changes in other functions would yield like results (Parsons, 1962).

Parsons and Bales (1955) collaborated an interest in small group theory to delineate two distinct categories of leadership highly visible in task-oriented groups. Zelditch (1955) contended that the same differentiation of leadership roles eventually developed in the nuclear family. Thus, Parsons, Bales, and Zelditch concluded that in any small, task-oriented group, including the family, both an instrumental leader and an expressive leader existed. It was Zelditch (1955) who contended that in most societies, the husband served as the instrumental leader, governing the family's financial matters and the wife served as the expressive leader controlling morale and internal conflict.

Following and modifying these contentions, Rossi (1968) explained that the role differentiation concept was now becoming usurped by the role blurring concept of men's and women's family roles. She expressed a view of parents as instrumental or expressive leaders:

> It would not surprise many investigators of the family if women scored higher than men on the expressive dimension and men scored higher on the instrumental dimension of the parental role. Yet quite the opposite might actually result (p. 39).

Therefore, it would appear evident that the family's orientations, experiences, and expectations defined the roles of family members.

Undoubtedly, through family interactions, the father, the mother, and the children jointly participated in role definitions. This learning of role expectations was vividly illustrated by viewing the Amish families. In an extensive research effort, Kuhn (1954) concluded that the Amish children were expected to assume the roles of farmer and housewife, and the Amish parents were highly successful in transferring role expectations into internalized role definition for their young. He described this process:

> The Amish infant and child are immersed in their families, and their widest horizons are Amishdom. Even at the ages of fourteen and fifteen some of my Amish subjects in the Kalona area had never visited Iowa City, only sixteen and seventeen miles away. This is, apparently, a very deliberate practice for adult Amish people shop regularly in Iowa City. The horizon of the Amish child is thus bounded largely by his family, and as a consequence his earliest roles are much less age-graded than are those of our children. He associates mainly with his fellow siblings, who are thus not as precisely his age-peers as are the associates of our children (p. 54).

Therefore, especially the child who lives within a homogeneous culture will accept and internalize the culture's expected behaviors and assume the culture's definition of roles. If the family is the child's primary culture, the child will assume the variations exemplified by the family.

These family expectations that result in the personal assimilation of family roles have great impact on the member's consequent behavior. Burgess, et al. (1971) commented on the force of family expectations: The behavior of a person in a particular situation is motivated by attitudes and ideas formed in his various experiences from birth to time of acting in that situation" (p. 241).

Clearly, the assignment of roles appeared to be a result of family experiences and expectations. It was apparent that the assignment and acceptance of family roles greatly influenced the resulting mode of behavior and ultimately perpetuated the role definitions.

For decades, the principal role of nurturer was decidedly assigned by society to the mother. However, recent views acknowledged the significance of both the mother and the father in the nurturing role. Most authorities still held that in the infant stages it was the two-way mother and child process that provided for satisfaction for the physical and psychological needs (Bell, 1968; Bronfenbrenner, 1970). Nevertheless, attention was being directed to the psychological benefits of sharing the parenting roles and tasks from the birth of the child on. Kitzinger (1972)

affirmed this idea by stating that both the woman and the man were often involved in the developmental crises of pregnancy and birth.

Thus, the significance of both the paternal role and the maternal role have been recognized as vital to the child's development. Bronfenbrenner (1970) contended that the father's role was two dimensional in influencing the development of his children. First, the father provided an identity model with the member of like sex, his son. Also, the father provided first hand experience with members of the opposite sex for his daughter. Further, this research stated that when praise and recognition came from both the mother and the father, children appeared to make better developmental progress.

Pedersen (1976) believed that the father's presence influenced the entire family in another manner. He contended that the mother received reassurance about her own feelings of self-esteem in the maternal role from the active support of the father. Of course, this confidence would then be communicated to the child in a, consequently, more secure and stable family environment. In reverse, when the mother offered her support to the father, she conveyed to both the father and the child her judgment of the worth of the paternal role.

Pringle (1980) contended that both the maternal and paternal roles were essential to child development. She stated:

> There is also some evidence that children's sense of responsibility develops best not in a matriarchal or patriarchal family structure, but where both parents participate actively in child rearing . . . The father's absence--particularly where it is for long periods or permanent--has been shown to have an unfavorable effect on the child's psychological development, especially when it happens during the pre-school years; the influence of the father's absence on the mother will also affect the child, both directly and indirectly.
>
> The importance of the mother-child relationship has been so much stressed in recent years that it almost seemed fathers need merely to provide material things for their offspring. Work with handicapped children has shown how mistaken this view is. Where the father shares responsibility for upbringing and care, there is a much better chance of the child's triumphing over his disabilities than if the mother is left to cope by herself. The same is now seen to apply also to the normal child (pp. 61-62).

Thus, the value of both the father and the mother in performing their family roles was relatively clear. Bronfenbrenner (1973) offered further support for this contention as he stated:

> In short, a three-person model, including two adults of the opposite sex, appears to be more effective for socialization than a two-person mother-child model. . . The fact that the structure most conducive to a child's development turns out to be the family is hardly surprising. The family is, after all, the product of a million years of evolution and should therefore have some survival value for the species (p. 8).

Undoubtedly, the group structure of the family was related to the effectiveness of the social unit. The roles defined and assumed, the membership maintained, the boundaries established, and the decision-making process allowed, all contributed to the family structure. These multidimensional variables of the family structure were found to be

extremely influential in the equally complicated matter of family function.

Function of the Family

A particular view of the family functions is, of course, dependent on the viewers definition and perception of the family (Adams, 1971; Zimmerman, 1949; Burns, et al., 1983). Farber (1964) has expressed the apprehensive view that great caution must be exercised in explicitly declaring and defining universal family functions. He warned that the task of specifically stating what must be done for society to survive involved risky value judgements.

However, there are many experts who disagree with Farber's ideas and emphatically argue for acceptance of their theoretical generalizations of universal family functions. Aberle (1950) contended that every society must accomplish specific goals in order to guarantee continued existence. He commented:

> There are certain goals that any society must accomplish in order to continue existing. It must reproduce individuals to replace the dying; it must protect its boundaries; it must motivate persons to take positions of leadership; it must solve the economic problem of physical survival; and so on (p. 100).

Aberle's point of view was supported by Davis (1949) as he delineated reproduction, maintenance, placement, and socialization of the young as the universally accepted family functions. Another family scholar, Murdock (1949) reported the family functions to be reproduction,

socialization, economic cooperation, and sexual relations. Later, Spencer (1976) supported Murdock's contentions and agreed that these four functions were universal in nature. However, Reiss (1965) disputed all of these notions of family function and stated that in reality only socialization remained as the exclusive domain of the family.

Adams (1971) offered a summary of William J. Goode's analysis of family functions. He reported these functions to be reproduction, status placement, and child socialization. He considered child socialization to be the process of learning what to do to get along in society and viewed this function as the most valuable to society as a whole.

The attempt to discover the universally accepted family functions prompted Ogburn (1933) to call attention to the effects of industrialization and urbanization in regard to the traditionally accepted version of family functions. He stated:

> Industrialization and urbanization have resulted in the transferral of one traditional family function after another to specialized institutional settings. The economic producing function has been transferred to the factory and office; the educational function has been moved to the schoolroom; the religious function has been left almost entirely to the church or synagogue; the recreational function has gone to the theater and stadium; the medical function has been transferred to the doctor's office and hospital. In most cases, the family members go to these places individually, not as a family unit. The result has been that the family is left to provide affection and understanding for its members, but little else. In short, with the increasing dif-

> ferentiation and specialization of society, the family, too, has become a specialist. No longer functionally central. It now specializes in gratifying people's psychological needs (p. 13).

Thus, socialization and the care of the young were the only aspects of the family functions that continually emerged in some form within all attempts to declare universal functions. The functional, social agency assigned to proved for the satisfaction of human psychological needs has clearly been identified as the family unit.

The significance of the socialization process was further explicated by McNeil (1969) as he stated:

> The developing child is time-bound. He has a limited life expectancy on this earth. If newborn children could be expected to reach the age of 150, we might worry less about achieving early the correct form of human response to social life, and some of our anxiety about the proper development and socialization of children might lose its urgency. As it is, the brief moment of childhood, during which human beings are most malleable, is the period when the whole process of socialization--the shaping the person into a socially acceptable form--must occur. The newborn organism is at once exposed to a complex set of related training practices designed to shape his behavior to conform to the conventions of the society into which he is born. The profound influence of socialization pervades every area of human experience and behavior because it determines much of how the child will understand his world, how he will react to it, and what goals, motives, tastes, appetites, attitudes, habits, and preferences he will acquire (p. 2).

Thus, the family function of socializing the young was designated as a process that influenced all aspects of human experience. The brevity of the childhood developmental period was noted as the crucial time on which hinged the success of the entire socialization procedure.

This prominent socialization function has been defined in many ways (McNeil, 1969; Zimmerman, 1949; Overton, 1983). However, all definitions have yielded the ultimate purpose of socialization as that of the perpetuation of the existing society. In keeping with this classic purpose, Spencer (1976) viewed the process of socialization as:

> Through socialization the person acquires not only culturally prescribed patterns of needs and motivations, but also many other aspects of his personality. He acquires his language, a fund of knowledge and skills, his commitment to particular norms and values, and his capacity to perform in the many role relationships that will constitute his life (p. 84).

Another expression of the sociological position was stressed by Conklin (1984) as he reported the odd behavior of a thirteen year old girl as a result of her unusual treatment. Her father had kept her locked in a room and had communicated with her only by barking or growling. At night, she was confined to a cage-like enclosure and was strapped to a seat during the day. She was not allowed to make vocal sounds and was abused if she made any type of noise. Consequently, she had no language skills and displayed other types of social maladjustment.

Conklin described two other cases of childhood social isolation that resulted in equally unusual behavior. One was of a girl named Anna who had been hidden by her grandfather since she had been a baby. At the age of six, Anna could not walk or talk. The other was the case of Isabelle who was kept in a dark room and allowed to communicate only through gestures. When Isabelle was found at the age of

six she could not speak. Conklin commented on the effects of this extreme social isolation and the consequent absence of a culturally acceptable socialization process. He explained:

> Socialization also includes the acquisition of cognitive skills--intellectual abilities such as reasoning, thinking, remembering, and using language. Another aspect of socialization is affective development, the learning of emotions and feelings. You might think that feelings such as love are a basic part of human nature, but the indifference that Anna showed toward others indicates that isolation from human contact can prevent a person from developing such "natural" feelings (pp. 73-74).

Thus, Conklin cited examples that illustrated the necessity of having agents of socialization who were willing to teach social norms in a socially acceptable manner.

Further, Conklin identified social interaction as the crux of the socialization process. He stated: "Interaction with others is crucial to the socialization of a child. Those who do not have contact with caring people are limited in their emotional, physical, and social development" (p. 74). Thus, children must have social contact with those who will model and teach culturally approved ways.

The psychologist's definition of socialization reflected a concern for maintaining the uniqueness of the individual. Mussen (1967) broadened the definition by stating: "The word socialization also refers to all the processes by which an individual acquires his personality characteristics, motives, values, opinions, standards, and

beliefs" (p. 54). Moreover, while Mussen identified the child-rearing practices of parents as central to the socialization of the young, he also included education, religion, peer influence, and media exposure as agents of socializations.

The concerns of sociology and anthropology were combined by Brim and Wheeler (1966) to define the process of socialization as "the means by which the raw material of biological man is transformed into a person suitable to perform the operations of society" (p. 4). This view reflected attention to the reasons for socialization and the methods used in the process.

Each of these definitions of socialization were etched from a philosophical vantage point. While the anthropologist, the sociologist, and psychologist may have offered varying definitions, each reflected a common dimension of interest in the continuance of culture and society through the socialization process.

However, Bronfenbrenner (1985) disputed these somewhat rigid definitions of socialization as inadequate and inappropriate for the complicated social fabric of today's families and society. He contended that the socialization process should merely and purely be defined as "keeping human beings human" (p. 50). Further, he stressed that socialization was primarily a matter of meeting human needs and must be considered as a life-long process. Thus, he emphatically stated:

> Based on an analysis of the available research evidence, these seven propositions define the critical conditions for making, and keeping, human beings human. At this juncture you may well ask, "How old is the child referred to in these propositions?" That point is debatable. I would suggest anyone under the age of, say, 89! For if you examine these propositions, you will discover that they speak to the human condition throughout our lives. As human biologists remind us, one of the distinguishing features of our species, Homo sapiens, is that we are social animals. Sooner or later, and usually sooner, we need each other. It's because that need has been met for us, for you and me, that we are here. We couldn't read, we couldn't think, we couldn't function, we couldn't relate to each other if somebody hadn't made the investment I've been describing. When I was a kid my father used to say to me, "Little One, always remember, you are the people in your life" (p. 50).

Considering the charge to the family to concern itself with socialization through the meeting of human needs, the inquiry must then turn to the identification of these needs.

Bronfenbrenner believed that the massive volumes of research findings and theoretical speculations regarding the necessary and sufficient conditions for healthy socialization of children could be summarized, condensed, and stated in seven manageable propositions. He reported these propositions to be:

> Proposition I - In order to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally--any and all of those--a child needs the enduring irrational emotional involvement of one or more adults in care and in progressively more complex joint activity with that child. What do I mean by "irrational emotional involvement"? I mean somebody has to be crazy about the kid. . .
>
> Notice that in this situation each side is teaching the other new tricks. That happens from the first moment of birth. The newborn in our

> species teaches its caregiver a very complicated game. These is nothing more challenging intellectually than having to take care of an infant. It's the most complex and captivating activity we're capable of. Once you are being it, you get hooked. You begin to become irrational about that little creature, and it becomes irrational about you. That irrationality is very important, because without it, the little creature can't become competent. For example, it can't, years later, take SAT tests very successfully unless it experienced that irrational commitment years before. We're very interesting organisms, we humans. We are indeed social animals, evolved so on a biological basis. Accordingly, development begins and continues as a ping-pong game between people who are crazy about each other. That's how we become human, and how we remain human as adults (if we do) (p. 46).

Bronfenbrenner believed that the research over the past half century had well documented this first principle. However, he stressed that irrational attachment had been a guiding principle of mothers from the beginning of time.

Further, he stated that the remaining six proposals regarding the conditions essential to socialization, had emerged from research completed during the last two decades. He continued:

> Proposition II - The development power of emotionally involved care and progressively more complex joint activity is enhanced by the participation of adults of both sexes in the joint process.
>
> Proposition III - This has only one word different from Proposition I: In order to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally, a child needs the enduring rational involvement of one or more adults in progressively more complex activity (p. 47).
>
> Proposition IV - The effectiveness of the ping-pong game depends on the extent to which third parties support or undermine the activities of those actually engaged with the child (p. 48).

> Proposition V - In order for a child to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally, it takes a variety of people in a variety of ping-pong games. You can't just stay home and do it. As we grow up, we need to get different strokes from different folks in different settings to become sentient, capable, competent, and compassionate human beings. But for those strokes in different settings to be effective, they have to be coordinated (p. 49).
>
> Proposition VI - For successful child rearing, there must be consensus, connection, and mutual accommodation between the different settings in which the child lives: home, day care center, school, work place, peer group, and neighborhood. The people in these settings can't be at odds with each other (p. 49).
>
> Proposition VII - This is the most important, especially in modern industrialized societies. The involvement of adults in care, joint activity, and support of child rearing requires public policies, belief systems (ideologies) and practices that provide opportunity, status, resources, encouragement, example, stability, and above all time: time for child rearing, primarily by parents but also by all other adults in the child's environment and in the environment of those who deal with children.
>
> That's a tall order. But that tall order must be filled for a society to thrive. We are accustomed to measuring the success of a society by its gross national product. We are now discovering that the gross requires the fine. The material requires the spiritual. That's what science is now discovering (pp. 49-50).

Thus, Bronfenbrenner recognized and acknowledged the family unit as the key to successful socialization but also pleaded for the coordination of all social entities directly or indirectly involved in the task of child socialization. His seven propositions were offered as a model for conditions conducive to solving the present socialization dilemmas. In conclusion, he stated: "There is a principle that sums up all seven propositions. It comes

from a world far worse than our own. A Soviet friend once said to me, 'We're going to outlive you as a society, and do you know why? Because with all our horrors, one thing we never forget: the family'" (pp. 56-57). The family was distinguished as the central factor in the socialization process and the social unit through which society could thrive and survive.

Pringle (1980) supported Bronfenbrenner's contentions and insisted that information was readily available to assure successful socialization of the young. She admonished our society as she stated:

> A willingness to devote adequate resources to the care of children is the hallmark of a civilized society as well as an investment in our future. Some argue that we do not know enough to provide positive care and creative education for all children; others object that child rearing is essentially a personal, private matter; while yet others retort that we cannot afford to spend more. So A. E. Housman's despairing appeal 'When will I be dead and rid of the wrong my father did?' continues to be a reproach to our affluent society (p. 148).

Pringle contented that four basic emotional needs had to be met from the beginning of life to enable a child to grow from infancy to maturity and to experience normal socialization. She explained these needs to be the need for love and security, the need for new experiences, the need for praise and recognition and the need for responsibility.

Pringle urged all involved with the socialization of the young to consider the eventual cost, impact and consequences for a society that did not ensure the meeting of

children's needs. She pleaded for attention to the plight of children as she stated:

> Children inevitably depend on others for their well-being, care and education; they have no vote or voice in the running of the community, either at local or national level; and resources devoted to them are society's investment in tomorrow's parents. For all practical purposes of social policy, we must act on the assumption that the environment is of over-riding importance and that the early years of life are particularly vital. To develop the potential for becoming human, the baby must have a human environment; and the most efficient and economical system known to man for making human infants human is the family (p. 155).

Pringle believed the successful socialization of the young to be the paramount concern for today's society and an issue to be attended with deliberation and dedication by parents and other caregivers.

Raths (1972) expanded the socialization concepts of Pringle and Brofenbrenner by proposing that this process within schools and homes should attempt to address vital personal and societal issues. He contended that those charged with the socializing of the young should be directed by the following questions:

> In the schoolrooms of the world, and in the homes of the world, what can teachers and parents do which would most likely contribute significantly to the fulfillment of life? What contributes most to that inward calm which we frequently call a sense of well-being? What can we do that will add to the probability that this generation of children will be more zestful, more spontaneous, more cooperative, more thoughtful and considerate of others, more ardent guardians and champions of freedom for everyone everywhere? (pp. 2-3).

Thus, Raths presented a view of modern dilemmas that must be resolved triumphantly within a civilized society

searching for a fuller and more zestful life for its citizens. He realized the needs of children that must be met by the agents of socialization in order to allow these probing thoughts to find and maintain satisfactory resolution. Therefore, Raths contended that the essence of these society-sustaining issues could only be satisfactorily attended by humans who were both physically and emotionally sound and, consequently, experiencing a reasonable sense of well-being (Raths, 1972).

The vital nature of this sense of well-being was dramatically illustrated by Mumford's observations as he researched the mother/child relationship. Mumford (1951) reported:

> So, too, the infant who is offered food without friendly intercourse and love, as in an old fashioned orphanage, may reject it or fail to be nourished by an otherwise adequate diet; the very processes of digestion prosper only if reinforced by attitudes and feeling that have no direct bearing on the function in hand (p. 126).

Mumford contended that a warm emotional climate was essential to the child's well-being and normal functioning.

Even in the earliest stages of life, the matter of inner security and well-being appeared to affect human growth and development. Raths (1972) further contended that for humans to progress from infancy to maturity and experience successful socialization, eight basic emotional needs must be met throughout the continual process. He considered these needs to be:

> (a) The need for belonging (b) The need for achievement (c) The need for economic security (d) The need for freedom from fear (e) The need for love and affection (f) The need to be free from intense feelings of guilt (g) The need for sharing and self-respect (h) The need for self-concept and understanding (pp. 40-58).

In addition, Raths postulated that when these emotional needs were unmet hostile aggression, self-isolation, regressions, submissiveness, and psychosomatic illness often resulted thwarting all attempts at the normal socialization process. He concluded that only with the satisfactory development of these emotional components could children properly experience socialization.

The major function of today's family was indicated to be that of socialization and consequently, caring for the young (Kitzinger, 1972; Bell, 1968; Reiss, 1965; Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Murdock, 1949; Burgess, 1971). Socialization has been identified as the human process through which humans learn the ways of humans in order to live in a human society (Raths, 1972; Pringle, 1980; Bronfenbrenner, 1984). This process has been viewed as a progression in which normal human development in all domains is dependent on the meeting of human needs. Thus, when the physiological needs were denied, society's goal of having a wholesome, healthy, productive membership was thwarted. Thus, when love and affection were denied, the societal goal of having sensitive, compassionate, caring citizens was distorted (Raths, 1972). Therefore, an influential hierarchy of needs satisfaction within the socialization process was evident.

Maslow's (1954) theory of basic needs offered a framework for the consideration of needs satisfaction inherent in the socialization process. He indicated that this orientation to needs/motivational theory was endorsed "by most clinicians, therapists, and child psychologists" (1968, p. 21) even though the language varied from expert to expert. Furthermore, Maslow declared this theory to be "in the functionalist tradition of James and Dewey, and is fused with the holism of Wertheimer, Goldstein, and Gestalt psychology, and with the dynamicism of Freud, Fromm, Horney, Reich, Jung, and Adler" (1970, p. 35).

Maslow (1973) identified and described the nature of the components of his theory of human motivation. He identified the physiological needs as a beginning point and the most prepotent of all the needs in the hierarchy. He explained that if a situation existed in which all the needs were unsatisfied, the organism would be dominated by the physiological needs. Maslow commented on the extent of this dominance:

> Another peculiar characteristic of the human organism when it is dominated by a certain need is that the whole philosophy of the future tends also to change. For our chronically and extremely hungry man, Utopia can be defined very simply as a place where there is plenty of food. He tends to think that, if only he is guaranteed food for the rest of his life, he will be perfectly happy and will never want anything more. Life itself tends to be defined in terms of eating. Anything else will be defined as unimportant. Freedom, love, community feeling, respect, philosophy, may all be waved aside as fripperies which are useless since they fail to fill the stomach (p. 154-156).

Maslow discussed the physiological needs with such detail and vibrancy to illuminate the concept that only when lower needs are satisfied are other needs even a consideration. He emphasized this point by stating: "One main implication of this phrasing is that gratification becomes as important a concept as deprivation in motivation theory, for it releases the organism from the domination of a relatively more physiological need, permitting thereby the emergence of other more social goals" (1973, p. 157).

Maslow moved within the dynamics of the individual to discuss the second type of basic needs in his hierarchy, the safety needs. He explained that when the physiological needs were well satisfied, the safety needs emerged and dominated. Maslow viewed the child's need for safety to be indicated by a preference for some type of undisturbed routine or rhythm. He commented:

> The central role of the parents and the normal family setup are indisputable. Quarreling, physical assault, separation, divorce or death within the family may be particularly terrifying. Also parental outbursts of rage or threats of punishment directed to the child, calling him names, speaking to him harshly, shaking him, handling him roughly, or actual physical punishment sometimes elicit such total panic and terror in the child that we must assume more is involved than the physical pain alone. While it is true that in some children this terror may represent also a fear of loss of parental love, it can also occur in completely rejected children, who seem to cling to the hating parents more for sheer safety and protection than because of love.

Thus, Maslow concluded that the child generally preferred "a safe, orderly, predictable, organized world" (1973, p. 159). Parents in this organized existence were

viewed as all-powerful and dependable for protection from danger and harm. Further, he contended that "these reactions may so easily be observed in children is in a way a proof of the fact that children in our society feel too unsafe (or, in a word, are badly brought up)" (1973, p. 159). Maslow viewed the satisfaction of the safety needs as basic and essential to a normal socialization process within the family.

With the gratification of both the physiological needs and the safety needs, Maslow contended that the needs most commonly thwarted and most often the object of clinical studies will emerge for satisfaction. He identified these as the love and affection and belongingness needs which cause the child to strive for affectionate relations and belonging to a group. Maslow contended that thwarting of the love needs has been identified by most theorists of psycho-pathology as a basic cause of maladjustment.

Maslow viewed the love needs as a two-way process that involved both the giving and the receiving actions. However, after satisfaction of the love and belonging needs, the organism moved to the last of the needs deemed by Root (1970) as approached through deficiency or maintenance motives. A common characteristic of survival needs, security needs, belonging needs, and finally esteem needs is that they are granted or denied by external factors, are strong and recurring, and grow stronger when denied. Maslow (1973) categorized the esteem needs in two classifications

and explained that all people have a need for self-respect and for the esteem of others based on respect. He categorized these as the desire for achievement and the desire for prestige. He commented:

> Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting of these needs produces feeling of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness (1970, p. 45).

Root (1970) modified Maslow's hierarchy of needs to include the need for knowledge, the need for understanding and the need for aesthetic appreciations before reaching the self-actualization level. Maslow and Root agreed that the self-actualized human displayed the needs of a fully functioning being and was simply, a total, fulfilled self. Maslow expressed this ultimate fulfillment as: "What a man <u>can</u> be, he <u>must</u> be. He must be true to his own nature" (1970, p. 46). Of course, as Maslow cautioned these needs will vary greatly from individual and should be regarded as being what the individual can be (Maslow, 1968).

Therefore, Maslow viewed human needs as appearing in a hierarchy. The higher-leveled needs came forth only after the lower-leveled needs, such as survival needs, had been satisfied. If a lower-leveled need conflicted with other needs, the lower-leveled need would dominate. When all other needs in the hierarchy were satisfied, the highest level of functioning was approached. This self-actualized person was one motivated by needs to be accepting and not defensive, to love others and self without giving in to

aggression or manipulative means, to act in ways that were ethically and morally good for society, and to express autonomy and creativity (Gage and Berliner, 1975).

Critical attention has been given to the theory that socialization attempts are less than successful because of need satisfaction denial. Obvious cases of unsuccessful family functioning and thwarted needs satisfaction were indicated by the statistics of the American Humane Association (1986) as they reported over 1.7 million incidents of child maltreatment. While most of these situations were concerned with abuse at the physiological needs level, 10% of the reported cases involved emotional maltreatment. Many experts have professed that while psychological maltreatment was rarely reported, it was probably more prevalent and definitely as destructive as the physical abuse (Egeland, Sroufe, & Erickson, 1983; Hart, Gelardo, & Brassard, 1986).

A host of international conferences and national professional activities have joined forces to define the act and describe the nature of psychological maltreatment in an effort to direct a concentrated, national movement toward the rights and needs of the children of this decade. The International Conference on Psychological Abuse of Children and Youth was held in 1983 and with the work of representatives from many countries and numerous child advocate groups, the following definition resulted:

> Psychological maltreatment of children and youth consists of acts of omission and commission which are judged on the basis of a combination of community standards and professional expertise to be psychologically damaging. Such acts are committed by individuals, singly or collectively, who by their characteristics (e.g., age, status, knowledge, organizational form) are in a position of differential power that renders a child vulnerable. Such acts damage immediately or ultimately the behavioral, cognitive, affective, or physical functioning of the child. Examples of psychological maltreatment include acts of rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, exploiting, and mis-socializing (Hart, Germain, & Brassard, 1983, p. 2).

Thus, the mis-socializing phenomena was identified and characterized as a perpetrator of psychological maltreatment. The Office for the Study of the Psychological Rights of the Child has offered a list of acts that might assist in understanding the nature of psychological maltreatment. These acts included:

> Rejecting. To refuse to acknowledge, believe, receive; to decline to accept, to refuse, to cast or throw away as useless, unsatisfactory. To discard; to relegate. To refuse to hear, receive. To repel. (Distinguished from the "denying emotional responsiveness" category below by expressing active rejecting as opposed to passive ignoring.) Examples: treating a child differently from siblings or peers in ways suggesting a dislike for the child; actively refusing to act to help or acknowledge a child's request for help.
>
> Degrading. To reduce from a higher to lower rank or degree; to deprive of dignity. To bring into disrepute or disfavor; to depreciate. Example: calling a child "stupid"; labeling as inferior; publicly humiliating.
>
> Terrorizing. To impress with terror (a state or instance of extreme fear; violent dread; fright); to coerce by intimidation. Examples: threatening to physically hurt or kill; forcing a child to observe violence directed toward loved ones; leaving a young child unattended.

> Isolating. To place apart by one's self; to separate from all other; (medical) separate from persons not similarly infected. Examples: locking in a closet or, for extended time, in a room alone; refusing to allow interactions or relationships with peers or adults outside the family.
>
> Corrupting. To render antisocial or malsocialized; to maladapt to social needs or uses; to change from a state of uprightness, correctness, truth, etc., to a bad state; depraved; to make putrid; to change from good to bad; to debase. Examples: teaching and reinforcing acts that degrade those racially or ethnically different; teaching and reinforcing criminal behavior.
>
> Exploiting. To utilize; to get the value out of. To make use of basely for one's own advantage or profit. Examples: sexually molesting a child; keeping a child at home in the role of a servant or surrogate parent in lieu of school attendance; encouraging a child to participate in the production of pornography.
>
> Denying Emotional Responsiveness. To fail to provide the sensitive, responsive caregiving necessary to facilitate healthy social/emotional development; to be detached and uninvolved; to interact only when necessary. Examples: ignoring a child's attempts to interact; mechanistic child handling which is void of hugs, stroking, kisses and talk (Brassard, Germain, & Hart, 1987, p. 7).

Thus, Brassard, et al. (1987) proposed the acts that cover the major types of psychological maltreatment. Further, they believed that Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs provided a theoretical framework for analyzing the ultimately destructive forces of the psychological abusive acts. They stated:

> It is logically supportable to hypothesize that psychological maltreatment is a direct attack on psychological need fulfillment, and that this is what produces its destructive power. The work of maslow provides the theoretical foundations and most well-developed conceptualization of needs/motivational theory relevant to this

> position. . . . The deficiency needs create disagreeable tension and, thereby, motivate the individual to reduce that tension. Growth needs are pursued because of the pleasurable tension accompanied by their satisfaction. The deficiency needs are most relevant to psychological maltreatment. From our point of view, psychological maltreatment tends to frustrate or distort efforts to fulfill these needs. Maslow (1968, 1970) and others (Biehler & Snowman, 1982; Glasser, 1965; Maddi, 1980) have indicated that failure to meet deficiency needs may produce maladaptive, ineffective, and destructive patterns of living.
>
> The acts of psychological maltreatment . . . . appear to be in direct conflict with, and likely to frustrate fulfillment of, basic psychological needs in precisely the manner in which Maslow (1970) has described the frustration of these needs. Terrorizing, verbal assault, and physical abuse would be in conflict with safety, and in some cases, physiological needs. Threatened withdrawal of love, inattention to nurturing, rejecting, and denying emotional responsiveness would be in conflict with belongingness and love needs, and would also interfere with fulfillment of physiological and safety needs. Scapegoating, exploiting, knowingly permitting maladaptive behavior, berating and disparaging would be in conflict with esteem needs (Brassard, Germain, & Hart, 1987, p. 8-9).

While the movement for an intense, nationally organized study of psychological maltreatment is still in the formative stages, Broadhurst (1984) working with the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect endorsed an earlier work by Wald (1961) to identify the varied consequences of psychological maltreatment. This list included:

> <u>habit disorders</u>, such as sucking, biting, rocking, enuresis, or feeding disorders;
>
> <u>conduct disorders</u>, including withdrawal and antisocial behavior such as destructiveness, cruelty, and stealing;

> neurotic traits, such as sleep disorders and inhibition of play;
>
> psychoneurotic reactions, including hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobias, and hypochondria;
>
> behavior extremes, such as appearing overly compliant, extremely passive or aggressive, very demanding or undemanding;
>
> overly adaptive behaviors, which are either inappropriately adult (parenting other children for example) or inappropriately infantile (e. g., rocking, head-banging or thumbsucking);
>
> lags in emotional and intellectual development; and
>
> attempted suicide. (Wald, 1961, pp. 6-7)

Other experts have generated similar lists of child indicators of maltreatment (Krugman & Krugman, 1984; Shengold, 1979; Main & Goldwyn, 1984). Nevertheless, Brassard, et al. expressed concern that the consequences of psychological maltreatment would be regarded as opinion or speculation. Therefore, these authors (1987) provided an updated, extensive list of conditions associated with maltreatment and documentation through supporting literature from clinical case studies and empirical research. Clearly, the current movement toward the comprehensive investigation of the psychological maltreatment of children is justified and necessary for understanding contemporary socialization practices in many families. Particularly, attention directed to the perceptions of the psychological effects of the family socialization process as experienced by the child will be highly relevant. Brassard, et al. commented: "It is, after

all, the personal subjective meaning of maltreatment from the perspective of the victim which determines its power and focus of influence" (1987, p. 15). Thus, the child's perception of the socialization experience was deemed highly significant in determining the impact of the process.

Assuredly, the socialization function of the family has been viewed in its positive aspects by Maslow (1954), Raths (1972), Pringle (1980) and Bronfenbrenner (1984). This family function has been designated as basic and essential to perpetuation of our society and defined as learning to live in human ways within a society of human beings. These human ways have been clarified through various views of human needs satisfaction. The mis-socialization of the young has been viewed in terms of definition, violation of needs satisfaction, acts of commission and omission, and consequent acts of behavior (Brassard et al., 1987). The family unit was regarded as a human ecological system whose structure and function were designed to facilitate the stewardship of children and to perpetuate the continuance of this society.

Summary

The family has been viewed by many experts in terms of its purpose, definition, structure, and function. Perceptions of these aspects of the family have been articulated from varying points of view based on commitment

to the observer's respective discipline. Thus, the sociologists, the psychologists, and the anthropologists have offered somewhat diversified versions of each dimension. However, visible commonalities have emerged continually among these explanations.

The family purpose has most often been cited as serving to facilitate the perpetuation of society. While countless interpretations of the process were evident, the family's strategic purpose as a major societal entity on which all other societal institutions depended for survival was not to be denied.

The components inherent in most definitions of the family included human relationships established by blood, marriage, adoption, or kinship. The concept of kinship expanded the traditional definition to include those "felt" to belong to the family unit. Further, prominent definitions included the interactions of members as a factor essential to distinguishing the family.

The family structure was observed to be subject to continual change as a result of internal or external forces. The general characteristics of groups which included membership, statuses and roles, and identity were assigned to the family group structure.

The nature of the family function had received almost universal agreement for many decades. However, with increased industrialization and expanded social services, in the decade of the 1980s the major family function

appeared to be the socialization of the young. This socialization function was viewed through the framework of survival, security, belonging, and esteem needs satisfaction.

Consideration and understanding of the various family aspects is essential to serve as a point of reference when exploring possible changes in the family's purpose, definition, structure, and function, and the consequent perceptions of these family entities as expressed by divorce-experienced children.

CHAPTER III

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHANGING FAMILY AND THE DIVORCE-EXPERIENCED CHILD

The Changing Family

Traditionally, the child brought to the school institutional experience a membership in the most basic social unit of every society, the family. For young children, the family has been the group and the social institution with which they have been best acquainted and with which their deepest emotions, memories, and consequent values have been directly linked and bonded. The early traditional families in America and the school institution complimented and assisted the accomplishment of compatible purposes. However, in the original experience with a social institution, children of this decade have been caught within the cogs of one of the fastest changing entities in American society. For better or worse, the American family unit has been rapidly changing in structure, function, and effect. Consequently, all members of this basic social unit have had varied experiences in which their attitudes, values, and norms have been defined or redefined (Hetherington, 1984).

It has been predicted that the future will be dominated by a diversity of family forms. Therefore, the customary nuclear family form of husband, wife, and children will be experienced by fewer and fewer Americans (Brassard et al., 1987; Despert, 1953; Keller, 1977; Keniston, 1977). Cherlin and Furstenberg (1985) contended that marriage and having children would remain a part of the American family experience. Further, they explained:

> Neither the dire pessimists who believe that the family is falling apart nor the unbridled optimists who claim that the family has never been in better shape provide an accurate picture of family life in the near future. But these trends indicate that what we have come to view as the "traditional" family will no longer predominate (p. 134).

Moreover, these contentions that a transformed type of family unit will survive were supported by stating:

> At current rates, half of all American marriages begun in the early 1980s will end in divorce. The number of unmarried couples living together has more than tripled since 1970.
>
> One out of four children is not living with both parents. The list could go on and on. Teenage pregnancies: up. Adolescent suicides: up. The birthrate: down. Over the past decade, popular and scholarly commentators have cited a seemingly endless wave of grim statistics about the shape of the American family. The trends have caused a number of concerned Americans to wonder if the family, as we know it, will survive the twentieth century.
>
> In the future, we should expect to see a growing amount of diversity in family forms, with fewer Americans spending most of their life in a simple "nuclear" family consisting of husband, wife, and children. By the year 2000, three kinds of families will dominate the personal lives of most Americans: families of first marriages, single-parent families, and families of remarriages (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985, p. 134).

Therefore, it was clear that the traditional family unit was continuing in a state of transformation. Consequently, it was not the dissolution of the family unit that warranted interest and concern but rather the changing family form and function, the consequences for the human members principally involved in the change, and the ultimate perceptions wrought by the family transformation process.

Societal realities have brought multiple family modifications. London (1987) has labeled many of these alterations as the "psychosocial epidemics of our day" (p. 668). He stated:

> The incidence of divorce has more than doubled since 1960, and the number of children affected by divorce now exceeds one million annually. The number of unmarried couples cohabiting has increased dramatically in the past quarter century, as has the number of children under age 15 living with them. The number of single-parent families has also risen. In 1984 more than 1.5 million children under the age of 18 were living with neither parent.
>
> Changes in work patterns have also disrupted children's lives. By 1984 almost half of the 10 million working mothers in the United States had children in nursery school or kindergarten. At the same time, there were perhaps as many as eight million "latchkey children" . . . .
>
> Increased sexual activity among teens increases the pregnancy and child-bearing rates among unmarried American girls. Until 1965, barely 15% of teenage girls who gave birth were unmarried; by 1983, 50% to 75% of them were unwed. . . . More than 715,000 children were born to unwed families in 1982. In 1960 children under 16 bore 25,000 babies; in 1977 they bore 42,000 (p. 668).

London (1987) cited these statistics to support the charge that philosophical attention should be directed toward the ultimate meaning of the societal alterations to

American society. He asked: "Could these trends be omens of the dissolution of our civilization? Causes of its decay? Mere passing accidents of our era? Imperial Rome is said to have rotted from within by the corruption of its slave-based society long before it was beaten from without. Could an American Imperium go the same way" (p. 670). London (1987) contended that societal norms prevailing until the end of World War II have now been predominantly abandoned. Thus, the traditional agents of socialization have been equally altered and the matter of healthy child development has become increasingly more complicated. He stated: "Promoting healthy child development may be harder to do now than in the past because today's main problems arise from changes in society that prevent normal channels and agents of positive character development from working well" (p. 670).

Furthermore, Emery (1982) supported London's (1987) view of the modern family as he predicted that 38% of women in their late twenties would experience divorce after the first marriage. Moreover, Cherlin and Furstenberg (1985) credited this rising divorce rate and births to unmarried women as the principal contributors to one of the major types of today's altered family: the single-parent home. They explained:

> The second major type of family can be formed in two ways. Most are formed by a marital separation, and the rest by births to unmarried women. About half of all marriages will end in divorce at current rates, and we doubt that the rates will fall substantially in the near future.

> But three-fifths of all divorces involve couples with children living at home. In at least nine out of ten cases, the wife retains custody of the children after a separation.
>
> Although joint custody has received a lot of attention in the press and in legal circles, national data show that it is still uncommon. Moreover, it is likely to remain the exception rather than the rule because most ex-spouses can't get along well enough to manage raising their children together. In fact, a national survey of children aged 11 to 16 conducted by one of the authors demonstrated that fathers have little contact with their children after a divorce. About one half of the children whose parents had divorced hadn't seen their father in the last year; only one out of six had managed to see their father an average of once a week. If the current rate of divorce persists, about half of all children will spend some time in a single-parent family before they reach 18 (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985, p. 135).

Undeniably, the American family of this decade is experiencing radical transformation and alteration in form and, consequently, in function (Brassard, et al., 1987; Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985; Emery, 1983; Hetherington, 1979; London, 1987).

Recently, educational and political leaders have pleaded for attention to be directed to those family members who have limited or no control over family change but who are intensely affected by altered family socialization opportunities. Howe (1986) contended: "The overwhelming fact that must be faced regarding children in the U.S. today is that they are losing ground. Efforts to provide children with healthy and rewarding lives are declining even as the needs for such efforts are growing. The self-interest of adults is taking center stage, and the inter-

ests of children are being shoved into the wings" (Howe, 1986, p. 191).

Central to the concern for children living within the single-parent families were the economic situations within these families. Cherlin and Furstenberg (1985) reported nine out of ten single-parent families were headed by women. While Bane (1979) contended that in 85% of the cases mothers have custody of the children. Thus, following the divorce experience mothers now have reduced income and must seek paid employment. Bane (1979) reported that 77.1% of divorced mothers with children were employed. Further, Bane (1979) reported that in 1975 the median income of two-parent families with children was $15,534 but that of the one-parent family headed by the mother was only $5,501. Therefore, becoming suddenly poor, immediately responsible for additional duties, and limited in social interaction opportunities complicated the divorce-adjustment scene (Smith, 1980; Asher & Bloom, 1983). Coletta (1983) attached great significance to the role strain felt by divorced mothers as a result of struggling economic conditions.

Howe (1986) commented on the changes in family patterns that are affecting today's children. He explicated: "The growing numbers of single-parent families and of families in which both parents work outside the home are depriving a growing number of middle-class children of adequate adult support" (p. 192). As a result of changing

family conditions, Howe (1986) joined other experts in discussing the disturbing economic plight of children. He cited from A Children's Defense Budget, An Analysis of the FY 1987 Budget and Children, developed by the Children's Defense Fund as follows:

1. First, a basic description of child poverty in America:

   a. Thirteen million children in America are poor. More than one in every five children is poor. Nearly one out of every four children under 6 is poor.

   b. Almost two out of every three poor children are white.

   c. Nearly two out of every five Hispanic children are poor.

   d. More than half of the children in families headed by females are poor (p. 195).

Howe (1986) concluded that addressing the needs of the children and the changing families of this decade was central to accommodating the needs of the nation. He commented: "We need a continuing, independent, and sophisticated capacity to scrutinize the agenda of our national government through the lens of the needs of children and families" (p. 196). Further, he contended that the unmet needs of America's altered families would have impact on national survival. He explained:

> The U.S. is the wealthiest nation in the world, but it is rapidly becoming a nation whose politi-

> cal will to provide its children with the necessities for physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral growth is weakening. Look at the national scene, and ask yourself who is the champion for children.
>
> Have we regressed to an amoral condition in which we are willing to neglect the needs of children in favor of the demands of other interest groups that pay higher immediate political dividends? Or might it be possible to put together in this country a political coalition broadly conceived around the needs of children and reflecting Abraham Lincoln's view that "a child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started . . . . He will assume control of your cities, states, and nations. . . . The fate of humanity is in a child's hands (p. 192)."

Thus, Howe urged that the changing American family and its present plight should be of intense concern to those charged with monitoring and directing the growth of the nation. He considered the welfare of the children within the changing families to now be such a critical issue that urgency at the national level was warranted.

Undoubtedly, American families have been drastically influenced by divorce actions and unwed parenthood (Wallerstein, 1980; Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985). As a result, many family structures have been altered from two-parent, male-headed social units to one-parent, female-headed families with reduced family earning power and diminished family resources and support in which to attempt the child-rearing process (Cook & McBride, 1982; Duncan & Duncan, 1979; Thompson & Rudolph, 1983; Wilkinson & bleck, 1977).

This combination of altered family structure and modified family functions has resulted in a new characteristic

profile of today's children. Hodgkinson (1987) suggested that a total look at the demographics of today's five-year-olds might assist in predictions of tomorrow's families, contribute to the assessment of present day families, and facilitate insight into our changing society and its basic social units. While these demographics offered by Hodgkinson (1987) reflected changes in ethnic composition as a result of recent immigration trends, many characteristics indicated the influence of modifications in the American family. He reported:

> Demography has an enormous amount of predictive power, due to the simple fact that students grow up and become the next generation of adults. Thus, some fraction of today's five-year-olds will become the high school graduates of the year 2000. Here are some characteristics of today's five-year-olds:
>
> 1. Twenty-four percent of them live below the federal poverty line, the highest percentage in almost thirty years.... In 1984, there were 3,330,000 poor people over the age of sixty-five, but 11,455,000 poor children under fifteen years of age. Ten percent of the poor are over sixty five, but forty percent of the poor are children. The national problems created by having such a large number of impoverished youth can be predicted.
>
> 2. More than one-third of our five-year-olds belong to minority groups. In Texas and California, there is a virtual minority majority in the five-year-old population. This demographic change is not caused by a major increase in minority birth rates, but rather by a decline in white fertility. In addition, minority no longer equals poor, as the Black, Hispanic, and Asian middle classes are growing and moving into important positions in the American political and economic systems. Shortly after the year 2000, high school graduates will come from a pool which will be over 40 percent minority--

the children born in 1986. By the year 2000, one-third of all Americans will be from minority groups.

3. As a result of recent immigration from South America and Asia, the number of languages and dialects spoken by students in our schools is increasing with great speed, and there are often few if any certified teachers who speak the languages these children understand.

4. Far fewer of our five-year-olds are white, suburban, and middle-class than is the case with today's high school seniors. Birth rates have declined most in the Northeast and Midwest, centers of the white middle class. At the same time, they have increased most in the Southeast and Southwest, with their very high minority percentages, especially among school-age youth.

5. Eighteen percent of today's five-year-olds were born outside of marriage.

6. About half of these five-year-olds will live with a single parent. In 1986 families with a working father, housewife mother, and two or more school-aged children make up 4 percent of American households.

7. About 11 percent of today's five-year-olds have identified physical or emotional handicaps.

8. Twenty percent of the females will get pregnant during their teens. Every day in the United States, forty teenagers give birth to their third child.

9. By the time today's five-year-olds reach high school, more than two-thirds of their mothers will be working, most of them full time. "Latch-key" children, now at 7 percent, may become the majority in the next few years. (Hodgkinson, 1987, pp. 10-11)

If then an estimated one-half of these children who are now five-years-old will live with a single parent, and the divorce action is the predominate force creating single-parent homes, this demographic profile has well de-

scribed a large portion of those young people who will be participants in the divorce experience.

Further, McLaughlin and Shields (1987) stressed the value of focusing attention on this type of demographic data and demographic projections. They explained: "A significant proportion of today's school children come from the types of family situations that gave rise 20 years ago to concern about new ways to involve parents in their children's education. Indeed, only 7% of today's school children come from families that were considered typical in 1965: two-parent families with a single wage earner" (McLaughlin & Shields, 1987, p. 157).

Adding to this concern for changing family patterns and consequent family functions, Heath and McLaughlin (1987) contended that social institutions such as the schools have been unaware of the significance of this demographic data and, consequently, have been unprepared to deal with related issues. They believed that societal realities have been ignored and that the current, prevailing view of schooling coupled with these social truths does not facilitate productive adulthood. They stated:

> Although academic achievement has traditionally been the express purpose of the schools and has been taken as sufficient proof of their success, academic achievement alone does not guarantee the effective citizens and adults America requires. Other outcomes must be accomplished concurrently in order for academic achievement to mean much. These nonacademic outcomes build on notions of social competence and include additional dimensions, such as physical and mental health, formal cognition, and motivational and emotional status (Heath & McLaughlin, 1987, pp. 577-578).

Moreover, these authors suggested that as a result of ignoring the changing American family unit, other social institutions are assuming false impressions of the role and competence of existing families. They explained that today's schools are built on an outmoded notion of the form and function of the family. The typical family form of the mid-1960's now exists in only 7% of the families. The authors noted that economic pressures on the dual-career families and the single-parent families prevented parents from participating in their children's school experiences. Further, it was reported that even in advantaged suburbs, children are often poorly socialized.

Thus, the social institutions of this decade, especially the schools and the families, are faced with increasingly complex tasks in providing for the needs of American's children who are caught within the harsh, demanding wheels of societal change. Hodgkinson (1987) viewed this increased diversity in the child population and, consequently, the student population as an intense challenge to educators. He explicated this challenge by stating:

> Some of the increased student diversity will be brought to the school by new patterns of immigration. Some will be brought by the stark changes in the family and working lives of those who were born in this country. Put the two together, and we have a brand new challenge for the schools, especially for the curriculum. And what changes in the curriculum have been achieved? Standards have been raised for high school graduation, with virtually no provision for counseling, tutorials, and other assistance to ensure that every student

> has an equitable chance of attaining these standards (p. 11).

Thus, Hodgkinson pleaded for a renewed appraisal of our social systems and the means through which both American families and schools can facilitate the necessary and complementary functions that are both desirable and essential in maximizing growth opportunities for the young.

Clearly, the American family has been experiencing alterations and modifications in structure and function. Varying societal realities have contributed to these changes and were found to be somewhat affecting all members of the family, but especially the children. The action of divorce has been identified as the most prevalent agent of family change and the single-parent formation of the family has been designated as the most predominant emerging family form. As a result of the changing American family, the forms and functions of other social institutions have the potential for transformation in order to provide for new, evolving societal needs.

The Divorce-Experienced Child

Divorce has been indicated as the principal agent of family modification in the past two decades and predictions contend that it will continue in this influential role (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985; Dietl & Nett, 1983; Glick, 1979; Hodgkinson, 1987; Murdock, 1980; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). With predictions that half of all school-aged children will soon have experienced the social phenomena of di-

vorce, the research studies of how the children and the family system are adapting have become more and more numerous (Kurdeck, 1981; Gardner, 1977; Felner, Farber, & Primavera, 1980; Schlesinger, 1985).

Nevertheless, Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) have pointed out that this abundance of research may in fact be inconclusive in that most studies have concentrated on clinical data obtained from parents. Moreover, they contended that the children's perceptions of the divorce experience often were just the opposite of their parents. While many mothers initially perceived the divorce action to be necessary, desirable, and under control, the involved children's emotional reactions indicated a quite opposing perception.

Further, Nelson (1985) offered support for this position. He stated:

> While separation/divorce is a stressor for both parents and children, in many cases it may be perceived very differently by parents and children. Women may tend to perceive the separation/divorce as predictable, controllable, and desirable, since they most often suggest or initiate separation and divorce; while in some cases, their children's perceptions may be just the opposite. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) have found that children's perceptions of divorce often include fear of abandonment, blaming one parent, both parents, or one's self for the separation/divorce, negative evaluation of one parent, both parents, or one's self, confusion about the meaning of separation/divorce, denial of the finality of divorce, a strong desire for parental reunion, etc. (Nelson, 1985, p. 119).

As Nelson (1985) acknowledged the limited research regarding children's perception of divorce, he also recog-

nized the interpersonal relationship insights that additional research in this area would offer. He contended:

> Young (1983) has found that children report more anxiety and adaptation problems when they blame themselves or their mother for the divorce and fewer problems when they blame their fathers or do not blame anyone. Clearly, the little research that has been done on children's perceptions of their parent's separation/divorce has shown that appraisal of the stressor is an important aspect of the adaptation process. Further research on the discrepancy between the perceptions of children and their parents should be useful in understanding part of the strain that families must deal with following separation/ divorce (Nelson, 1985, p. 120).

Clearly, Wallerstein and Nelson recognized the valuable, multidimensional contributions that additional research based on the children's perspectives would bestow to understanding the many and varied aspects of the divorce experience.

Based on clinical data obtained from an adult perspective, causes, effects, and adaptations by all family members to divorce related issues have been discussed in the literature and have been the subjects of numerous studies (Goldstein & Solnit, 1984; Green, 1978, 1981; Hetherington, 1979; Levinger & Moles, 1979; McDermott, 1969, 1970; Parish & Dostal, 1980; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1980; Weiss, 1980). However, limited numbers of studies exist regarding the children's perceptions of causes, effects, and adaptations to divorce related issues and even fewer studies exist regarding the children's perceptions of the family after experiencing the ramifications of divorce.

One study of children's perceptions of divorce was conducted by Moore, Bickard, and Cooper in 1977. Moore et al. (1977) studied divorce-experienced children's perceptions of family structure and found no difference in structural choices for children from divorced parents or children from married parents. Powell, Wiltcher, Wedemeyer, and Claypool (1981) completed similar studies and supported the contentions of Moore et al. However, a study by Armbruster (1982) expanded the family structural options to the divorce-experienced children and found affirmation of one-parent family structures and same-gender adults. This finding was not consistent with the previous research of Moore et al. (1977) or Powell et al. (1981). Armbruster (1982) contended that the divorce experience had helped children to attain a more flexible perception of the family structure and thus, had influenced their choices of legitimate family structures. However, this study did not deal specifically with characteristics assigned to the roles within various family structures which might have illuminated reasons for structural choices and the resulting differences in the three studies.

Eight family dimensions were developed by Moore et al. (1977) and were used as a framework for the studies of Armbruster (1982), Camara (1979), Moore et al. (1977), and Powell et al. (1981). These researchers contended that the eight dimensions were salient in children's perceptions of family members. The use of these dimensions varied within

the studies but was defined as an acceptable tool in determining the definition of family members by divorce-experienced children.

Armbruster (1982) named and defined these eight dimensions 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 a 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).
>
> Social Role Factors - The child's answer explicitly includes mention of roles, expectations, or social customs (e.g., flowers at a wedding, being a good parent) (pp. 31-32).

The definition of the family as discussed by Moore et al. (1977), Powell et al. (1981) and Armbruster (1982) was established to distinguish the dimensions apparent in the intact and divorce-disrupted families. However, their findings were not in agreement. Armbruster (1982) found no

differences in the definition by family type. While, Moore et al. (1977) reported that children from the intact and divorce-disrupted families demonstrated differences in the use of membership, emotional factors, and domestic functions. Powell et al. (1981) reported a significant difference in the use of co-residence and membership by each family type. Although the results of the studies were not in agreement, the eight dimensions were established as an appropriate framework through which to view the perceptions of family members by the divorce-experienced child.

Kurdeck and Berg (1983) recognized the abundance of research dealing with divorce-experienced children's adaptation and adjustment. However, these authors also recognized that the perception of the children involved in the divorce action was being disregarded. They gave credibility to the idea of considering the children's perceptions by stating:

> While progress has been made in the integration of existing studies on the nature and correlates of children's adjustment to parental divorce, little attention has been directed to the congruence among different sources of information on children's divorce adjustment. Parents typically have provided assessments of children's divorce reactions, while children themselves have not been interviewed routinely. Given evidence that parents and children's sources of information may not be concordant (Fulton, 1979; Kurdeck, Blisk, and Siesky, 1981; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980), our efforts have been directed toward developing self-report divorce adjustment measures for children.
>
> How children themselves appraise divorce related events may be an integral component of their adjustment (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974). Previous studies of children's divorce reactions

> (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980) have identified several areas of concern for children whose parents have separated or divorced. These include children's understanding of divorce as an interpersonal process, their hopes for parental reconciliation, their fears of abandonment, their assignments of blame for divorce, their fears of negative peer reactions, and their negative evaluations of their parents and themselves (p. 48).

Thus, Kurdeck and Berg (1983) preceded with a study that involved children's responses and used objective inventories and questionnaires to assess the following:

> To summarize, the purposes of the present study were to interrelate measures of children's divorce adjustment; to relate children's specific divorce adjustment to parent and teacher ratings of their general behavior adjustment; to assess developmental trends and sex differences in children's divorce adjustment; and to examine social, familial, and psychological correlates of children's divorce adjustment (p. 50).

Unlike previous researchers (Fulton, 1979; Kurdeck, Blisk, and Siesky, 1981), these experts reported that their study did find significant relationship between the measures of children's divorce adjustment by custodial parents and their children. However, the magnitude of the obtained correlation was quite low. There was no significant correlation available for teachers' observations of children's adjustments and the children's perceptions. The researchers felt their present assessments were reliable but that more indepth studies were needed in this area before conclusions regarding child/parent perceptions or child/teacher perceptions could be warranted.

However, Kurdeck and Berg (1983) combined their findings with the results of other research studies and con-

cluded that the intrafamily factors which can predict the nature of the divorce-experienced children's adjustment were as follows:

> Taken together, the results indicate that adjustment problems in social, emotional, and cognitive development are unlikely to occur for children if the following factors exist: only minimal depletion of financial resources, low levels of interparental conflict and hostility preceding and following the divorce, cooperative parenting between ex-spouses, approval and love from both parents, authoritative discipline from the custodial parent, regular visitation by the noncustodial parent, and an emotional climate that helps children discuss divorce-related concerns (pp. 49-50).

Two factors have continually been indicated as moderating variables in the studies of divorce-experienced children: the longevity of the divorce experience and the age of the divorce-experienced child.

Wallerstein and Kelly (1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1980) have reported the results of a longitudinal study regarding varying areas of psychosocial functioning. Their studies indicated that immediately following the divorce experience psychosocial adaptation problems were evident in the majority of the child subjects regardless of age. Sustained adaptation problems were evident in 50% of the children after one year of experiencing the divorce. However, 50% of the children had improved but not returned to the psychosocial levels of adjustment experienced prior to the divorce.

Similarly, the longevity issue was addressed by a study of Hetherington, Cox, and Cox (1978) regarding antisocial behavior of pre-school children. High rates of ag-

gressive behaviors along with increased non-compliance to parental advisements were found to be most evident in the boys from divorced parents. Even after two years, these children continued to be more anti-social than children whose parents remarried within the two year period.

The studies of Hess and Camara (1979) included children from mother-headed families who had experienced divorce two to three years prior to the study. Parents and teachers rated these fourth and fifth grade children whose parents were divorced as exhibiting more symptoms of stress and increased difficulties in working with effectiveness at school.

Thus, while the longevity of the divorce experience continued to be debated and studied, it was evident that the divorce experience resulted in varying types of psychosocial changes for many children along individually varying time dimensions.

The issue of the child's age at the time of the divorce experience has been identified by Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) as the best predictor of how children initially react to their parent's divorces. Kalter and Rembar (1981) agreed with Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) and indicated age to be the most important moderator of divorce-experienced children's adaptation and consequent behaviors. They reported the ages between three and five years to be the most vulnerable times for children to experience di-

vorce. However, a recent Harvard study reported by Stein (1988) disclosed conflicting information. Stein commented:

> Kaufmann interviewed 15 male and 15 female college students ages 18 to 23 at private colleges in the Boston area and found most reacted strongly to the news that their parents were breaking up. At least two-thirds of the students reported feelings of aloneness, anger, anxiety, pressure and sadness had increased as a result of their parents' separation. Seventy-three percent of the women and more than one-third of the men in the study reported having trouble with their studies because of the trauma. Twenty percent of the students reported they increased their consumption of alcohol or drugs. Thirty-seven had sleeping problems. Twenty-seven percent had eating problems. The average length of their parents' marriage was 23 years. All the parents had at least separated and in 90 percent of the cases at least one parent had filed for divorce. Half the student's parents were divorced. All the students were already at school when the separation occurred. The average length of time they were at school before the separation was nine months. Seventy-three percent of the students said the breakup had changed their views on marriage and relationships primarily by making them more wary and skeptical about the chances of forming and sustaining healthy relationships (p. 5).

Therefore, age as a moderator in the divorce experience appeared to be an individual matter and not easily assigned to stages or other divisions. Clearly, the divorce experience and the consequent severance of familiar interpersonal boundaries appeared to be of significance at all ages.

Nelson (1985) contended that the current research efforts regarding the divorce-experienced child have viewed divorce in a pathology orientation using clinical subjects. He reported the major considerations of this research to have been adjustment, treatment, adaptation, intervention,

and prevention from a pathological model rather than simply viewing the divorced-experienced child as an opportunity for understanding a new social situation. He explained: "Future research should help to clarify the pros and cons of single-parent family life and to stimulate the development of necessary social and institutional supports that can prevent problems and ensure the quality of life of families which have experienced marital separation/divorce" (p. 134).

Summary

The American family is experiencing multiple changes. For decades, this nation's families have been regarded as having a traditional structure and customary functions. However, the families of the 1980's are dominated by a diversity of family types.

The prevalent agent of change appeared to be the action of divorce. Thus, it was not the dissolution of the family that warranted interest but rather the radical changes in family form and function. Moreover, concern was expressed for the fact that the changing characteristics of today's families may have gone unattended by another influential social institution, the school.

Central to these concerns is the divorce-experienced child who has been caught within the boundaries of a disrupted family. Researchers acknowledged the fact that very little was known about the child's perceptions of the di-

vorce event and even less was known about the child's perceptions of the family after participating in the divorce experience. Most available research regarding divorce-experienced children dealt with adaptation and adjustment from a clinical orientation.

Thus, it was evident that a basic societal institution was experiencing extensive modification through the action of divorce. It was equally evident that the divorce-experienced child was, consequently, involved in a disrupted home environment. The understanding of the multiple dimensions involved in the severing of familiar interpersonal boundaries is a task assigned to all those charged with the stewardship of divorce-experienced children.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter presents an explanation and description of the research study components. The guiding methodology and theory, the involvement of sample subjects, the procedures of the data collection, the framework for analyzing the data, and the process of the interviews are explicated. The objectives of this study were to examine the following:

1. The family definition, purpose, structure, and function as perceived by divorce-experienced children of elementary school age.

2. The recognition by elementary teachers of divorce-experienced children's perceptions of the family definition, purpose, structure, and function.

Methodology and Theory

It was toward the understanding of the perceptions of divorce-experienced children regarding the family and the intensity of the recognition of these perceptions by teachers that this study was directed. It was to the

Sociological Imagination and the chapter entitled "Intellectual Craftsmanship" (Mills, 1959) that the researcher turned for guidance in methodology and support for theory. First, Mills commented on the hazard of being too precisely trained and the mental freedom that must abound within the mind for the researcher to create original, unique thought. Mills explained:

> Since one can be trained only in what is already known, training sometimes incapacitates one from learning new ways; it makes one rebel against what is bound to be at first loose and even sloppy. But you must cling to such vague images and notions, if they are yours, and you must work them out. For it is in such forms that original ideas, if any, almost always first appear (p. 212).

Therefore, Mills (1959) sanctioned floundering responses and often vague notions of direction that eventually expose reality. Further, he discussed methods of stimulating the sociological imagination:

> On the most concrete level, the re-arranging of the file, as I have already said, is one way to invite imagination. You simply dump out heretofore disconnected folders, mixing up their contents, and then resort them. You try to do it in a more or less relaxed way. How often and how extensively you re-arrange the files will of course vary with different problems and with how well they are developing. But the mechanics of it are as simple as that. Of course, you will have in mind the several problems on which you are actively working, but you will also try to be passively receptive to unforeseen and unplanned linkages (Mills, 1959, p. 213).

Thus, it was to these "unforeseen and unplanned linkages" (Mills, 1959, p. 213) that this research was directed and to the discovery of the hidden perceptions of the family harbored by divorce-experienced children. The open-ended

interview was the chosen procedure and Mills offered justification for this approach:

> Be a good craftsman: Avoid any rigid set of procedures. Above all, seek to develop and to use the sociological imagination. Avoid the fetishism of method and technique. Urge the rehabilitation of the unpretentious intellectual craftsman, and try to become such a craftsman yourself. Let every man be his own methodologist; let every man be his own theorist; let theory and method again become part of the practice of a craft. Stand for the primacy of the individual scholar; stand opposed to the ascendancy of research teams of technicians. Be one mind that is on its own confronting the problems of man and society (Mills, 1959, p. 215).

Consequently, this study was conducted within a research framework regarded not as confining and restraining but rather as a flexible arena in which to observe and understand the changes of personal milieu and beyond.

Sample

The subjects were randomly selected from a total elementary school population of over 600 students. The school's name, location, and precise student population will not be identified in order to guarantee the confidentiality and anonymity pledged to the school officials who approved the sensitive nature of the study and the parents, students, and teachers who willingly cooperated with the multiple aspects of the research.

Parents of all students within the school were sent letters. The letters asked for permission for the child to participate in a study regarding children's perceptions of the family. All students were issued parental permission

forms and the divorce-experienced variable was not mentioned in order to avoid biased responses and treatment by both the child and teacher subjects. Of the 600 parental permission forms issued, 65.8% were returned. From those permission forms returned, one divorced-experienced child was randomly selected from each self-contained elementary classroom which qualified by having at least two divorce-experienced children granted parental permission for participation in the study. The divorce experience was verified by either school records or by parental affirmation.

The class sizes averaged 21 students for each self-contained classroom. All potential classrooms qualified in the intermediate grades. Three potential classrooms did not qualify in the primary grades. The remaining student population had been assigned to classrooms designed for special needs and, therefore, was not considered as appropriate for this study.

The child subjects and teacher subjects that constituted the sample were delineated as follows:

Elementary School - Primary (Grades K-3)

Child subjects = 12

Teacher subjects = 12

Elementary School - Intermediate (Grades 4-6)

Child subjects = 12

Teacher subjects = 12

The resulting sample included 24 child subjects and 24 teacher subjects.

A summary of demographic data for sample child subjects is presented in Table I. This data revealed the average age of the child subjects to be 9.2 years and the ethnic origin to be predominantly Anglo American. Twelve children were living in single-parent homes, eight in reconstituted by marriage homes, and four in two adult homes as a result of cohabitation. Fifteen children had experienced divorce once; five had experienced divorce twice; and four children had experienced divorce three or more times. The average time period from the child's first experience with divorce was 3.1 years.

A summary of demographic data for sample teacher subjects is presented in Table II. This data revealed the teacher sample to be predominantly female, Anglo American, and Protestant. Half (12) of the sample fell into the 30 to 40 age range. Twelve teachers had bachelor's degrees and 12 teachers had master's degrees. The teaching experience ranged rather evenly from 1 to 25 years. Only two of the 24 teacher subjects had experienced divorce.

Data Collection

The data collection occurred during August, September, October, November, and December of 1987. All interviews were conducted in private areas within the physical school setting. Most interviews were conducted during the hours after the regular school session. The shortest time spent in an interview with a child was approximately one hour.

TABLE I

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE CHILD SAMPLE

	Female	Male
Age		
5-6	2	1
7-8	3	3
9-1	3	4
11-12	7	1
Ethnic Origin		
Black American	3	2
Anglo American	12	7
Present Home		
Single Parent (Divorce)	8	4
Two Parent (Marriage)	5	3
Cohabitation	2	2
Divorce Experiences		
1	10	5
2	3	2
3	2	1
More	0	1
Time from First Divorce		
under 2 years	7	2
2-3 years	3	3
3-4 years	4	2
more	1	2
Number of Children in Family		
1	5	2
2	5	4
3	3	2
4	2	1

TABLE II

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE TEACHER SAMPLE

Gender	
Female	23
Male	1
Ethnic Origin	
Anglo American	24
Age	
under 30	4
30-40	12
40-50	5
over 50	3
Education	
Bachelor's	12
Master's	12
Teaching Experience	
under 1 year	1
1-5 years	5
5-10 years	4
10-15 years	6
15-25 years	8
Personal Divorce Experience	
None	22
One	2
Religious Preference	
Protestant	22
Catholic	1
Other	1

The greatest time period for an interview with a child exceeded three hours. The shortest time period spent with a teacher subject was approximately 25 minutes and the longest time period for a teacher interview exceeded one hour.

The child subjects were informed that the information about the family was being obtained by the researcher for a study and that none of the information would be directly shared with their parents, their teachers, or others who would know them personally. The subjects were assured of strictest confidentiality and anonymity. They were encouraged to be direct, honest, truthful, and to be concerned only with their own ideas and feelings. Initially, a tape recorder was used to record the responses of the children, but the older children strongly objected. One subject refused to respond if the tape recorder were deemed a necessity. Thus, the researcher continued with a hand-written, verbatim transcript of responses. The elimination of the tape recorder appeared to provide for more relaxed and free-flowing responses.

The teacher subjects were informed that their responses would be used for data within a research study. The teacher subjects were assured of strictest confidentiality and anonymity. They were encouraged to be direct and to be concerned only with what they believed. The first teacher subject refused to respond in the presence of a tape recorder. Thus, the recorder was eliminated for

this group and the hand-written verbatim transcript was used.

Interviews

All interviews were semi-structured. However, the child interviews were primarily child directed. Questions were asked and any response was accepted. The children and teachers were allowed to deviate from the subject and to engage in rambling, informal conversations. Every attempt was made to remove inhibitions or restrictions that might hamper responses.

Divorce-Experienced Child Subjects

Definition of the Family. The interviews began by asking the child subject, "What is a family?" Often, the children would respond by asking, "Do you mean my family?" The researcher repeated the original question and then rephrased the question as, "Tell me, what is your idea of a family?" The answer was recorded verbatim.

Structure of the Family. This portion of the interview began by handing the child subject the 24 pictures of various family structures. The child was asked to arrange these family structure pictures on a table and to look them over carefully. After a five minute observational period, the child was asked to hand to the researcher the picture that best showed a family. After this task was accomplished, the child was asked why the choice had been made.

Then, the child was asked to select the family structure picture that was least like a family. Again, the child was asked why the choice had been made. The 24 family structure options available to the child were as follows:

1. Father-child-mother
2. father-child-child-mother
3. father-child-child-child-mother
4. father-child-child-child-child-child-child-mother
5. father-mother-child-grandmother-grandfather
6. mother-child
7. mother-child-child
8. mother-child-child-child
9. father-child
10. father-child-child
11. father-child-child-child
12. child-child
13. child-child-child
14. child-child-child-child-child-child
15. father-child-grandfather
16. mother-child-grandmother
17. father-child-father
18. mother-child-mother
19. father-mother
20. grandfather-grandmother
21. child-grandmother
22. father-child-grandmother
23. father-child-mother-mother

24. mother-child-father-father

A similar version of this family structure instrument was used by Moore et al. (1977) and Norris (1981). It was established that preschool children can identify family groups from other structures. These researchers used the family structure pictures to establish an affirmation or a denial of each family type. The expanded version of the family structure pictures was used in the present study to determine divorce-experienced children's identification of the family structure most compatible with their perception of the family and the family structure least compatible with their perception of the family. The child subjects were informed that if one of the available family structure pictures was not compatible with their perceptions, the available blank pages could be used to fashion such a structure.

Characteristics of Family Members. A forced choice technique was used to determine those common characteristics assigned to the roles of mother, father, and children within the context of the family. The instrument consisted of sets of descriptors printed on cards and generic pictures of mother, father, and children. The child subject was asked to place one of the descriptor card pairs on the picture of the family member in question and to hand the other card that did not describe the family member to the researcher. This process continued with the picture of mother, father, and children. The children were told that

if additional descriptors were needed to express their ideas about family members, the available blank cards could be used to fashion such descriptors. The available descriptors were:

1. good-bad
2. pleasant-unpleasant
3. beautiful-ugly
4. fair-unfair
5. nervous-calm
6. happy-unhappy
7. mean-kind
9. strong-weak
10. powerful-powerless
11. loving-unloving
12. smart-dumb
13. cold-warm
14. exciting-boring
15. tired-rested
16. wrong-right

Function of the Family. This interview regarding the child subject's perception of the family function was semi-structured. The child subject was asked certain questions but allowed to ramble, generate new questions, and respond in any chosen fashion. The atmosphere was directed toward the removal of the child subject's possible inhibitions. Thus, occasionally other topics were introduced by the

child subjects and thoroughly discussed. The questions asked of each child subject by the researcher were:

1. What is a family?
2. How would you describe your family?
3. Who is in your family?
4. How do you feel about your family?
5. What do you do to get ready for school?
6. What do you usually have for breakfast?
7. Who helps you with getting ready for school?
8. What do you have for supper?
9. What do you do after school?
10. What does mother do for you?
11. What do you do for mother?
12. What does father do for you?
13. What do you do for father?
14. What does mother do for father?
15. What does father do for mother?
16. What do you and other family members do together?
17. What 5 describing words help you think about mother?
18. What 5 describing words help you think about father?
19. What 5 describing words help you think about others in your family?
20. How do you feel about your mother?
21. How do you feel about your family?
22. How do you feel about your father?

23. How do you feel about other family members?
24. What do you and your family do for fun?
25. What do you and mother do together for fun?
26. What do you and father do together for fun?
27. What do mother and father do together for fun?
28. How would you change your family?
29. What do you like best about your family?
30. What do you like least about your family?
31. Who is your favorite family member?
32. What is your favorite thing to do with your family?
33. Who is your least favorite family member?
34. What is your least favorite thing to do with your family?
35. Does your family help you? In what ways?
36. Does your family help you with school? In what ways?
37. Do you feel safe in your family? Why or why not?
38. Do you ever feel afraid in your family? Why or why not?
39. Is your family important? Why or why not?
40. Are you important in your family? Why or why not?
41. Who is the most important member of the family? Why?
42. Are you a member of the family? How do you know?
43. Is your mother a member of the family? How do you know?

44. Is your father a member of the family? How do you know?
45. Are all your brothers and sisters members of the family? How do you know?
46. Why do we have families?
47. What is the most important thing that a family does?
48. What would you do if you did not have a family?
49. What other information could you share with me that would help my understanding of your ideas about a family?

Purpose of the Family. The child subject was asked to think about all aspects of the family that had been discussed during the interview. Then, the child-subject was asked the following question: "Why do you have a family?"

Related-Teacher Subjects

Definition of the Family. The related-teacher subject was asked to simulate the child subject's definition of the family. The process used with the child subject was explained to the related-teacher subject and the teacher was asked to respond by defining the family in terms of the child subject's perception.

Structure of the Family. The related-teacher subject was asked to simulate the child subject's selection of the family structure pictures that best depicted a family and least depicted a family. The process used with the child

subject was explained to the related-teacher subject. Then, the teacher was asked to make family structure selections based on the teacher's knowledge of the child subject's perception of the family.

Characteristics of Family Members. The related-teacher subject was asked to view the 16 descriptor pairs listed under the headings of Mother, Father, or Children (considered as brothers, sisters, self or any combination thereof). The related-teacher was asked to circle the descriptor in each of the 16 pairs that according to the child subject's perception would best describe the family member named in the heading. The descriptors available to the related-teacher subjects under each family member heading were the same descriptors available to the child subjects in the modified Q-sort process.

Function of the Family. An open-ended interview was used with the related-teacher subjects. First, the teacher was asked to discuss aspects of the family that might assist the researcher in understanding the child subject's perception of the family. Next, the related-teacher subject was asked to assign a rating (with 10 being greatest and 1 being least) to the satisfaction of each of four needs in terms of the child subject's perception of the family's function in satisfying these needs. These needs included survival, security, belonging, and esteem needs (Maslow, 1954). These ratings of the needs satisfaction were solicited not for the purpose of quantifying data but

for the purpose of stimulating thought and responses regarding the child subject's perception of the family's function. Finally, the related-teacher subjects were asked to explain the reasons for their ratings. These reasons were recorded verbatim.

Purpose of the Family. The related-teacher subject was asked to think about all aspects of the family that had been discussed regarding the child subject's perspective of the family. The entire interview process used with the child subject was thoroughly explained to the related-teacher. Then, the teacher was asked to simulate the child subject's response to the following question "Why do you have a family?"

Data Analysis

Definition of the Family. The eight dimensions (Moore et al., 1977) salient to understanding the family were used as a framework to distinguish the aspects apparent in the definitions of the family as proposed by divorce-experienced child subjects and the related-teacher subjects. These dimensions were Membership, Domestic Functions, Guidance, Co-Residence, Biology, Emotions, Legal Factors, and Social Role Factors. Percent was used to determine the following:

1. The percentage of child-subject definitions that included each dimension.

2. The percentage of related-teacher definitions that included each dimension.
3. The percentage of the dimensions used in each related-teacher subject's definition that agreed with the dimensions used in the divorce-experienced child subject's definition of the family.

Finally, a composite definition of the family was constructed featuring those dimensions most often mentioned by the divorce-experienced child subjects.

Structure of the Family. Percent was used to determine the following:

1. The percentage of child subjects that chose each family structure as most like their perception of a family.
2. The percentage of child subjects that chose each family structure least like their perception of a family.
3. The percentage of related-teacher subjects that correctly identified the child subject's perceptions of the family structure most like a family.
4. The percentage of related-teacher subjects that correctly identified the child subject's perception of the family structure least like a family.

Characteristics of Family Members. Percent was used to determine the following:

1. The percentage of the child subjects that chose each descriptor to describe the family members of mother, father, and children.
2. The percentage of the descriptors chosen by the related-teacher that agreed with the child subject's perception of the family members of mother, father, and children.

Function of the Family. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was used as a framework for organizing and viewing the responses to the open-ended interview of the child subjects and the related teachers.

Purpose of the Family. The purposes of the family as proposed by the child subject and the related-teacher were compared for commonalties and differences.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the interviews with the divorce-experienced child subjects and the related-teacher subjects. First, the responses of the child-subjects are analyzed and then compared with the responses of the teacher subjects. These responses include perceptions of the following: The definition of the family, the structural membership of the family, the characteristics of family members, the function of the family, and the purpose of the family. The verbatim responses of the divorce-experienced child subjects and the related-teacher subjects are provided in each area of consideration. These verbatim comments should add clarity and enhance understandings.

Definition of the Family

The child subjects were asked "What is a family?" The responses were categorized according to the eight dimensions of the family proposed by Moore et al. (1977). These dimensions were identified as Membership, Biology, Domestic Functions, Guidance, Co-residence, Emotions, Legal Factors, and Social Role Factors.

The dimensions included in the child subjects' definitions and the frequency of each dimension's inclusion were as follows;

1. Emotions (87.5 percent). The child refers to effective factors (e.g., loving one another, being happy, being lonely).

2. Guidance (66.6 percent). The child refers to family activity geared specifically toward the nurturance of children (e.g., taking care of children, helping with homework, or solving problems).

3. Membership (37.5 percent). The child gives a list of specific persons or roles when referring to the composition of the family (e.g., mother, father, my dad, my mom).

4. Domestic Function (20.8 percent). The child mentions general family maintenance of activity (e.g., cooking, studying, earning money).

5. Co-residence (16.6 percent). The child's response refers to the personal proximity or shared residence of persons (e.g., living together or having a house).

The child subjects mentioned a mean of 2.3 dimensions in their definitions of the family. Each child-subject had the personal option of including as many as eight dimensions in the response or as few as one. However, maturity and other situational factors could have affected the likelihood of equal mention among the child subjects. Thus, the mean score of each dimension would be of no consequence. The frequency of the appearance of each dimension

in the child subjects' definitions attends to the identification of those entities most commonly and least commonly evident in the divorce-experienced child's perception of the family.

Examples of family definitions that emerged from the interviews with the child subjects and which included the emotions dimension were as follows:

1. A family is somebody who tries to love you.
2. A family is people who care about you and stay with you for a while.
3. A family is someone who really, really likes you at least more than anyone else likes you.
4. A family is people who live with you and try to make you happy but they might not.
5. A family is everybody who stays around to work things out . . . like being together and not being lonely and stuff like that.

Examples of family definition that emerged from the interviews with the child subjects and which included the guidance dimension were as follows:

1. A real family has at least one big person who takes care of the kids--maybe more.
2. A family is people who are suppose to help you. They might not but they're supposed to and they better or it's not good.
3. A family helps you get something you need--like to eat and other things, too.
4. A family works out problems. Even if there is just one adult, problems have to be helped with or kinda help each other any way you can.
5. A family takes care of you and makes you a home.

Examples of family definitions that emerged from the interviews with the child subjects and which included the membership dimension were as follows:

1. A family has a mother and a father but they don't have to live together. It is best but they don't have to. Yes, that is a family. I'd die if I thought my dad was not in my family.

2. A family has at least a mother. Me and mom are our family. I guess my dad could be if he really wanted to and he'd come.

3. A family has one adult usually a mother. Like me, mother, my brother, we have family talks so I guess we are a family.

4. A family has two parents for the kids, whether the parents know it or not.

5. A family must have kids, a mother, and father. They could have some other relatives too. Like uncle Charlie and aunt Tootie--

The domestic functions dimension was included in 20.8 percent of the definitions and the co-residence dimension was included in 16.6 percent of the definitions. The dimensions of biology, legal factors, and social role factors were not included in the definitions. Therefore, a composite definition of the family perception as proposed by the divorce-experienced child would likely include the following: A family is someone to love you (emotion - 87.5 percent) and take care of you (guidance - 66.6 percent). A family has parents and children (membership - 37.5 percent).

The responses in this study agreed with Powell et al. (1981) and Armbruster (1982) in that the identified dimensions were apparent in children's definitions of the fam-

ily. However, the dimensions of emotion, guidance, and membership that appeared most frequently in the present research were not consistent with these earlier findings from studies of children that lived in both one-parent homes and two-parent homes.

The related-teacher was asked to simulate the child-subject's response in constructing a definition of the family. Membership was included in 87.5 percent of the related-teachers' definitions. Guidance was included in 33.3 percent of the definitions and the emotion dimension was included in 16.6 percent of the definitions. The mean of the dimensions included in the definitions of the related-teachers was 1.54. This mean represented considerably fewer aspects than the 2.3 mean utilized by the child subjects.

In viewing the recognition of the children's perceptions by the related-teacher subjects, the teachers were categorized according to intermediate grades which included grades four, five, and six, and the primary grades, which included grades kindergarten, first, second, and third. Then, the related-teacher subjects (N=24) were viewed as a total group.

In the intermediate grades, 50 percent of the related teachers did not recognize any of the dimensions salient in the child subject's definition of the family. Moreover, 33.3 percent of the related-teachers in the intermediate grades recognized only a small portion, 33.3 percent, of

those dimensions included in the children's definitions. Only two teachers, 16.6 percent, in the intermediate group recognized and identified more than 34 percent of the dimensions inherent in the child subjects' definitions of the family. One teacher, 8.3 percent, recognized 66.6 percent of the dimensions and one teacher, 8.3 percent, recognized all of the dimensions. Most of the intermediate grades related-teachers believed the child subjects' definitions to rest in the realm of membership and to deal primarily with the two-parent family.

In the primary grades, four of the 12 primary teachers, 33.3 percent, recognized and identified all dimensions proposed by the related-child subject. Four of the primary grade related-teachers recognized 50 percent of the dimensions included in the related-child subjects' perceptions. One primary teacher, 8.3 percent recognized 33.3 percent of the dimensions and three primary teachers, 25 percent, did not recognize any of the dimensions in the child subject's definition.

A view of the total related-teachers' recognition of the dimensions included the following:

1. 37.5 percent of the related-teachers recognized no dimensions.

2. 30.8 percent of the related-teachers recognized 33.3 percent of the dimensions.

3. 16.6 percent of the related-teachers recognized 50% of the dimensions.

4. 4.2 percent of the related teachers recognized 66.6 percent of the dimensions.

5. 20.8 percent of the teachers recognized all dimension.

This indicates that the full definition of the family as perceived by divorced-experienced children was recognized by only 20.8 percent of the teachers who worked daily with these children. Further, the intermediate grade related-teacher subjects had 83.3 percent of their number who recognized no more than 34 percent of the dimensions inherent in the child's perceptions and 50 percent of this group recognized no dimensions. However, the primary grade related-teacher subjects had only 33.3 percent of their group who recognized below 34 percent of the dimensions and had 33.3 percent who recognized all the dimensions. The grade level of the student and the related-teacher appeared to be related to the extent of perceptional understanding of the divorce-experienced child's definition of the family.

Structure of the Family

The child subject was asked to select the picture that was most like a family and the picture that was least like a family from the 24 illustrations of possible family structures. The related-teacher was asked to simulate the child's response. The illustrated structures chosen as most like a family and the frequency of selection by the child subjects were as follows:

1. The mother-child family structure was chosen by 45.8 percent of the child subjects.

2. The father-child-mother family structure was chosen by 25 percent of the child subjects.

3. The father-child-child-mother family structure was chosen by 8.3 percent of the child subjects.

4. The mother-child-child family structure was chosen by 8.3 percent of the child subjects.

5. The mother-child-child-child family structure was chosen by 8.3 percent of the child subjects.

6. The father-child-child-child-child-child-child-mother family structure was chosen by 4.2 percent of the child subjects.

The illustrated structures chosen as least like a family and the frequency of selection by the child subjects were as follows:

1. The child-child family structure was chosen by 79.1 percent of the child subjects.

2. The father-mother family structure was chosen by 16.7 percent of the child subjects.

3. The child-child-child-child-child-child structure was chosen by 4.2 percent of the child subjects.

The recognition of the children's perceptions by the related-teachers occurred as follows:

1. In the intermediate grades, 16.6 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as most like a family by the related-child subjects.

2. In the intermediate grades, 33.3 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as least like a family by the related-child subjects.

3. In the primary grades, 41.6 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as most like a family by the related-child subjects.

4. In the primary grades, 75 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as least like a family by the related-child subjects.

5. In the total teacher sample (N=24), 29 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as most like a family by the related child subjects.

6. In the total teacher sample (N=24), 54.2 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as least like a family by the child subjects.

The child subjects were asked to give reasons for their choices of the family structures. the comments related to the family structure choice of mother-child as a structure most like a family were as follows:

1. You can have a family so long as you have at least one big person. Usually a mother at least you need a mother.

2. I don't know if it is a real family, but it is a kind of family when you have a mother and a kid like a son or a daughter.

3. Our family has a mother and a father and a child. But, mother and I are our family most of the time.

My father is only in it only a little. You can still be a family with just a mother. It might not be the best but it will have to do.

4. A mother is in our family and we have children, too. Our father is away so I'm not sure if he counts or not. I don't see him that much. My mother said not to think about it or I'll get a headache.

5. We have two children and one mother in a family. We did have a father in it. He got drunk and is gone. So, now mother and my sister and me are the family. All that is left, I guess.

The comments related to the family structure choice of father-child-mother as a structure most like a family were as follows:

1. You have to have a father and a mother to make a real family. You know like you read about. They all love each other and everything.

2. We didn't have a father and a mother always. A family should have two. A father and a mother are nice to have and kids.

3. A father has to be there to make the kids mind and a mother has to be there to cook. If you only have a mother you only have part. If you only have a father you only have part. Kids are a part, too.

4. I have a new father and a mother, so I have a good family. If you mean a good family, that's both. Families aren't right with just a mother and children.

5. Now, a normal family has a father and a mother who love you. Although, I really have two of each. I think they are all my family and that's four. No the real family is a real father and a real mother who stay with the children.

The comments related to the family structure choice of father-child-child-mother as a structure most like a family were as follows:

1. A family needs more than one kid. I have never been in a family with just one kid. Some families

have one mother and no father and that's not right either. You need at least two parents and 2 kids.

2. I'd like to have a brother and sister because I did before. A lot of the stories I read have them. A real family has a father, a mother, and more than one child. They all live together too. That is real important. If you like have brothers or sister or stepbrothers who live in Texas, you never get to see them.

The comments related to the family structure choice of mother-child-child as a structure most like a family were as follows:

1. A mother is all you need. We get along fine. A mother and kids will do. We get along just fine in our family. It might not by the very greatest but it'll be a family anyway. We get along real fine. Some people say our kind is not a family but they are wrong. We are a family. We do fine.

2. It's alright to just have a mother. If you can't get a father its alright. A father really messes up a family anyway. My mother says if she finds a nice father she is going to get one. Jack is alright but he's not like a father. Just a mother is alright with us.

The comments related to the family structure choice of mother-child-child-child as a structure most like a family were as follows:

1. A mother and three kids are a kind of family. It is true. No one knows about a family but the people in it. Our family is that kind. You can see all kinds of families. Like on TV you see families and you read about all different families. Some families have two parents. You have other families. Mothers are real important to families. I think maybe all families have mothers and kids. Lots of families don't have dads. It's no big deal as long as the kids have a mother.

The comment related to the family structure choice of father-child-child-child as a structure most like a family was as follows:

1. This could be a family. We were sorta like this once but not anymore. I always thought it was fun to have a father. Having a mom is nice too. You don't have to have both. My friend lives with his father and never sees his mom. He says he likes it. Fathers really can help you.

The comments related to the family structure choice of child-child as a structure least like a family were as follows:

1. You have to have parents or at least one. Who would take care of you if you didn't have at least a mom?

2. Children alone are orphans. I was almost an orphan once.

3. Just children. They'd never make it. When we're left alone too long, we fight. Sometimes we can't find anything to eat and we fight about that too. You have to have a mother or a dad.

4. Two children are against the law to make a family.

5. Two children would just cry. One weekend she left us. We cried our eyes out. We were still a family because she came back. But, two children all by themselves are in trouble.

6. That's silly. Everyone knows kids have to have big people to help them. They have to eat and can't drive to the store and they don't have money either.

The comments related to the family structure choice of father-mother as a structure least like a family were as follows:

1. You have to have kids to have a family. Like you get up on the platform and tell the judge about the cigarette burns. Then, he takes you away and you belong to a new family. The mother and father are not a family anymore. If the mother gets a new father and they put you back, you are family.

The comment related to the family structure choice of child-child-child-child-child-child as a structure least like a family was a follows:

1. That many kids would have to have someone old to help them. That's too many kids alone.

The identification of the mother-child family structure as most like a family by 45.8 percent of the child subjects indicated a change from the traditional family structure view previously expressed by all children. Moore et al. (1977) reported no variance in affirmation of legitimate family structures with children from one-parent and two-parent homes. In addition, the studies by Wallerstein (1976, 1977) indicated that children involved in the disruption of divorce approved the traditional, two parent family structure as the acceptable structure for all families. However, Armbruster (1982) noted that while there was no significant difference in children's affirmation or denial of family structures according to family life experience, more children living in one-parent homes were willing to affirm and discuss one-parent homes as acceptable family structures. The present study indicated that the traditional family was chosen by only 25% of the children. Also, many of the choices and reasons for the choices appear to be related to the life experience of the divorce-experienced child.

The selection of the child-child family structure as least like a family by 79.1 percent of the divorce-experienced child subjects and the reasons offered for these

choices indicated that children recognize the functions of adults within the family setting.

The intermediate grade related-teachers identified the family structures chosen by the related-child subjects most often as the traditional two-parent family. Only 16.6 percent of the intermediate grade related-teachers were able to recognize the family structures chosen by the child subjects. However, in the primary grades 41.6 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen by the child subjects. In related comments, the primary teachers often indicated conversations with the child subjects that revealed a notion of the family life. This indicates a 25 percent higher rate of perception recognition by the primary grade teachers. Again, the grade level of the child and the teacher is related to the extent of the teacher's perception.

Characteristics of Family Members

The divorce-experienced child subjects were asked to assign characteristic descriptors to the family members of mother, father, and children (to be regarded as brother, sister, self or any combination thereof). The characteristics of mother chosen most often and the percentage of the children making the descriptor assignment were as follows: good (58.3 percent), pleasant (54.2 percent), beautiful (62.5 percent), fair (58.3 percent), nervous (66.6 percent), unhappy (54.2 percent), kind (58.3 percent), help-

less (62.5 percent), weak (62.5 percent), powerless (66.6 percent), loving (58.3 percent), smart (70.9 percent), warm (62.5 percent), exciting (50 percent), tired (75 percent), and right (62.5 percent).

The characteristics of father chosen most often and the percentage of the children making the descriptor assignment were as follows: good (66.6 percent), pleasant (70.8 percent), beautiful (75 percent), fair (83.3 percent), calm (79.16 percent), happy (91.66 percent), kind (83.3 percent), helpful (91.66 percent), strong (100 percent), powerful (100 percent), loving (83.3 percent), smart (95.9 percent), warm (95.8 percent), exciting (87.5 percent), rested (79.2 percent), and right (95.8 percent).

The characteristics of brother, sister, self or any combination thereof that were chosen most often and the percentage of the children making the descriptor assignment were as follows: bad (58.3 percent), unpleasant (54.2 percent), ugly (62.5 percent), unfair (54.2 percent), nervous (75 percent), unhappy (58.3 percent), kind (58.3 percent), helpless (66.6 percent), weak (66.6 percent), powerless (70.8 percent), loving (50 percent), dumb (54.2 percent), warm (62.5 percent), boring (54.2 percent), rested (79.16 percent), and wrong (62.5 percent).

The related-teacher subject was asked to simulate the child subject's response. The mean score of the descriptors chosen by the primary related-teachers that agreed with the child subjects' perception of the family was 66.48

percent. The mean score of the descriptors chosen by the intermediate related-teachers that agreed with the child subject' perception of the family was 42.5 percent. The mean score of the descriptors chosen by the related-teacher subjects (N=24) that agreed with the child subjects' perception of the family was 54.49 percent. Thus, the mean score of the primary teachers exceeded the mean score of the intermediate teachers by 23.98 percent.

The characteristics that were chosen by the child subjects for the father were in a more positive direction than those chosen for the mother. This was consistent with Bane (1979) and Nelson (1985) who indicated that the mother is most often the custodial parent, must deal with greater family stress, and is often the target of blame assignment by the children.

The characteristics that were chosen by the child subjects for brother, sister, self or any combination thereof were in a more negative direction than those chosen for either parent. This was consistent with the ideas of Hart, Germain, and Brassard (1983) in that the greatest consequence of the divorce disrupted home is often the self esteem of the children involved in the disruptive process. The research of Wallerstein (1980) indicated that maintaining the image of self was one of the greatest hurdles for the divorce-experienced child. Wallerstein's research which found many of the divorce-experienced children to be worried, angry, and overburdened may account for the nega-

tive picture of self and mother that resulted from the present study (Wallerstein and Bundy, 1984).

Function of the Family

The responses of the child subjects as they answered the 49 questions in the open-ended interview were categorized in accordance with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It was impossible to identify an exact response to an exact question as the child subjects often rambled and generated spontaneous responses to unrelated issues during the discussion of a given question. Thus, many questions were answered without being asked. At least one comment from each of the child subjects was relevant to the first four needs in the hierarchy.

The comments related to the survival needs which reflected concern for immediate existence indicated the family function to be instrumental in both the satisfaction and denial of these needs. Those comments which reflected the family function to be involved in needs satisfaction were as follows:

1. My mother helps me by getting me food to eat and cooks it.

2. I like my house now. I have my own room and it's neat.

3. I always have plenty to eat. That is what a family does for is get you things you need. I eat toast, Cheerios, and things like that for breakfast. Mother makes me eat that breakfast. The most important things a family does is eat like dinner and stuff.

4. We use to live with Aunt Jean. Then, we lived with Uncle Mannie and I really like living in our new place. I use to worry a lot about where we'd live next. But now that I have my new dad, did I tell you about him, Jim.. I have a house to live in.

5. Mother washes clothes and gets me all the things I need. I get dressed, of course, myself. Mother buys me new clothes, now. I like my mother because she really tries to get me what I need.

Typical comments that indicated some degree of denial were as follows:

1. It's really not too good when you don't know where you are going to live. We'd move to one house and then we couldn't pay. We had to move. We move a lot. We have some furniture. Not the good furniture. We couldn't pay and they took it away in a truck. But, I like to sleep on the floor. It is really fun. Did you ever?

2. Mostly, nobody fixes breakfast because we don't like it. Sometimes, I did eat breakfast but not too much. Mostly, our family just eats supper. I eat a bunch at school. Then I'm so full, I don't need any breakfast. I love the lunchroom's pizza. I could eat tons and tons of it. For my birthday, we might get to have pizza. I'm going to ask and see. I think my mom could make pizza.

3. Mother stays out late so she sleeps in. She works hard. She is really tired. We try not to wake her up. She is bad if you do. Really mad. So, we get ready for school. We just wait to eat until lunch. Sometimes, my stomach goes grrrrrr about like reading time. When its real quiet, it's funny to hear it.

4. My clothes are usually alright. I'd like some new ones and I'll probably get some. That lady that knows my mother gave us some. My mother would like me to have really good clothes but they are too much. Do you think I look bad? Mary said that I smell. I don't think so. If I tell you something, will you promise not to tell anyone. Right. Sometimes, my brother is scared and we sleep together. He, you know, gets cold and, you know, does it in the bed. It gets on my underwear and it does stink. I'm going to get new underwear when I get new clothes. Don't tell, you know, what I told.

5. Well, you see mother doesn't get home until really late. So I just eat whatever is around like potato chips, pop, candy, stuff like that. I'm not that hungry. Anyway, I eat at school. I don't like it but I have to eat it. I wish I could have good stuff like I have a home like cookies, pop, chips and stuff. I'd pack lunch but mother says its too high. If you put chips in a coke and shake it, man, now that's good for breakfast. Did you say nobody would know what I said? Not even my mother? Well, if you want to know what is really good, put some vodka in the coke with chips and shake it good. Man, that's good, real good. If I get caught I'm in big trouble. But I know where she hides it. She thinks she can drink it but not me. I know good stuff.

The comments related to security needs reflected a concern for safety and the events of the future. Also, a need for stability and security was evident. Those comments which reflected the family function to be involved in the denial of these needs were as follows:

1. I feel afraid of him some of the time. Like, he's not my real dad. I worry about him. He acts funny sometimes. He touches me too much. I'm afraid he might touch me, you know, in the private part. He holds me on his lap and I don't like it. I told my mom to make him stop but she said I'm silly. But, I still feel, you know, creepy with him. If he ever does, you know, I'll tell my real dad.

2. I'm afraid that they'll fight like my mother fought with my dad. He gets mad all the time and he just lives in our house most of the time. Sometimes, he leaves. I hate the screaming. Don't dare tell a living soul, but sometimes he hits her. She cries a lot. My mom says he is good for my brother because they play ball and things like that. But when they fight, I'm scared. It's going to happen all over.

3. Sometimes, I think she might leave me. I stay with my aunt most weekends and now I'm staying with her most of the time. My mom goes to Dallas because she has an apartment there and lives with her boyfriend. I don't go there because they are so busy and Dallas is so dangerous. I know she

loves me. She's the best. I know she'll always come back. She wants me to stay here because the school is better and there is not so much traffic. I couldn't ride my bike in Dallas. I know she'll come back. She always did. I don't know for sure when. Don't you think she'll come? She always says she loves me.

4. If it makes my mother happy, then it's OK with me. I just wish our family could be back like it was. I don't care if she gets married, I guess. But, you know my dad might come back. I wish he hadn't left. He had to. He's probably never coming back either. Did you know he is in the hospital? Do you want me to tell you why? You have to swear to never, ever tell. He has AIDS. Do you think he will die? Our family will never be the same. He tried to help us. She made him go. I saw him and he looks awful. I don't know what we are going to do.

5. You see, my real dad is Clyde and he really wanted us to be a family and live a good life. I don't know. It didn't work out. So now, my mom married him. I call him Jack. She calls him Jackie. I really wish he'd leave. He just takes all her time. They run around and she gets all dressed up. I know my real dad wouldn't like him. I'm going to talk to her about him. We don't need him around. My mom just wants him.

6. I hide under the bed because I'm scared. They holler and fight and hit. They use bad words. You know parent-fighting words! My mother said they might get a divorce, too. But she is mean. I want my other daddy back. I don't like them to fight and be mean.

7. I wish he didn't watch those nasty movies. He won't ever do those bad things to me again or he'll have to go to jail again. They do those bad things in those movies. He goes to church now and acts sorta nice. I worry, though. My mother doesn't want him to leave. I guess I don't want him to. She says don't fuss about him because we really need him. I think he loves us.

8. Did you hear what my father did? He set our house on fire. My mother called the police. He slapped her around and says now he has to go to jail. He was mad because we divorced him. You should have seen that fire. It was taller than you. Mom said he'd get in big, big trouble if he did that kinda stuff anymore. I'm afraid to sleep. You can't

ever tell when he might make a fire again. We moved. He might burn this house, too. He gets real mad about my mom. He use to turn red and scream when he got mad. Mom should not have made him mad. He was real nice until he got mad.

The comments related to belonging needs reflected a concern for being a part of the group, being wanted, and experiencing love. Those comments which reflected the family function to be involved in the denial of these needs were as follows:

1. Well now, I have two fathers and I'm not sure if I really want two. My real father is in Alabama and he wanted me to stay but I tried to but a father and a girl have problems. Like his friends come over and left beer cans every where. Did I tell you he's an alcoholic? Well, I tried to clean up the place but they'd just mess it up again. He'd stay out kinda late and my aunt found out. She told mom. I think they agreed that I better come back. He really wanted me but he had too many people who wanted to be his friends. I just didn't work out. Then, my mom was busy with Donald and now they are married and we go with him. I hope it works out. It sorta has already. Do you remember my brother who was here? Well, he went to Alabama and really likes it. I'd really like to try Alabama again and I might if my real father wants me. Donald would probably love for me to go and then he'd be the main one.

2. My mother really loves me. My Arkansas dad wouldn't have hit us if he had wanted me. He never liked me really. I heard him tell my mother that he wasn't even sure if I belonged to him. Do you know what I mean? Now that Daddy Bob is back we'll stay with him. The boys don't like him. As long as mom likes him I don't care. Mother and me are a family. The boys came from--well, Ted has a dad in New York and I don't know about Jeremiah's dad. I'd really like us all to be together. Mom keeps me with her and she won't let anyone get me . . . not even my Arkansas dad.

3. I like my family because we do things together. Like go to the lake or to the city. I have fun. Well, we use to have trips like that together. Now, I mostly just go to my father's on the weekends. Not everyone. He is tired and busy and

doesn't have time to take me much like to concerts and things. Then, Darla always hangs around now with him. I think my mother is glad to have me go with my father. She likes to go dancing and stay up real late. She works hard and deserves some fun. Sometimes my father takes my back early and she's not home yet. But I don't care. I just mostly watch TV.

4. Explaining about my family is really complicated and you might not understand. My real mother hated boys so she sold me for $1,000 to my mother I live with now. My father was in the nursing home because he had an accident. His truck crashed because he was so sad over her selling me, the divorce, and everything like that. My mother that keeps me really wants me. I know she does. She let me visit my real father and he said I was just what he wanted. He would have lived with Mary, my mother now, if he could have walked. Did I tell you he died last year. I went to the funeral. Yea, it was really nice and he wanted me.

5. I'm not sure who I belong to the most. I guess I really belong to both of them. I flew to South Dakota and my father and Susan met me at the airport. I was going to stay all summer but things got all messed up. So, I stayed two weeks and came back. Mom was mad. She called him up and told him he was supposed to take care of me. She said to leave Susan alone. But I like Susan, too. It's just that father is busy with his work and Susan. Mom is busy with Hank and her new job. She says she needs a break, too. We're going to call my grandmother and see if I can stay with her some. Sometimes I stay with our neighbor. Now, she is really neat to stay with. You can stay up as late as you want and eat what you want, too. You said you weren't going to tell any of this, right? Well, she lets me drink a little bit of beer almost everytime I stay. She is fun like that.

6. I get sad. I didn't want to leave my house in the country. We had to. I hate the trailer. Sometimes, I hate Ann. Do you know her? She took my dad to Tulsa and kept him with her kids. I hate her kids, too. They are mean, real mean. I have to stay there, like, I don't know a few days and we really fight. They have a big house and I hate all of them. My mother tries to make our trailer nice but she should have kept my dad. Maybe we will get a good house one day.

Sometimes, I wish I didn't have to go to any house. Just stay away from all of them.

7. I try to help. I get in lots of trouble. Since he moved in, he and my mother are always busy. I like to go with them but they are like they want to be alone. You know, I tried living with them in Nebraska but that didn't work. I'd rather stay with my grandmother because it's not the same. I tried living with my father and that sure didn't do. I took my rabbit. His girlfriend didn't like it. I kept it really quiet in the basement and mostly cleaned up. It never hurt anything. She killed it. I ran off but they found me. I don't really feel good living with any of them. I wish it was back like the first. I think I'm going to try my grandmother's and see how I do.

8. We might go back to Wichita. There are too many people at grandma's. We don't even fit. I want to go to Wichita, I think. But, who should I live with? My dad and mom have two places. She says come to her. He says stay with him. Really, there are too many people in Wichita and bad things going on. I don't know. My dad says I am his. My mom says that he is wrong. Maybe, they'll get back.

9. Nobody really wants me. My mother says she does to me. She don't act like it cause she talks about getting rid of me to my dad. Well not really rid but gone. She always calls him to say I'm causing trouble or being bad or something like that. He don't care. She don't care either if I don't bug her.

The comments related to the esteem needs reflected a concern for personal worth and value. Those comments which indicated the family function to be involved in the denial of these needs were as follows:

1. If I could change my family, I'd change myself. I cause trouble. Mom and dad fought a lot about us kids. Mom was tired and we needed to eat and stuff. He wouldn't help. If I hadn't caused so much trouble about things, things might be OK. I love them both but they both think I cause too much trouble. I don't mean to. I guess I'm just that way. I get in lots of trouble at school, too. You probably already know. Everybody knows I cause trouble.

2. I really need to stop the bad things I do. Like, I steal from her purse but I need some money. Just a little. You promised not to tell. She says I'm a bad kid. He hits my hands 10 times each. He says kids stink. My sister and I packed up some stuff and took off. They sent the police. The police think I'm bad, too.

3. I do best at working in the lunchroom. The janitor lets me help with putting up tables and I'm really good at it, or that's what he said. I'm even a good sweeper in the lunchroom. I try to help at home but I mess up all the time. When I go to my dad, I'm not allowed to mess up. That's what his friend said and I never did stuff right like dad wanted it anyway. I'm not too good at stuff at school except for putting up the tables. My mom said that I am thick between the ears and I really need to try harder. We don't get home 'til late and, you know, my dad helped me with my homework when he was here. Now, mom's too tired. She works, you know. But, John says I'm good at lunchroom stuff. I'm not like most kids. I'm just not too good at most things.

4. My mom loves me and I love her. She thinks I'm cute. I look in the mirror to see if I'm fat. I don't really like the way I look in the mirror. My teacher said my clothes are dirty. I told mom. Mom said to not listen to her talk cause she don't know how we are. It's OK to be dirty. I am sorta dirty. I don't like dirty. Two big kids called me a dirty punk. I don't care. Sometimes, I am dirty. We have dirty kids cause we don't have the money to go wash, but I don't care. My mom says we are poor cause of my dad. My dad don't care if I am dirty. Next time, I'm going to hit anyone who calls me dirty punk.

5. Well, see I tried to make them get it. They hit each other and yelled. I said for them to stop it. But they didn't stop it for a long, long time. I tried to stop it. I guess I should have stopped it. If I had been good, he would have stayed. You see, I try to do things but they don't do right. You see, I try to cook. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are my best. You see, I try to do good in school but I can't. I'm a little dumb. My mother says we are both dumb. We were dumb to get such a father is what my mother says. We are really dumb for not making him take me with him too. I don't know what to do about being dumb. Maybe, I'll get over it.

The related-teacher subjects were interviewed concerning the child's perceptions of the family function and needs satisfaction. The related-teacher was asked to discuss the related-child subject's view of the family function in the satisfaction or denial of four needs.

Examples of comments by the intermediate grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to survival needs were the following:

1. He seems to be OK. He doesn't talk that much about his family. I guess he thinks its alright.

2. She never complains, so I guess everything is right. I really don't know much about the family except for what I hear around town.

3. I don't know that family but I think everything is fairly normal.

4. From all I can tell, she is taken care of pretty well. She complains about other kid's comments sometimes.

5. I do know that family and who knows what goes on, but we never discuss anything that personal.

Examples of comments by the primary grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to survival needs were the following:

1. I know the mother and have talked to her a few times about the needs that I see here at school. She tells me she is doing the best that she can.

2. Well, I have had two conferences with the parents and they seem to be trying to make a good home. I think she sees herself as well cared for.

3. Yes. I think an improvement could be made in the nutrition habits of the whole family. He is often hungry at school and I get him a snack. He knows that the family needs help.

Examples of comments by the intermediate grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to security needs were the following:

1. Well, you know as busy as we are we just don't talk about those things.

2. I really don't know the family. The mother has never showed up for conference. I never talk much to students about these things. I guess she thinks the family is fine.

3. I don't really know the family and the child never complains. So, I would assume everything is under control. She acts alright.

Examples of comments by the primary grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to security needs were the following:

1. Sometimes, she really feels insecure about herself and the things we do at school. I know she has had a rough time at home. I try to give her a chance to talk as much as possible. She worries quite often about the home situation.

2. He never says much but I sense that he does not feel stable in the home environment. I wish he would talk more often. He does have problems that are quite related to the recent happenings at home.

3. At several conferences, both parents have come. I really think they are trying. I talk to the mother continually about the child's feelings. So much anxiety about the parents' relationships.

4. She worries often about her family situation. She is afraid that she is going to be left alone.

Examples of comments by the intermediate grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to belonging needs were the following:

1. He doesn't get along well at school and makes rude remarks about the family. I would think he doesn't feel like he belongs to anyone.

2. Who knows?

3. With all that teachers have to do, it is hard to find time to talk about personal matters. We seem to have more and more to teach and we just can't worry about families.

4. She appears to feel good about her home and has lots of friends.

Examples of comments by the primary grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to belonging needs were the following:

1. We talk about families quite often. She loves her family and always speaks in a positive way about them.

2. During share time, she want to tell something about what she and mother are going to do. I think she really wishes that she and mother would do more together.

3. I know the mother is very insecure and I am sure some of this is reflected in the student's reluctance to try new things. They have had some family problems and I'm trying to help in every way possible. She is an insecure little girl.

4. I think she feels good about her stepfather and her mother. She hasn't always felt this way but they are getting closer. She use to want to call her mother all the time. She seems to really be close to her mother.

Examples of comments by the intermediate grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to esteem needs were the following:

1. She acts fine. She doesn't have many friends though and is fairly much a loner. She never mentioned family.

2. I haven't noticed. She just comes and works and goes.

3. We don't have time to talk about her family. I don't recall it being mentioned.

4. I have caught her crying a few times. She'd never tell why. I guess she has a rough home.

Examples of comments by the primary grade related-teachers regarding the child's perception of the family function as related to esteem needs were the following:

1. We have been reading stories about being a special person. She has many needs in this area but we are working on it. I have talked at conference with her mother about helping with this at home.

2. I have talked with the parents about her lack of self-esteem and we're doing activities that I think will help. The family tells me that things should get better. She loves her family but worries about them. She really needs help.

3. She says she has a wonderful mother, but I sense that things might not be quite right. Some of the names that she says are given to her at home are less than complimentary. I worry about her.

The perceptions of the divorce-experienced children as related to the family function in satisfying survival, security, belonging, and esteem needs often reflected a denial of these needs. The primary teachers often recognized this denial of needs. Most intermediate teachers felt that this type of observation was beyond their area of responsibility and had not recognized either satisfaction or denial of the needs.

Purpose of the Family

The responses of the children when asked to determine the purpose of the family were identical to the responses to the definition of the family. The dimensions of emo-

tions and guidance were consistently mentioned and the words "to have someone to love you and care for you" were constantly used. This may be attributed to the elementary school-age child's connotation of the word "purpose". The related-teachers' definitions consistently mentioned membership and residence with little recognition given to the emotion dimension.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The family is the social institution historically and traditionally charged with the responsibility and the challenge of socializing the young. In the past two decades the family form has experienced multiple and rapid changes which have consequently altered the family function. The principal agent of change in American families has been the action of divorce. As a result of the increasing prominence of divorce, at least half of all school-age children will soon have experienced the complexities of living within a family that has been disrupted.

The school is the institution of society charged with receiving the children that come from this changing family environment and with accomplishing the tasks that allow these children to become successful students and eventually productive, contributing adult citizens. An understanding of the child's first teacher and continual teacher, the family, is essential to the development of an interpersonal student/teacher relationship on which to build learning opportunities compatible with society's goals. However, recent schooling movements have not considered the validity,

the significance, and the gravity of providing for these human relationships. Comer (1988) explicated the relationship issue by stating:

> Our society has changed--so have our schools. But by focusing solely on academic changes, the schools have ignored the affective domain--the crucial human relationships that students need to grow and learn. We remain mired in a mechanical approach to learning. It's one that has never served our children well--and in today's world dooms many of our students to failure (p. 39).

Clearly, student and teacher interpersonal relationships and consequent human understandings are essential to solving the perplexing problems visible in today's complicated and turbulent society.

This study is directed toward a view of those student/teacher interpersonal relationships that have allowed for the teacher's understanding of the divorce-experienced child's perception of the family. The study sought to examine the divorce-experienced child's perceptions of the family definition, the family structure, the characteristics of family members, the family function, and the family purpose. After examination and identification of the child's perceptions of these family entities, the study sought to determine the extent to which the perceptions were recognized by teachers.

The open-ended interview was utilized with the 24 divorce-experienced child subjects and the 24 related-teacher subjects to facilitate identification of the child's perceptions of the family and the teacher's recognition of these perceptions. A modified Q-sort technique and family

structure illustrations were used to enhance the interview process.

The study revealed a definition of the family by divorce-experienced children which concentrated on the emotional dimension and which also included guidance and membership. The word "love" was used with consistency throughout the definitions. This definition was recognized by 33.3 percent of the primary grade teachers and 8.3 percent of the intermediate grade teachers. Of the total teacher sample, 20.8 percent of the teachers recognized all dimensions inherent in the children's definitions.

The mother-child family structure was chosen by 45.8 percent of the child subjects as the type of structure most like a family. A father was chosen in two of the structure choices, but a mother was present in some combination in all structure choices. In the intermediate grades, 16.6 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the child's perception of the family structure. In the primary grades, 41.6 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the child's perception of the family structure. In the total teacher sample (N=24), 29 percent of the related-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as most like a family by the related child subjects.

The child-child structure was chosen by 79.1 percent of the child subjects as the structure least like a family. In the total teacher sample (N=24), 54.2 percent of the re-

lated-teacher subjects recognized the family structures chosen as least like a family by the child subjects.

The characteristics of mother chosen most often by the child subjects were: good, pleasant, beautiful, fair, nervous, unhappy, kind, helpless, weak, powerless, loving, smart, warm, exciting, tired, and right.

The characteristics of father chosen most often by the child subjects were: good, pleasant, beautiful, fair, calm, happy, kind, helpful, strong, powerful, loving, smart, warm, exciting, rested, and right.

The characteristics of children chosen most often by the child subjects were: bad, unpleasant, ugly, unfair, nervous, kind, helpless, weak, powerless, loving, dumb, warm, boring, rested, and wrong.

The mean score of the descriptors chosen by the related-teacher subjects (N=24) that agreed with the child subjects' perceptions of the family members was 54.49 percent.

The function of the family was viewed through the needs hierarchy as defined by Maslow (1954). The responses of the child subjects were categorized according to Maslow's hierarchy which included survival needs, security needs, belonging needs, and esteem needs. The responses from most of the child subjects indicated needs dissatisfaction in some areas. The primary teachers recognized many of the perceptions of family function that revealed needs denial. However, the intermediate teachers recog-

nized very few of the children's perceptions as verbalized or actualized.

The purpose of the family was defined by the child subjects in terms of emotion and guidance and was identical with the definition of the family. This may be accountable to the child subjects' connotation of the word "purpose". The related-teachers' definitions consistently mentioned membership and residence with little recognition given to the emotion dimension.

Conclusions

Children

1. As love was included in most of the children's definitions of the family, children appear to want and seek love above all else. This is confirmed by Pringle (1980) as she affirmed love and security as the basis for all lasting relationships and the primary need for all children. This is confirmed by Bronfenbrenner (1985) in his Proposition I which insists that the love of an adult is the foundation for child socialization.

2. The traditional two-parent family is no longer predominantly regarded as the model for all families by divorce-experienced children. The life experiences of these children may allow them to view the world in more flexible and compassionate terms. They may develop a greater acceptance of other social aspects that are altered by circumstance.

3. Divorce-experienced children may have the ability to formulate and contain both the macrocosmic views of social concepts and the microcosmic view of social concepts. Responses often affirmed the proposal of Camara (1979) in that children may be able to simultaneously have views outside their experience and also microcosmic views based in their own particular environment. They are willing to accept society's view of the family while maintaining their own view as well.

4. Divorce-experienced children perceive two kinds of parents: real and not real. The real parents are defined by biology and other parents defined by circumstances. A sensitive kinship exists for the "real parent" regardless of the time or physical distance from that parent.

5. The mother is perceived as essential to the family above all other members. This view is substantiated by the nurturing concepts of Raths (1972) and Conklin (1984) which deem the maternal influence as having the greatest impact on the children.

6. The characteristics of mother present a confused state by the children. The children's comments indicated a love for mother, an understanding that mother might be bound by circumstances, and yet a resentment toward the mother. This may be supported by Wallerstein (1980) who suggested that when children are hurt and angry they strike out at the most available person.

7. While the father was absent from the homes most of the time, the children produced a more positive view of the father than self or mother. Often the father image approached fantasy. The children appeared to hold a microcosmic view of mother and of self while supporting a macrocosmic view of the world's definition of the father. Many of the children's comments suggested compensation by replacing an absent father with a superior-father image.

8. The negative characteristics assigned to the siblings or self indicate a low self image. In many comments, children expressed the assumption of responsibility for the marital disruption and the unhappiness evident in the family. Furthermore, the child subjects often believed children to be a nuisance to parents and unwanted by at least one parent.

9. Divorce-experienced children do not perceive the family as functioning to well satisfy many needs. The withdrawal, isolation, or other behaviors reported as observed by teacher subjects may be related to needs denial. This contention is supported by the premise of Brassard et al. (1987) in that normal socialization is dependent on the satisfaction of needs.

Teachers

1. Primary grade teachers have better interpersonal relationships with students than do intermediate grade teachers. In every category of the interviews, the primary

grade teachers demonstrated greater understanding of the children's perceptions than did the teachers of the intermediate grades.

2. Elementary teachers have limited insight into the relevance of the child and family interactions.

3. Elementary teachers have limited recognition and understanding of divorce-experienced children's perceptions of the family.

Recommendations

1. Based on the findings of this study, research is encouraged to speculate further whether primary grade teachers have more intimate relationships with their students and have greater sensitivity to students' perceptions than do the teachers in the intermediate grades.

2. Research is encouraged to learn more about varying perceptions of children within other child populations.

3. The development is encouraged of curriculum materials and teaching methods that will address the phychosocial needs of all groups of children.

4. Encouragement is extended for the inclusion of sensitivity training in teacher education programs.

5. Encouragement is extended for directing new efforts toward the socialization needs of the divorce-experienced child.

Pedagogical Considerations

1. Contemporary professional literature reveals a thematic concentration on increased academic standardization of content and procedure, the objective measurement of achievement, industrial models of process, and external controls of both teachers and students. This emphasis reflects the profession's current preoccupation with cognitive matter while virtually ignoring affective concerns. Consequently, many educators, parents, and citizens remain unaware of the integrated aspects of cognition and affect that emerge during the schooling process. Researchers should address the interrelatedness of thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Writers should pursue topics that heighten professional awareness of the value of including emotional growth as a curricular entity.

2. Today's educational community is confronted with social issues that are approaching the crisis stage. However, it appears that only artificial, surface conditions are delineated for attention. Students' involvement with drugs, suicide, pregnancy, and acts of violence has been viewed from a clinical perspective and a prescriptive orientation. Attention should be given to the reality of the daily experiences of the young that generate anger, anxiety, confusion and mistrust, and are organized into a larger framework of attitudes, values, and beliefs through which to filter life's choices.

3. The continuing direction for teacher education programs features a content orientation, offers the educator training in skills of the clinician, and urges a focus on achievement in cognitive terms. This approach does not include courses for prospective teachers that would lead to producing enhanced student/teacher interpersonal relationships in the classroom or courses that provide potential educators with the opportunity to recognize the influence that social considerations might have on students. A reorganization of teacher education programs should include a focus on the multidimensional human aspects of the learner who lives in today's complex society.

4. Existing, limited, teacher autonomy is being smothered by an increasingly mechanistic bureaucracy. Never have teachers had fewer choices regarding content, methodology, materials, time and other organizational variables as legislative mandates and reform agendas continue to determine the direction and essentials of schooling. As revealed by this study, many teachers commented that time within the imposed school plan did not allow for the cultivation of interpersonal relationships and attending to the human concerns of students. Attention should be directed to the need for allowing teachers to plan for school variables based on the perceived human needs of individual students.

5. Some agency of society must address the satisfaction of the basic survival and security needs for

today's children and the school would appear to be the logical institution to fill the void now created by many familial circumstances. Students cannot be expected to engage in great academic quests while hungry, dirty, inadequately clothed, frightened, or troubled. Many children are coming to the schooling experience with the basic needs denied.

6. Perhaps the school's role and function should be redefined to include a new kind of curriculum that involves children's feelings. Cognitive instruction alone will not provide a holistic education. If children demonstrate or express the need for love, perhaps the curriculum should allow for daily human interaction with a loving, caring, supportive adult. If children express fears of being alone, perhaps extended school programs should be developed and made available before and after regular school hours. If children are to be involved in increased self-care responsibilities, perhaps the curriculum should include programs designed to improve self-care skills. If existing families do not provide for the psychosocial needs of the children, perhaps those concerned with the total growth of the children must recognize and accommodate these needs. If students are caught in a world of conflict, perhaps they should be prepared to manage controversy, conflict, and confrontation through personal decision making and orderly resolution of issues. These concerns cannot be addressed within the existing conception of education purpose.

School reform should be based on the holistic needs of the human learners in today's society.

It is hoped that this study will create an awareness of the divorce-experienced child's perceptions of the family and the need for continued research in this area. It is hoped that through this research, teachers and parents will become more sensitive to the value of interpersonal relationships and the worth of attending to children's points of view.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aberle, D.F. (1950). The functional prerequisites of a society. Ethics, 60, 100-111.

Adams, B.N. (1971). The American Family: A Sociological Interpretation. Chicago: Markham Publishing Co.

Aldous, J. (1970). Strategies for developing family theory. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 37, 250-258.

American Humane Association. (1986). Highlights of the Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting 1982. Denver, CO: Author.

Anshen, R.N. (1949). The Family: Its Functions and Destiny. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Anthony, J.E. and Koupernik, C. (1970). The Child in His Family. New York: Wiley-Interscience.

Appel, K.W. (1985). America's Changing Families. Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa.

Armbruster, M. (1982). Divorce and the School-Age Child's Perception of Family. Unpublished master's thesis. Oklahoma State University.

Arnold, L.E. (1985). Parents, Children, and Change. Massachusetts: D.C. Heath.

Asher, S.J. & Bloom, B.L. (1983). Geographic mobility as a factor in adjustment to divorce. Journal of Divorce, 6, 69-84.

Bales, R.F. (1951). Interaction Process Analysis: A Method for the Study of Small Groups. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

Bane, M.J. (1979). Marital disruption and the lives of children. In G. Levinger & O.C. Moles (Eds.), Divorce and Separation: Context, Causes and Consequences. New York: Basic Books.

Bell, R.Q. (1968). A re-interpretation of the direction of effects in studies of socialization. Psychological Review, 75, 81-95.

Berelson, B. & Steiner, G.A. (1967). Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings. New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich.

Berger, P. (1985). Invitation to sociology a humanistic perspective. In K. Finsterbusch (Ed.), Sociology (pp. 7-9). Guilford, Connecticut: The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc.

Biehler, R., & Snowman, F. (1982). Psychology Applied to Teaching. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Biller, H.B. & Soloman, R.S. (1986). Child Maltreatment and Paternal Deprivation. Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Co.

Blau, P.M. (1977) Inequality and Heterogeneity: A Primitive Theory of Social Structure. New York: Free Press.

Brassard, M.R., Germain, R., & Hart, S.M. (1987). Psychological Maltreatment of Children and Youth. New York: Pergamon Press.

Bricklin, B. & Bricklin P.M. (1970). Strong Family-Strong Child. New York: Delacorte Press.

Brim, O.B., Jr., and Wheeler, S. (1966). Socialization after Childhood. New York: Wiley.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1985). The parent/child relationship and our changing society. In L.E. Arnold (Ed.), Parents, Children, and Change. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath

_____. (1984). Work and family through time and space, In S.B. Kamerman and C.D. Hayes (Eds.). Families that Work: Children in a Changing World. Washington, D.C. National Academy Press.

_____. (1973). The psychological costs of quality and equality in education. Child Development, 38 (3), 909-25.

_____. (1970). Two Worlds of Childhood: U.S. and U.S.S.R. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Broadhurst, D. (1984). The Educator's Role in the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, D.C.: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Burgess, E. (1968). Family Roles and Interaction. Chicago: Rand McNally & Co.

_____. (1926). The family as a unity of interacting personalities. Family, 7, 3-9.

Burgess, E.W., Locke, H.J. & Thomes, M.M. (1971). The Family. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.

Burns, A., Bottomley, G. & Jools P. (1983). The Family in the Modern World. Boston: George Allen & Urwin.

Caldwell, R.A. & Bloom, B.L. (1982). Social support: Its structure and impact on marital disruption. American Journal of Community Psychology, 10, 647-667.

Camara, K.A. (1979). Children's construction of social knowledge: Concepts of family and the experience of divorce (Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1979). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1979, 40, 3433-B. (University Microfilms No. 180 T103)

Caplan, G. (1978). The family as support system. Report of the Task Panel on Community Support Systems, Task panel reports submitted to the President's commission on mental health. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2, 168.

Caplow, T. (1969). Two Against One: Coalitions in Triads. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Castillo, A. (1981, May). Judges flip the family album. The New York Times. p. E9.

Cherlin, A. & Furstenberg, F.F. (1985). The American family in the year 2000. Sociology 85/86. Guilford, Connecticut: The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc. p. 134-138.

Coale, A.J. (1965). Aspects of the Analysis of Family Structure. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Coletta, N.D. (1983). Stressful lives: The situation of divorced mothers and their children. Journal of Divorce. 6, 19-31.

_____. (1979). The impact of divorce: Father absence or poverty? Journal of Divorce, 3, 27-35.

Comer, J.P. (1988). Is parenting essential to good teaching? National Education Association Today, 6, 34-35.

Conklin, J.E. (1984). Sociology. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.

Cook, A.S. & McBride, J. (1982). Divorce: helping children cope. School Counselor. 30, 89-94.

Cooley, C.H. (1902). Human Nature and the Social Order. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Davis, K. (1950). Human Society. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Despert, J. (1953). Children of Divorce. New York: Doubleday.

Dietl, L.K. & M.J. Nett. (1983). Single Parent Families; Choice or Chance. New York: Columbia University.

Dobson, R. and Dobson, J. (1976). Humaneness in Schools: A Neglected Force. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt.

Dohrenwend, B.S. & Dohrenwend, B.R. (1974). Stressful Life Events: Their Nature and Effects. New York: Wiley.

Duncan, R.T. & Duncan, D. (1979). You're Divorced but your Children Aren't. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Eisner, E. (1985). The Educational Imagination. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Egeland, B, Sroufe, L.A. & Erickson, M. (1983). The developmental consequences of different patterns of maltreatment. Child Abuse and Neglect, 7, 459-469.

Elkin, H. (1960). Aggressive and erotic tendencies in army life. American Journal of Sociology. 31, 15-19.

Emery, R. E. (1983). Interparental conflict and the children of discord and divorce. Psychological Bulletin, 92, 310-330.

Farber, B. (1964). Family: Organization and Interaction. San Francisco: Chandler.

Felner, R.D., Farber, S.S., & Primavera, J. (1980). Children of divorce, stressful life events, & transitions: A framework for preventive efforts. In

R.H. Price, R.F. Ketterer, B.C. Bader, & J., Monahan (Eds.), Prevention in Mental Health: Research, Policy, and Practice. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Fischer, B. (1987). Families (Special Issue). National Education Association Today, 5, 30-41.

Foote, N.N. & Cottrell, L.S., Jr. (1955). Identity and Interpersonal Competence: A New Direction in Family Research. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fulton, J.A. (1979). Parental reports of children's post-divorce adjustment. Journal of Social Issues, 35, 126-139.

Gage, N.L. & Berliner, D.C. (1975). Educational Psychology. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Gardner, R. (1977). The Parent's Book about Divorce. New York: Bantam.

Glasser, W. (1965). Reality Therapy. New York: Harper and Row.

Glick, P.C. (1979). Children of divorced parents in demographic perspective. Journal of Social Issues. 35, 170-182.

Goldstein, S. & Solnit, A.J. (1984). Divorce and your Child. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Goode, W.J. (1964). The Family. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Green, B.J. (1978). Helping children of divorce: A multimodal approach. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 13, 31-45.

Hare, A.P. (1976). Handbook of Small Group Research. New York: Free Press.

Hart, S., Gelardo, M., & Brassard, M. (1986). Psychological maltreatment. In J. Jacobsen (Ed.), The Psychiatric Sequelae of Child Abuse. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

Hart S., Germain, B., & Brassard, M. (1983). Proceedings Summary of the International Conference on Psychological Abuse of Children and Youth. Indiana University: Office for the Study of the Psychological Rights of the Child.

Heath, S.B. & McLaughlin, M.W. (1987). A child resource policy: Moving beyond dependence on school and family. Phil Delta Kappan, 68, (8), 576-580.

Henry, D. (1981, February). Divorcing parent from child. The New York Times. p. C11.

Hess, R. & Camara, K. (1979). Post-divorce family relationships as mediating factors in the consequences of divorce for children. Journal of Social Issues, 35, 79-96.

Hetherington, E.M. (1984). Children in Families Under Stress. California: Jossey-Bass Co.

_____. (1979). Divorce: A child's perspective. American Psychologist, 34, 851-858.

Hetherington, E.M., Cox M. & Cox R. (1978). The aftermath of divorce. In J.H. Stevens, Jr. & M. Matthews (Eds.), Mother-Child-Father-Child Relations. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Hill, R. (1971). Modern systems theory and the family: A confrontation. In Sussman, M. (Ed.) Sourcebook in Marriage & the Family. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hill, R. & Hansen, D.A. (1960). The identification of conceptual frameworks utilized in family study. Marriage and Family Living, 22, 299-311.

Hodgkinson, Harold. (1987). Changing society, unchanging curriculum. Phi Kappa Phi Journal, 67 (3), 8-11.

Howe, H. (1986). The prospect for children in the United States. Phi Delta Kappan, 68 (4), 191-196.

James, W. (1890). The consciousness of self. The Principles of Psychology. New York: Henry Holt.

Kagan, J. (1980). The influences of the family. School Psychology Review, 9 (4), 298-311.

Kahn, A.J. & Kamerman, S.B. (1982). Helping America's Families. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Kalter, N., & Rembar, J. (1981). The significance of a child's age at the time of parental divorce. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 51, 85-100.

Keller, S. (1977). Does the family have a future? In A. Skolnick & J. Skolnick (Eds.), Family in Transition. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

Keniston, K. (1977). All Our Children. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Kephart, W.M. (1977). The Family, Society, and the Individual Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Kingsley, D. (1949). Human Society. New York: Macmillan.

Kitzinger, S. (1972). West Indian immigrant children with problems. Therapeutic Education, 6, 5-18.

Krugman, R.D. & Krugman, M.K. (1984). Emotional abuse in the classroom. American Journal of Diseases of Children, 138, 284-286.

Kuhn, M.H. (1954). Factors in personality: Socio-cultural determinants as seen through the Amish. Francis L.K. Hsu (Ed.) Aspects of Culture and Personality. New York: Macmillan.

Kurdek, L.A. (1981). An integrative perspective on children's divorce adjustment. American Psychologist, 36, 856-866.

Kurdek, L.A., Blisk, D., & Siesky, A.E. (1981). Correlates of children's long-term adjustment to their parents' divorce. Developmental Psychology. 17, 565-579.

Levinger, G. & Moles, D.C. (1979). Divorce and Separation: Context, Causes and Consequence. New York: Basic Books.

London, P. (1987). Character education and clinical intervention: A paradigm shift for U.S. schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 68 (9), 667-673.

Maddi, S.R. (1980). Personality Theories: A Comparative Analysis. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press.

Main, M., & Goldwyn, R. (1984). Predicting rejection of her infant from mother's representation of her own experience: Implications for the abused-abusing intergenerational cycle. Child Abuse and Neglect, 8 203-217.

Maslow, A.H. (1954). Motivation and Personality. New York: Harper and Row.

_____. (1968). Toward a Psychology of Being. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

_____. (1970). A Theory of Human Motivation. New York: Harper and Row.

_____. (1973). Dominance, self-esteem, self-actualization. In R.L. Lowry (Ed.) Germinal Papers of A.H. Maslow. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.

May, R. (1969). Love and Will. New York: W.W. Norton.

_____. (1961). Existential Psychology. New York: Random House.

McDermott, J.F. (1969). Parental divorce in early childhood. American Journal of Psychiatry, 124, 1424-1432.

_____. (1970) Divorce and its psychiatric sequelae in children. Archives of General Psychiatry. 23, 421-427.

McDonald, J. (1965). Myths about instruction. Educational Leadership, 22 (7), 613-614.

McGrath, J.E. (1978). Small group research. American Behavioral Scientist, 21, 651-671.

McLaughlin, M.W. & Shields, P.M. (1987). Involving low-income parents in the schools: A role for policy. Phi Delta Kappan, 69, (2), 156-160.

McNeil, E.B. (1969). Human Socialization. Belmont, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Mead, G.H. (1934). Mind, Self, and Society, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Merton, R.K. (1957). Social Theory and Social Structure. New York: The Free Press.

Mills, C.W. (1959). The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford Press.

Montessori, Maria. (1970). The Child in the Family. New York: Avon Books.

Moore, N.V., Bickhard, M.H., & Cooper, R.G., Jr. The Child's Development of the Concept of Family. Austin, Texas: University of Texas at Austin, 1977. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 140.980)

Mumford, L. (1951). The Conduct of Life. New York: Harcourt Brace and Co.

Murdock, C.V. (1980). Single Parents are People Too. New York: Butterick.

Murdock, G.P. (1949). Social Structure. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Mussen, P.H. (1967). Early socialization: Learning and identification. New Directions in Psychology III. New York: Holt.

Nelson, G. (1985). Family adaptation following marital separation/divorce: A literature review. In B. Schlesinger (Ed.) The One Parent Family in the 1980's. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Norris, D.J. (1981). The Preoperational Child's Concept of Family Structure. Unpublished master's thesis. Oklahoma State University.

Nye, F.I. (1967). Values, family, and a changing society. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 29, 248.

Ogburn, W.F. (1933). The Family and its Functions. New York: McGraw Hill.

Overton, W.F. (1983). The Relationship Between Social and Cognitive Development. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Parish, T.A., & Dostal, J.W. (1980). Evaluations of self and parent figures by children from intact, divorced, and reconstituted families. Journal of Youth and Adolescence. 9, 347-351.

Parsons, T. (1962). Youth in the context of American society. Daedalus, 91, 103.

Parsons, T., & Bales, R. (1955). Family: Socialization and Interaction Process. New York: The Free Press.

Pedersen, R. (1976). Does research on children reared in father-absent families yield information on father influences? Family Co-ordinator, 10, 459-464.

Powell, J.A., Wiltcher, B.J., Wedemeyer, N.V. Y Claypool, P.L. (1981). The young child's developing concept of family. Home Economics Research Journal, 10 (2), 137-149.

Pringle, M.K. (1980). The Needs of Children: A Personal Perspective. Australia: Hutchinson Group.

_____. (1974). The Needs of Children. London: Hutchinson & Co.

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. (1959). African Systems of Kinship and Marriage. New York: Oxford University Press.

Raths, L.E. (1972). Meeting the Needs of Children. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill.

Reed, R. (1932). The Modern Family. New York: F.S. Crafts & Co.

Reiss, I.L. (1971). The Family System in America. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

_____. (1965). The universality of the family: A conceptual analysis. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 27, 443-453.

Rogers, C.R. (1951). Client-Centered Therapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Root, A.A. (1970). What instructors say to the students makes a difference. Engineering Education. 61, 722-725.

Rossi, A.S. (1968). Transition to parenthood. Journal of Marriage and the Family. 30, 39-40.

Rubin, L.J. (1974). Facts and Feelings in the Classroom. New York: Viking Press.

Schlesinger, B. (1985). The One Parent Family in the 1980's. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Schneider, D.M. & Homans, G.D. (1985). Kinship terminology and the American kinship system. American Anthropologist. 57, 1194-1208.

Schwab, J. (1969). The practical: A language for curriculum. School Review, 78, 12-19.

Serot, N.M., & Teevan, R.O. (1966). Perception of the parent child relationship and its relation to child adjustment. Child Development, 32, 373-378.

Shengold, L. (1979). Child Abuse and deprivation: Soul murder. Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 27, 533-599.

Simmel, G. (1950). The metropolis and mental life. In G. Simmel (Ed.) The Sociology. New York: Free Press.

Smith, M.J. (1980). The social consequences of single parenthood: A longitudinal perspective. Family Relations, 29, 75-81.

Spencer, M. (1976). Foundations of Modern Sociology. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Stein, R. (1988, February). Young adults not immune to parents' divorce. Perry Daily Journal. p. 5.

Sussman, M. (1974). The isolated nuclear family: fact or fiction? In M. Sussman (Ed.) Sourcebook in Marriage and the Family. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Thomas, W.I. (1923) The Unadjusted Girl. Boston: Little, Brown.

Thompson, C.L. & Rudolph, L.B. (1983). Children of Divorce. Monterey, California: Brooks Cole.

U.S. Bureau of Census. (1980). Money income of families and persons of the United States. Current Population Reports. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Van Manen, M. (1986). The Tone of Teaching. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Wald, M. (1961). Protective Services and Emotional Neglect. Denver: American Human Association.

Wallerstein, J.S. (1980). Surviving the Breakup: How Children and Parents Cope with Divorce.

Wallerstein, J.S., & Kelly, J.B. (1980). California's children of divorce. Psychology Today, 14, 67-76.

_____. (1977). Divorce counseling: A community service for families in the midst of divorces. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 47, 256-269.

_____. (1976). The effects of parental divorce: Experiences of the child in later latency. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 26, 256-269.

_____. (1974). The effects of parental divorce: The adolescent experience. In E.J. Anthony & C. Koupernik (Eds.), The child in his Family: Children at Psychiatric Risk. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Weiss, R.W. (1980). Going it Alone: The Family Life and Social Situation of the Single Parent. New York: Basic Books.

White, B. (1975). The First Three Years of Life. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Wilkinson, G.S., & Bleck, R. (1977). Children's divorce groups, Elementary School Guidance and Counseling. 11, 205-213.

Yankelovich, D. (1981). Are you taking risks with your life? Parade Magazine, 12, 4-6.

Young, D.M. (1983). Two studies of children of divorce. In L.A. Kurdeck (Ed.), Children and Divorce. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Zelditch, M. (1955). Role Differentiation in the nuclear family: A comparative study. In T. Parsons and R.F. Bales (Eds.), Family, Socialization, and Interaction Process. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press.

Zimmerman, C. (1949). The Family of Tomorrow. New York: Harper & Brothers.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

August 20, 1987

Dear Parents:

In cooperation with Oklahoma State University, I will be conducting a research study dealing with children's perception of family. One child will be randomly selected from each classroom for participation in this important research effort. The children will remain completely anonymous and all information will be regarded with strict confidentiality.

The Oklahoma State University staff and I will appreciate your granting permission for your child to be included in the study. If your child is selected you will be contacted for further explanation of the study. Please date, sign, and return this form.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Nancy O'Donnell, Teacher

Date_____

Child_____ Teacher_____

Parent's signature_____

I agree that my child,_____, may participate in this research study conducted by Nancy O'Donnell.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROCEDURE WITH CHILDREN

AND EXCERPT FROM VERBATIM TEXT

INTERVIEW PROCEDURE WITH CHILDREN

The parents of the child subjects were contacted by telephone and arrangements were made for the children to be interviewed after regular school hours. Suitable arrangements were made for transporting the children to their homes after the interviews were concluded.

The interviewer contacted the children at their home classrooms and walked with the children to the interview areas. During this time, an exchange of casual conversation initiated rapport building. Often the interviewer and the child subject explored various areas of the school and engaged in informal discussions.

After arriving at the interview area, the child subject was offered refreshments and the opportunity to freely explore the area. Juice, milk, cookies, and crackers were available at the child's discretion throughout the interview. The child was encouraged to take restroom breaks and to move around the room at pleasure. Several children suggested moving to outdoor areas at some point in the interview and these requests were honored.

As the interviews began, the interviewer made every effort to allow the child subject to be comfortable, unrestricted, open, secure, frank, and honest. All children were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

VERBATIM TEXT

Interviewer: Now, in this part of the interview I am going to ask you several questions about your family. If you don't understand the question, please tell me. If you want to talk about more than just that question, please say anything that you think is interesting or important about your ideas of a family. Ready? What is a family?

Child subject: Didn't we talk about that? I don't care, I guess. But a family is like the people who love you and like you. Like my mother. I don't know. Words, telling about them aren't my best. I think I told you that. Did I? Did you know that some families fight? Sometimes, we do. Like my dad. Sometimes we don't. We use to. I mean they did. I sorta was in it. You know? See, I'm afraid that they'll fight like my mother fought with my dad. He gets mad all the time and he just lives in our house most of the time. Sometimes, he leaves. I hate the screaming. Don't dare tell a living soul, but sometimes he hits her. She cries a lot. My mom says he is good for my brother because they play ball and things like that. But when they fight, I'm scared. It's going to happen all over. Maybe, maybe not. Lots of problems. I guess that's about a family. I don't know.

Interviewer: How would you describe your family?

Child subject: I sorta did. You know the fighting and stuff. My mom is really good. Sometimes, he is too but well, I don't know. Do you know my mom? I thought you

might. She knows lots of people. We are a good family most of the time. I wish my dad, well you know he and my mom. If he came back, we'd have a real family I guess. But now Bob is here. So she likes it. I'd say my mom, my brother and I are a family for sure. Maybe Bob. For sure, my dad.

Interviewer: Who is in your family?

Child subject: I already said it.

Interviewer: How do you feel about your family?

Child subject: Sometimes good, sometimes not so good. Mostly good, I guess. I like my family but. I really like my dad. Brothers always fight. I love my mom. I like this room. Especially the color. I might get to paint this summer. Do you know all my family? I think they are OK.

Interviewer: What do you do to get ready for school?

Child subject: I get up and wash up. Sometimes I eat. Sometimes I hate breakfast. Yuck! We get our own. What ever you want. Like maybe a sandwich or cereal. Sometimes I just drink something. Then, I get my stuff and walk to school. Of course, I get dressed. I wear what I want. So, its easy. Did you know some kids have to wear what ever their moms want. I'd never go for that. I can take care of myself.

Interviewer: What do you have for supper?

Child subject: Sometimes, what ever I want or can find. Sometimes, Mom cooks. She gets tired at work. Mostly, we just look in the frig. I like hamburgers best.

Interviewer: What do you do after school?

Child subject: Not much. Homework, sometimes. Mostly, I watch TV. Sometimes, mom tells us we have to have something done when she gets home. We don't do it much. She gets mad but not much. Sometimes, I have someone over to watch TV. HBO has really good movies and stuff. Do you know, Jack? He don't have HBO so he comes over. I watch videos too. TV is fun. My favorite is, oh I guess I got lots. I can stay up late and watch TV if I want.

Interviewer: What does mother do for you?

Child subject: She does lots of stuff like sometimes cook. She gets us TV. Like it broke and she called that man and said it better get fixed fast. She says kids need something to do like TV. She likes TV, too. I guess she helps me. She don't like my grades lots. But, she don't gripe much. She says some teachers probably doesn't like me. My mom loves me. She tries to help. She gave up on that math homework. She don't like math like me.

Interviewer: What do you do for your mother?

Child subject: Not much. I don't really see her too much. I can't cook. She is real busy. Sometimes, she leaves us jobs but I don't do them much. I just try to not bother. She is busy with work and Bob and stuff. They like to dance. They don't like us to bother.

Interviewer: What does father do for you?

Child subject: We don't see him. But I know he pays my mom for us. He pays lots. She gets really upset if he don't pay. When he was here, he helped like with our house and everything. When he comes, he's fun. He don't come much. Probably because of Bob. My dad would really like to come back forever. He said.

Interviewer: What do you do for father?

Child subject: Nothing. How can I? He don't come.

Interviewer: What does mother do for father?

Child subject: Do you mean Bob or my dad?

Interviewer: Which ever one that you would like to talk about or both if you like?

Child subject: She don't do much now for my real dad. That's cause she goes out of the house usually when he comes. They don't talk much. But Bob. She does everything for him. Like cook and buy stuff. She takes good care of Bob good. When they fight she don't do nothing. She use to be good to my dad.

VITA

Nancy A. O'Donnell

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE FAMILY AS PERCEIVED BY DIVORCE-EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND RECOGNITION OF THESE PERCEPTIONS BY TEACHERS

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in St. Charles, Missouri, September 24, 1939, the daughter of JoAnn Walker.

Education: Graduated from Holdenville High School, Holdenville, Oklahoma in 1956; received Bachelor's of Arts Degree from Panhandle State University, Goodwell, Oklahoma in 1963; received Master of Science Degree from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1980; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education Degree from Oklahoma State University in May, 1988.

Professional Background: Secondary Teacher at Perry High School, Perry, Oklahoma, 1963 to 1965; Elementary Teacher in Migrant Education, Hollis, Oklahoma, 1965 to 1972; Elementary Teacher at Maysville Elementary School, Maysville, Oklahoma, 1972 to 1975; Elementary Teacher at Perry Elementary, Perry, Oklahoma, 1975 to present.