

RELATIONSHIP OF MARRIAGE PREPAREDNESS TO
PARENTAL EMPHASIS ON SELECTED VALUES

By

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Bachelor of Science

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1968

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
July, 1971

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express appreciation to all who have contributed to this study.

Special appreciation is expressed to Dr. Nick Stinnett, Associate Professor, Family Relations and Child Development, whose encouragement and guidance greatly facilitated the completion of this study.

Appreciation is also extended to Dr. James Walters, Professor of Family Relations and Child Development, and to Dr. Josephine Hoffer, Acting Head of the Department of Family Relations and Child Development, for their help in the critical reading of this study.

Appreciation is expressed to the Oklahoma State University Research Foundation for support of this project.

Special mention of appreciation is extended to the author's husband, Hollis, for his encouragement and support throughout the period of graduate study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

According to the U. S. Department of Commerce estimates, in 1969 there were 22,078,000 married persons between the ages of 14 to 19 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1970). Because of the large number of youth involved in marital relationships, the devising of methods which can be used to evaluate their preparedness for marriage has merit. The need for evaluating the preparation of youth for marriage becomes even more important in view of research findings which indicate that there is a lower rate of marital stability and happiness for men and women who marry at an early age compared to those who marry at an older age (Burchinal, 1965; Burchinal and Chancellor, 1962; Monahan, 1953; Burchinal, 1959).

There is a lack of current research concerning the preparation of youth for marriage. Bartz and Nye (1970, p. 258) state that

much of the systematic analysis of youthful marriages has been aimed at compiling data on race, geographic location, education, socio-economic level and such to indicate 'who' marries young. Some research, but much less, has been devoted to determining 'why' these people marry--personality characteristics, social characteristics, family dynamics.

Also there has been very little research done concerning the areas of marriage for which the youth feel most and least prepared to fulfill.

There is also little empirical evidence available concerning the

relationship of marital preparedness to parental emphasis upon certain values during the individual's childhood. These areas are investigated in this study.

Historically marriage readiness and success have been evaluated in terms of economic and family lineage considerations. These criteria for evaluating the success of marriage have changed. Burgess, Wallin, and Shultz (1954, p. 261) point out that

in more recent times, however, emotional fulfillment and psychic well-being of the husband and wife have become the primary criteria upon which a successful relationship is established. Today marriage is seen as a companionship which emphasizes the equality of husband and wife. It expects them to get emotional and intellectual stimulation from each other, to develop their individual personalities in a wholesome manner, and above all to find happiness in each other's company.

Rutledge (1966) has indicated that the preparedness of youth for marriage has failed to keep pace with the rising goals for marital success.

One indication of lack of preparedness for marriage is the number of unsuccessful marriages. In 1969 there were an estimated 660,000 divorces and annulments in the United States (U. S. Bureau of Census, 1970). The 1970 census reported that no less than 936,000 men and 1,726,000 women were separated from their marital partners (U. S. Bureau of Census, 1971). From the number of persons directly involved in unsuccessful marriages, it appears that many people have a need for better marriage preparation.

Education is one way to improve the individual's marital competence. Dyer (1959) compared a group of university students who took a course in preparation for marriage with a group who did not. The group who took the course rated themselves as happier in marriage than did the group of persons who did not. Dyer (1959, p. 232) concluded

there seems to be some evidence that the preparation for marriage course has been instrumental in effecting happier marriage relationships for those participating in the course--at least in the earlier years of marriage.

Moses (1956) found that students and married alumni believed that they gained insight and learned to solve problems as a consequence of their formal training in marriage.

Since formal education for marriage can contribute to marital preparedness, it is of value to develop instruments which can be used in classroom marriage preparation courses to serve as guides for students in determining the areas of marriage in which they feel most and least prepared. One such instrument is the Readiness for Marital Competence Index which Stinnett (1969) indicates can be used to provide young, single persons with a general guideline of how prepared they feel to fulfill in a mate the needs of love, respect, communication, and personality fulfillment. Stinnett suggests that youth who have the ability to fulfill these needs in a future mate have a strong basis for later marital success. The RMC Index can, therefore, be used as:

(a) a guide for the individual student concerning the basic emotional needs for which he feels most and least prepared to fulfill in a future mate, (b) a guideline for planning course content to fit the individual needs of the students, and (c) a stimulus for classroom discussion.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of high school aged youth concerning their preparedness for marriage and to relate their preparedness for marriage at the present time to the degree of parental emphasis regarding the learning of certain values during the respondent's childhood.

The specific purposes of this study were to:

1. Revise the Readiness for Marital Competence Index and administer the Readiness for Marital Competence Index to a large sample of high school aged persons.
2. Determine the perceptions of high school aged youth concerning their degree of preparedness to fulfill the basic emotional needs in a future spouse.
3. Relate the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores to the degree of parental emphasis regarding the learning of certain values during the respondent's childhood.

The following null hypothesis was examined:

1. There is no significant difference in the variance of the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree to which the respondent's parents emphasized the learning of each of the following values: (a) determination and perseverance, (b) seeing each person as having dignity and worth, (c) cooperation, (d) self-discipline, (e) spiritual development, (f) loyalty, (g) feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others, (h) expressing sincere appreciation of others, and (i) taking responsibility for the consequences of your own actions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There has been little research conducted in the area of marital preparedness; the bulk of work has been done in the area of marriage adjustment. Therefore, the review of literature here is composed mainly of research findings concerning marriage adjustment. The areas related to marital adjustment reported in the review of available literature are socialization, personality characteristics, role perceptions, compatibility of role expectations and fulfillment, communication, economic factors, religious factors, erotic experiences, age at marriage, and factors associated with marital preparedness, prediction, and adjustment.

Socialization Related to Marital Adjustment

Learning to perform the competencies necessary for a successful marriage is a never ending cycle. The preparation for marriage begins in the home during infancy and continues throughout childhood. This preparation includes all the influences and experiences brought to bear upon the child in the home and community. Rutledge (1966, p. 1) states that "the best preparation for married living is comprised of all those experiences which are so natural that they do not call special attention to themselves." Ideally the home provides an atmosphere in which a person may gain a realistic understanding of marriage and an ability

to find satisfaction through an intimate relationship with another person.

One of the background factors most predictive of one's own marital happiness is the happiness of the parents' marriage. By analyzing marital records of three generations, Landis (1956) found a significantly greater proportion of divorces in families that included grandparents who had been divorced than in families whose grandparents remained married. From this evidence Landis concluded that family backgrounds seem to condition people in ways that affect their marriageability. Other researchers who have found that the happiness of the parents' marriage affects the marital success of the children are Burgess and Cottrell (1939), King (1951), Locke (1947), Locke and Karlsson (1952), Shroeder (1939), and Terman (1938).

The quality of the relationship that exists between child and parent is another background factor associated with adjustment in marriage. Whitehurst (1968) found a significant difference in the marriage adjustment scores of those persons who were primarily influenced by peers and those who were primarily influenced by church and family in the learning of values and attitudes concerning marriage. Over twice the proportion of spouses who scored low on total marriage adjustment reported that they were influenced by peer associations before marriage. Scores indicating the degree of agreement between spouses revealed that five per cent of the low scorers were influenced by church and family before marriage, and 18 per cent of the low scorers were influenced by peers before marriage. For the communication variable two times as many low scorers reported being influenced by peers than by church and family. Those who indicated unhappiness were

influenced by peers two and one-half times more frequently than those influenced by the family or church before marriage. Whitehurst (1968, p. 401) concludes ". . . it appears that the family reinforces conventional values and behavior which is usually associated with a higher level of marital adjustment."

Personality Characteristics Related to Marital Adjustment

Research has indicated that personality is a significant factor in marital adjustment (Himes, 1949; Kirkpatrick, 1937). Stroup (1963) has stated that no one type of personality guarantees success in marriage; however, clinical evidence suggests that the person with a generally healthy personality will have a better chance for marital success than will the person who is on the opposite end of the personality continuum. Even though a relationship can be evidenced between certain personality characteristics and marital unhappiness, it is not known whether the personality characteristics are the cause of the unhappy marriage or whether the marital problems produce these personality characteristics (Stroup, 1963).

Burgess and Wallin (1953) investigated the relationship between personality characteristics and marital happiness. Results indicated that the happily married persons were "emotionally stable, considerate of others, yielding, companionable, self-confident, and emotionally dependent" (p. 529). In a study at the University of Idaho, Aller (1963) found that for both sexes tolerance, self-control, and responsibility were positively related to marital adjustment. For the husbands intellectual efficiency and dominance were positively related to marital adjustment; for the wives aggression, dominance, and

self-centeredness were negatively related to marital adjustment.

Earlier studies by Johnson and Terman (1935) and Terman (1938) yielded similar findings concerning the personality traits of happily married and unhappily married persons.

Pickford (1966) using the Guilford Zimmerman Temperament Survey studied the intensity of personality traits in relation to marital happiness. The research indicated that for the husband higher degrees of restraint, sociability, objectivity, friendliness, and personal relations were associated with marital happiness; marital unhappiness for the man was associated with higher degrees of general activity, ascendance, and masculinity. Traits associated with marital happiness in women were higher levels of emotional stability, objectivity, friendliness, and personal relations; a lower amount of these traits was related to marital unhappiness. Pickford (1966, p. 458) concluded that the trait of emotional stability "seems to be more important for assuring marital happiness in women than in men."

Buerkle, Anderson, and Badgley (1961) found a relationship between marital happiness and the personality characteristics of flexibility and adaptability. Crouse, Karlins, and Shroder (1968) also report finding that people capable of high integrative complexity are significantly happier in marriage than are the low integratively complex people. Crouse, Karlins, and Shroder (1968, p. 643) have characterized persons with low and high levels of integrative complexity.

Low levels of integrative complexity are associated with intolerance of ambiguity, dogmatism, rigidity, and closed mindedness. The structurally simple individual seeks certainty, structure, and fast closure in problems and has a low tolerance for stress, conflict, and uncertainty. . . . An integratively complex individual, on the other hand, is flexible in his dealings with the environment. He is a flexible explorer of his world: he does not close fast

under uncertainty and is attuned, adaptive, and sensitive to environmental change. He is capable of entertaining and processing alternative explanations of an event and seeks diversity and discrepant information in his information processing.

The high integratively complex person is, therefore, capable of highly adaptable behavior while the behavior of the person with low integrative complexity is inflexible. Harvey, Hunt, and Shroder (1961) hypothesize that the home environment most conducive to the development of a high integrative complex person is characterized by firm but loving discipline methods and by encouragement to form rules of interaction inductively.

Persons who are satisfied with their marriages tend to see personality characteristics in their spouses which are different from those seen by spouses who are not satisfied in their marriages. Locke (1951) reports that the happily married rated themselves and their mates more frequently as directional, adaptable, demonstratively affectionate, and sociable than did the divorced. The divorced persons perceived themselves and their spouses to be less responsible and decisive than did those persons who were happily married; in addition, the divorced more frequently attributed to themselves the culturally disapproved traits of stubbornness, domination, and quick anger. Locke states that happily married couples are more generous in their ratings and view themselves more frequently as having the aptitudes considered important for marital success.

The conclusion that the satisfied and unsatisfied spouses rate themselves and their mates differently was supported by Luckey (1964). Luckey found that those who were not happy in their marriages described their spouses as having "more extreme or intense qualities and as being

decidedly more skeptical and distrustful, blunt and aggressive" (p. 220). Those persons satisfied with their marriages "attributed moderate qualities to the spouses and saw them primarily as responsible, generous, cooperative, conventional, and . . . neither very managerial nor very modest" (p. 220).

Using the Guilford Zimmerman Temperament Survey, Pickford, Signori, and Rempel (1966) found evidence which indicated a relationship between a similarity of personality traits in the spouses and marital adjustment or happiness; a dissimilarity of personality traits was associated with marital maladjustment. Specifically the happily married couples were more alike than were the unhappily married couples in the traits of restraint, general activity, friendliness, and personal relations. Dissimilarity between the husband and wife in the traits of emotional stability and objectivity was significantly correlated with marital unhappiness. Although not statistically significant, a relationship was found between marital happiness and a similarity of spouses in the traits of ascendancy and sociability. An additional finding was that even though a similarity of specific traits in the spouses is associated with marital happiness, a dissimilarity in these traits is not necessarily associated with marital unhappiness. Although a similarity in the traits of personal relations and friendliness was correlated with marital happiness, a dissimilarity of spouses in these traits had a slight but not significant association with marital unhappiness.

Role Perceptions Related to Marital Adjustment

Hobart and Klausner (1959) found that the ability to accurately perceive how the mate rates himself as a person is related

significantly to marital adjustment. A higher correlation was found between female empathic ability and marital adjustment than between male empathy and marital adjustment. Locke, Sabagh, and Thomes (1956) also found no significant relationship between marital adjustment and the empathic ability of the male. In contrast, Taylor (1965, p. 3527) found that "empathic accuracy in self perception appears to have some relationship to marital adjustment especially with respect to the perceptions of the husbands."

Luckey (1960) found a relationship between marriage satisfaction and congruence between the husband's self concept and the concept held by the wife about him. However, the relationship does not hold for the agreement between the wife's self concept and the concept held by the husband about her. Stuckart (1963) also concluded that the wife's accurate perception of her husband was a more important factor in marital satisfaction than was the husband's understanding of the wife.

Taylor (1965) found that similarities between self perceptions and the spouse's perception of self are related to good marital adjustment. An additional finding was that a low degree of marital adjustment was associated with a negative attitude concerning the degree of consensus present in both mates' definition of selves.

Compatibility of Role Expectations and Fulfillment Related to Marital Adjustment

The roles of the husband and wife have a culturally determined complex pattern of expectations of responses. Snow (1966) views any discrepancy between role expectations and role performance as a potential area for conflict within the marital relationship. Research by Snow revealed that both spouses viewed the ideal role of the husband as

being the more dominant. However, in evaluating role performance, the husbands perceived their wives as having as dominant a role as themselves while the wives viewed the husband as being the more dominant. With respect to the expressive love dimension of role fulfillment in the marriage, the wives perceived their role expectations and role performances as having more of the affectionate component than did the role of the husbands. However, the husbands indicated that they viewed their roles and role performances as being as loving as those of their wives. For the role dimensions of dominance and love, neither the husband nor wife experienced role fulfillment.

Kotlar (1965) found that the adjusted as well as the maladjusted spouses had similar conceptualizations of ideal marital roles. However, the adjusted spouses perceived their mates as approaching to a significantly greater degree their expectations of the ideal mate than did the maladjusted spouses. The adjusted and maladjusted spouses could be differentiated with respect to both self perceptions and mate perceptions on the dominance-submission and hostility-affectional role dimensions. The adjusted spouses perceived themselves and were perceived by their mates as more dominant individuals than were the maladjusted. In the affectional role dimension both the adjusted husband and the adjusted wife perceived their spouses as being more affectionate than did the maladjusted husband and the maladjusted wife. Kotlar (1961, p. 1734) concluded that there is a

significant relationship between the individual's self-perception, the conceptualization of his ideal marital role, and his marital happiness. Individuals who perceived themselves as conforming to their expectations for their marital roles were more frequently found in the adjusted marital group.

Hobart and Klassner (1959), in contrast to the conclusions drawn by Snow and Kotlar, found no relationship between role disagreement and marital adjustment for either the male or female. Hobart and Klassner (1959, p. 263) state that this finding of no relationship between role disagreement and marital adjustment "seems to call into question the whole emphasis by sociology on the relationship between marital role conflict and marital adjustment first suggested by Cottrell twenty-five years ago." Other researchers reporting findings contrary to those of Hobart and Klassner are Jacobson (1952), Landis (1947), and Ort (1950).

Communication Related to Marital Adjustment

Hicks and Platt (1970, p. 560) state that "inherent in the concept of the companionship marriage is the belief that to be successful couples must have effective, open, rewarding communication." Navran (1967, p. 182) found that the communication of the happily married couples differed from the unhappily married couples in the following ways:

(a) they talk more to each other, (b) convey the feelings that they understand what is being said to them, (c) have a wider range of subjects available to them, (d) preserve communication channels and keep them open, (e) show more sensitivity to each other's feelings, (f) personalize their language symbols, and (g) make more use of supplementary non-verbal techniques of communication.

Although there is a positive association between marital satisfaction and communication (Karlsson, 1951; Locke, 1951; Locke, Sabagh, Thomes, 1956), Pinsley (1966) found that effectiveness in communicating emotions is not related to compatibility; in fact, troubled couples more accurately communicated emotional meanings to each other than did the untroubled couples. Pinsley concluded (1966, p. 4132) that

accurate perception of the spouse's emotional expressions afforded only a limited degree of mutual understanding compared to the broader understanding provided by the effective performance of well-defined role expectations specific to marriage.

Cutler and Dyer (1965) after studying 60 couples concluded that the discussion between spouses of a violation of expectations does not always lead to adjustment. In contrast, a study of 32 couples by Levinger and Senn (1967) revealed a positive correlation between marital satisfaction and full disclosure of feelings.

Economic Factors Related to Marital Adjustment

Grover (1963) found that the wives not employed outside of the home had higher marital adjustment scores than did the wives who were employed. Although the relationship of adjustment to unemployment was found within both the middle and working classes, the relationship was stronger in the lower than in the upper socio-economic group. Nye (1961) also found that the non-employed wife had better marital adjustment than the wife who was employed; the least difference in adjustment between the working and non-working wives was found for those wives whose husbands were in professional or managerial positions. Other investigators whose findings support the thesis that marital adjustment is poorer when the wife is employed than when she is not employed are Davis (1929), Hamilton (1929), and Havemann and West (1952).

Research by Blood and Wolfe (1960) indicated that marital satisfaction of working wives varied according to income. In contrast to Grover's findings Blood and Wolfe found that working wives of husbands whose incomes were less than \$5,000 annually indicated greater marital satisfaction than did the unemployed wives. However, when the annual

income of the husband was \$5,000 and over, the employed wife indicated less satisfaction than the unemployed. The working wives of low-income husbands and the non-working wives of high income husbands were equally satisfied with the marriage.

In a study of the marital adjustment of 122 husbands, Axelson (1963) found that the husbands with employed wives indicated a significantly greater degree of poor marital adjustment than did the husbands with unemployed wives. Axelson interpreted these results to indicate that the husband may perceive the wife's employment as a threat to the traditional culturally defined role of the man as the dominant member of the family.

Orden and Bradburn (1969, p. 399) found that

both partners in a marriage are lower in marital happiness when the wife is denied a choice and is in the labor market only because she needs the money than when the wife participates in the labor market by choice.

This relationship held true for all educational levels, stages in the life cycle, and for part or full time employment. Among the wives who were free to choose between the labor market and the home, no evidence was found that the choice of the labor market created a strain in the marriage for either the husband or the wife.

Whether or not the husband concurs with the wife's choice of the labor market over the home market affects his marital adjustment. Gianopulos and Mitchell (1957) report that the marriage adjustment of the husband is poorer when he disapproves of the wife's working. Nye (1961) confirmed this finding.

The stage of the family life cycle is another factor which affects the marital adjustment of the working wife. Grover (1963) found that within each socio-economic group, the employed wives with children at

home had significantly lower marital adjustment scores than did those who did not have children at home. In the non-employed group no relationship was found between the adjustment scores and the presence or absence of children. Findings by Orden and Bradburn (1969) that the wife's choice of labor market over the home market strains the marriage only when there are preschool children present in the family agree with those of Glover.

Not all researchers agree that the wife's working affects the marital adjustment of the couple. Karlsson (1951), Klinger (1954), and Locke and Mackeprang (1949) have reported finding no significant relationship between the wife's employment status and marital adjustment.

The occupation of the husband can be correlated with marital adjustment scores. Williamson (1952) found that belonging to the white collar professions and executive groups was significantly associated with marital happiness. However, occupations requiring more than 47 hours of work per week were associated with low adjustment scores. Williamson's study partially confirms earlier studies by Lang (1932) and Locke (1951). Lang found that the ten occupations associated with greatest marital happiness were chemical engineer, minister, college professor, teacher, engineer, wholesale salesman, chemist, accountant, civil engineer, and office worker. Those associated with the least happiness are a station employee, truck driver, musician, real estate salesman, plumber, auto mechanic, carpenter, general mechanic, traveling salesman, and laborer. Locke (1951) found that the relationship between the husband's job satisfaction and marital adjustment was stronger for those in professional occupations and for those with some graduate work. As the husband's job satisfaction increased, the

marital adjustment also increased.

The economic factor in itself may have little importance; the importance of the economic factor in marriage adjustment may lie in the fact that it is a symbol of cultural and educational factors. Burgess and Cottrell (1939) state that it is the manner in which the income is managed rather than the actual amount that is the important factor in the marital adjustment of the husband and wife.

Religious Factors Related to Marital Adjustment

Burchinal (1957) studied the relationship between marital satisfaction and religious behaviour. It was found that the group with church membership scored higher than the nonmembership group in marital satisfaction. In addition, those who regularly attended church scored higher than the nonattendance groups. Burchinal emphasized that those with regular church attendance might be more sociable or conforming and less prone to admit dissatisfaction. Research by Dyer and Luckey (1961) confirms Burchinal's findings; Dyer and Luckey found that the couples who were not affiliated with a religious group considered their marriages less happy than did the couples with religious affiliation.

Dyer and Luckey (1961) report no significant relationship between marriage happiness and whether or not the marriage was religiously heterogeneous or homogenous. These findings do not concur with the results of previous research. The following reasons are given for the discrepancy of the results of this study with the results of previous research: 1) the subjects have had a university course in marriage; 2) the subjects were young and had only begun the rearing of children; 3) the criterion of adjustment used was happiness and not separation or

divorce as in many other studies; and 4) society may be moving toward the acceptance of denominationally heterogeneous marriage with the result that couples are learning adjustive techniques for finding satisfaction in this type of marriage.

Peterson (1964) found that couples in interfaith marriages have lower adjustment scores than do the religiously homogenous couples. In this study 50 per cent of the Catholics married to Protestants had high marital adjustment scores compared to 61 per cent of the Catholics married to Catholics and 80 per cent of the Protestants married to Protestants.

Zimmerman and Cervantes (1960) studying 40,000 urban families, found the divorce rate in mixed Protestant-Catholic marriages three times higher than for marriages of like faith. Burchinal and Chancellor (1962) also present data which indicate that religiously heterogeneous marriages and marriages of unaffiliated persons are shorter in duration than are marriages of the religiously homogenous and of those with church affiliation.

Erotic Experiences Related to Marital Adjustment

Shope and Broderick (1967) studied predicted marriage adjustment and predicted sexual adjustment in 160 unmarried women. When a sexually active group of non-virgins was compared with virgins, a low, positive correlation was found between predicted high marital happiness and premarital virginity. The authors suggest that factors such as conventionality and ego strength may help explain the relationship between virginity and later marriage adjustment. Other authors have indicated a positive relationship exists between premarital sexual conservatism

and successful marriage; these researchers are Davis (1929), Burgess and Wallin (1953), Locke (1951), Reevy (1959), Schnepf and Johnson (1952), and Terman (1938).

Age at Marriage Related to Marital Adjustment

Data consistently indicate that age at marriage is related to divorce or marital dissatisfaction. Burchinal and Chancellor (1962) studying marriages that ended in divorce, found that when both spouses were 19 years of age or under at the time of marriage, the marriages lasted only half as long as when the spouses were 20 years of age or older. Burchinal (1965, p. 243) concludes that "age per se is not an adequate criterion for predicting marital adjustment with confidence, but numerous factors relating to readiness for marriage are reasonably well correlated with age." Chief factors that make marriage of the young a poor risk are a low socio-economic background, limited education, meager economic basis, and continued need for parental support. Other authors who have indicated a relationship between marriage at an early age and marital dissatisfaction are Burgess and Cottrell (1939), Davis (1929), Glick (1957), Hart and Shields (1926), King (1951), Locke (1951), Monahan (1953), and Terman (1938).

Factors Associated With Marital Preparedness, Prediction, and Adjustment

Sporakowski (1965) studied 678 single and 57 married students in an attempt to determine whether a relationship exists between selected background factors and marital preparedness, prediction, and adjustment. No significant relationships were found between prediction, adjustment, or preparation and maternal employment, sex of respondent, birth order,

or the size of the family of orientation. ^{Marital} In-addition preparedness and adjustment were not related to religious affiliation, socio-economic status, or the authority pattern in the family. Marital prediction was significantly related to religious affiliation with the Mormon religion representing the highest score, socio-economic status with the students in the highest economic class receiving the highest score, and the authority pattern of the family of orientation with the respondents from "middle of the road" families receiving the highest score and those from authoritarian families scoring the least favorably. Marital preparedness was related to the marital status of the respondent. As dating involvement increased the preparedness score increased; however, after marriage the preparedness self-ratings dropped possibly indicating a "more realistic assessment of readiness for marriage once the individual has become involved in it" (p. 158).

Using the Readiness for Marital Competence Index, Stinnett (1969) found that preparedness for marriage was not significantly related to religion, social class, presence or absence of siblings, steady dating during the early teen years, or the personality traits of general activity, restraint, ascendance, sociability, objectivity, friendliness, thoughtfulness, personal relations, and masculinity-femininity. The following factors were found to be significantly and positively related to the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores: happiness of childhood relationship with the parents, democratic authority pattern in the family of orientation, engagement to be married, emotional stability, and the unemployment of the mother for a major portion of the respondent's life.

Summary

1. The quality of interpersonal relationships within the family of orientation affects one's ability to develop traits which aid marital adjustment.
2. There is a relationship between certain positive personality traits and marital adjustment for the husband and the wife; one of the more important positive personality traits associated with marital adjustment, especially for women, is emotional maturity.
3. Marital adjustment of the husband and wife is correlated with the ability to demonstrate flexible or adaptive behavior.
4. A similarity of personality traits of the husband and wife is related to marital adjustment.
5. Spouses who are satisfied with their marriages tend to attribute to each other more of the culturally approved behavior and personality traits than do those spouses who are not satisfied in marriage.
6. Although effective communication is related to marital happiness, effectiveness in communicating emotions or full disclosure of feelings is not related to compatibility.
7. The husband and the wife each have a conceptualization of the ideal marital role; the adjusted couples experience role fulfillment more often than do the maladjusted.
8. The adjusted husband and wife perceived themselves and their mates as being more dominant and more affectionate in the role dimensions of dominance-submission and hostility-affectional than did the maladjusted husband and wife.

9. Adjustment in marriage is related to the ability to perceive accurately how the mate rates himself as an individual.
10. There is no consensus as to whether or not the employment of the wife outside the home is related to marital adjustment; however, the review of literature reveals the following:
 - a. Marital adjustment is related to the wife's participation in the labor market by choice as opposed to necessity.
 - b. The employed wives with preschool children in the home have lower marital adjustment than the working wives without children.
11. Membership and participation in religious activities is positively correlated with marital adjustment.
12. Sexual conservatism before marriage is positively related to marital adjustment.
13. Marriage at a young age is related to marital maladjustment and divorce.
14. Perception of marital preparedness is significantly and positively related to the following factors: happiness in childhood, democratic authority patterns in the family, emotional stability, unemployment of the mother, and engagement to be married.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Selection of Subjects

The subjects for this study were eleventh and twelfth grade students who were enrolled in a home economics class at one of seven selected high schools in the state of Oklahoma. A total sample of 499 students was obtained. The respondents were predominantly from families of upper-lower and lower-middle economic status; they were single and primarily Protestant. Cover letters which explained the nature of the research, assured anonymity to the students, and included directions for the administration of the questionnaires were sent to the nine home economics teachers in the seven Oklahoma high schools. The data were obtained during the month of February, 1971.

Information Sheet

The information sheet contained fixed alternative type questions which were designed to obtain information concerning: (a) demographic characteristics of the subjects, such as age, sex, and marital status of parents; (b) perceptions of the respondents concerning specific aspects of their parent-child relationships, such as degree of closeness to each parent and parent-child communication; and (c) perceptions of the respondents concerning marriage, such as perceptions of the most important characteristic of marriage.

The status of each respondent was assessed by means of the McGuire-White Index of Socio-Economic Status (1955). The criteria for the status assessments were based on certain characteristics of the head of the family; the characteristics used were level of educational attainment, occupation, and source of income.

Readiness for Marital Competence Index

The development of the Readiness for Marital Competence (RMC) Index by Stinnett (1969, p. 684) was based on the "definition that readiness for marital competence is the degree to which an individual feels prepared to fulfill in a future mate the needs of love, personality fulfillment, respect, and communication." The RMC Index as originally developed contained 46 items. For each of the items five degrees of response were possible; the responses ranged from the description of very prepared to very unprepared to perform the various functions or tasks delineated in each item. In scoring the items, the most favorable response was given the lowest score, and the least favorable response received the highest score.

In obtaining a measure of validity, an item analysis on a sample of 360 college students indicated that all of the 46 items composing the RMC Index discriminated at the .001 level between the upper- and lower-quartile groups. A split-half reliability coefficient with the resulting coefficient of .97 corrected to .99 indicates a high degree of reliability for the index.

In this study the RMC Index was revised; the revision of the instrument involved a condensation of the 46 items to 36 items. The need categories of love, respect, communication, and personality

fulfillment were altered so that each was represented with an equal number of items; currently, there are nine items in each category. In the unrevised form of the RMC Index there were four items in the communication category, 13 in the love category, 13 in the personality fulfillment category, and 15 in the respect category. One item was not classified in any of the four categories due to an equally low loading on all four factors as indicated by the factor analysis. Eight family life specialists judged the appropriateness of each of the five new items added to the communication category. The consensus of agreement was 100 per cent.

Analysis of Data

The chi-square test was used in an item analysis of the Readiness for Marital Competence Index given to the high school students in order to determine which items significantly differentiated those respondents whose total RMC Index scores fell in the upper quartile and those respondents whose total scores fell in the lower quartile.

An analysis of variance was utilized to examine the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the variance of the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree to which the respondent's parents emphasized the learning of each of the following values: (a) determination and perseverance, (b) seeing each person as having dignity and worth, (c) cooperation, (d) self-discipline, (e) spiritual development, (f) loyalty, (g) feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others, (h) expressing sincere appreciation of others, and (i) taking responsibility for the consequences of your own actions.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of Subjects

Table I presents a detailed description of the 499 subjects who participated in this study. Seventy-two per cent of the subjects were female, and twenty-eight per cent were male. The sample consisted of eleventh and twelfth grade students of whom 56 per cent were white and 36 per cent black. Eighty per cent of the subjects were Protestant. As determined by the McGuire-White Index of Social Status (1955), the sample was primarily from the upper-lower (43 per cent) and lower-middle (27 per cent) socio-economic classes. The largest proportion of the respondents (46 per cent) indicated a small town under 25,000 population as the place of residence for the major part of life, 25 per cent reported having lived on a farm for the major part of life. The largest percentage of the subjects (64 per cent) indicated that their parents were living together; 16 per cent indicated their parents were separated or divorced with no remarriage. Fifty-two percent of the sample indicated that their mother had been employed for a major part of their childhood; of this total, 27 per cent indicated part-time employment of the mother, and 25 per cent indicated full-time employment.

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECTS

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Sex	Male	141	28.26
	Female	358	72.74
Race	White	181	36.27
	Black	279	55.91
	Indian	32	6.41
	Other	7	1.40
Religious Preference	Catholic	14	2.81
	Protestant	397	79.56
	Jewish	1	0.20
	Mormon	0	0.00
	None	19	3.81
	Other	65	13.03
Socio-Economic Class	Upper-upper	3	0.60
	Upper-middle	43	8.62
	Lower-middle	135	27.05
	Upper-lower	216	43.29
	Lower-lower	100	20.04
Residence for Major Part of Life	On farm or in country	125	25.05
	Small town under 25,000	232	46.49
	City of 25,000 to 50,000	90	18.04
	City of 50,000 to 100,000	31	6.21
	City of over 100,000	16	3.21
Marital Status of Parents	Living together	318	63.73
	Separated or divorced (with no remarriage)	81	16.23
	One of parents deceased (with no remarriage)	50	10.02
	Divorced (with remarriage)	28	5.61
	One of parents deceased (with remarriage)	17	3.41
Employment of Mother	No	240	48.10
	Yes (part time employment)	132	26.45
	Yes (full-time employment)	126	25.25

The Item Analysis

In order to obtain an index of the validity of the items in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index, the chi-square test was utilized to determine if each item significantly differentiated those subjects scoring in the upper quartile and those subjects scoring in the lower quartile on the basis of the total scores. All of the 36 items on the RMC Index were found to be significantly discriminating at the .001 level as indicated by Table II.

Another indication of the validity of the RMC Index is the finding of a significant relationship between the RMC Index scores and the respondent's self perceived preparation for marriage at the present time. The question "How prepared do you feel for marriage at the present time?" was used to determine the respondent's self perceived preparation for marriage. The five fixed alternative answers ranged from very prepared to very unprepared. The relationship between the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores and the self perceived preparation for marriage at the present time was significant at the .001 level with the respondents who indicated that they felt very prepared for marriage at the present time receiving the most favorable RMC Index mean score and those who indicated that they felt very unprepared for marriage at the present time receiving the least favorable RMC Index mean score.

TABLE II
ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF UPPER
AND LOWER QUANTILES OF RMC SCORES*

Concerning the relationship with my future wife (husband), I feel I am prepared in the following:

Item	df	χ^2_{***}
1. Promoting a feeling of security in her (him).	4	116.76
2. Expressing my affection for her (him).	4	121.52
3. Showing my admiration for her (him).	4	124.16
4. Satisfying her (his) desire for affection.	4	84.77
5. Showing her (him) that I evaluate her (him) highly.	4	145.50
6. Helping her (him) to feel that she (he) is an attractive person.	4	120.06
7. Showing my confidence in her (him).	4	136.35
8. Letting her (him) know I feel emotionally close to her (him).	4	123.24
9. Letting her (him) know that I believe we have a common purpose in life.	4	142.26
10. Helping her (him) to achieve her (his) potential to become what she (he) is capable of becoming.	4	91.99
11. Bringing out the "best" qualities in her (him).	4	147.96
12. Helping her (him) become a more interesting person.	4	111.26
13. Helping her (him) to see herself (himself) more positively.	4	149.58

* There were two forms of RMC Index, a female form and a male form. For purposes of clarity, the items reported here are stated as they appeared in the male form. The appropriate word appearing in parentheses indicates how the item appears in the female form.

*** All of the items were significant in differentiating between the upper and lower quartiles at the .001 level.

TABLE II (Continued)

Item	df	χ^2
14. Helping her (him) to increase her (his) circle of friends.	4	110.12
15. Helping her (him) to improve the quality of her (his) interpersonal relationships outside marriage.	4	133.91
16. Helping her (him) to improve her (his) personality.	4	127.75
17. Helping her (him) to act according to her (his) beliefs rather than simply "following the crowd."	4	131.72
18. Helping her (him) to have confidence in herself (himself).	4	173.14
19. Being a good listener when she (he) talks to me.	4	83.47
20. Encouraging her (him) when she (he) is discouraged.	4	124.53
21. Seeing things from her (his) point of view.	4	115.86
22. Being considerate of her (his) feelings.	4	116.53
23. Showing her (him) that I understand what she (he) wants to achieve in life.	4	167.08
24. Respecting her (his) wishes when making important decisions.	4	129.95
25. Accepting disagreement from her (him).	4	104.60
26. Accepting her (his) differentness.	4	126.28
27. Avoiding habits which annoy her (him).	4	116.00
28. Expressing my disagreement with her (him) honestly and openly.	4	96.70
29. Letting her (him) know how I really feel about something.	4	95.10
30. Helping her (him) to express her (his) feelings to me.	4	125.33

TABLE II (Continued)

Item	df	χ^2
31. Letting her (him) know about my expectations in life.	4	132.42
32. Seeing beyond what she (he) says and being aware of her (his) true feelings when her (his) feelings are different from her (his) words.	4	131.22
33. Being aware that what she (he) says may not always indicate how she (he) really feels about something.	4	101.19
34. When she (he) is angry at me trying to understand why she (he) is angry.	4	106.66
35. Being observant as to whether she (he) has understood correctly the meaning of the message I have communicated to her (him).	4	120.51
36. When I am troubled, letting her (him) know what is bothering me.	4	100.33

Sub-Scores of Readiness for Marital Competence Index

The Readiness for Marital Competence Index consisted of nine statements for each of the four need categories of love, communication, respect, and personality fulfillment for a total of 36 items. Since a readiness to fulfill these needs in a future mate is considered an important factor in marital success, mean sub-scores were obtained in order to determine which specific needs the respondents felt most able and least able to fulfill in a future mate. Table III shows that the total mean sub-scores, mean sub-scores for the male, and mean sub-scores for the female all indicate that the respondents in these categories felt most able to fulfill the need of love in a future marriage relationship and least able to fulfill the need of personality fulfillment. The female subjects received more favorable RMC Index scores in all four need categories than did the male. This finding may be due in part to the fact, as noted by Jersild (1963), that girls mature emotionally at an earlier age than do boys.

TABLE III
 READINESS FOR MARITAL COMPETENCE INDEX SUB-SCORES
 FOR TOTAL SAMPLE AND ACCORDING TO SEX

Category	Mean Sub-Scores		
	Male	Female	Total
1. Love	17.44	15.87	16.31
2. Personality Fulfillment	19.23	17.61	18.08
3. Respect	19.16	16.51	17.22
4. Communication	17.76	16.42	16.78

Examination of Hypothesis and Discussion of Results

The one-way classification analysis of variance was employed to determine the relationship between the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores and the degree of parental emphasis upon the following values: (a) determination and perseverance, (b) perception of each person as having dignity and worth, (c) cooperation, (d) self-discipline, (e) spiritual development, (f) loyalty, (g) feeling of genuine concern and responsibility toward others, (h) expression of sincere appreciation of others, and (i) taking responsibility for the consequence of own actions.

Hypothesis I (a). There is no significant difference in the RMC Index scores according to parental emphasis on determination and perseverance.

In order to examine this hypothesis the one-way classification analysis of variance was used. As shown in Table IV, an F score of 1.36 was obtained indicating that a significant difference does not exist between RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on the values of determination and perseverance.

TABLE IV
F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS
ON DETERMINATION AND PERSEVERANCE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Determination and Perseverance</u>				
Very Rarely	26	71.46		
Rarely	56	71.80		
Moderate	167	68.05	1.36	n.s.
Often	167	64.34		
Very Often	68	65.53		

Hypothesis I (b). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on perceiving each person as having dignity and worth.

As shown in Table V, an F score of .81 was obtained when the one-way classification analysis of variance was used to examine this hypothesis. These results indicate that there were no significant differences in the RMC Index scores of the respondents according to the degree of parental emphasis placed upon learning to perceive each person as having dignity and worth. However, examination of Table V reveals that those who indicated their parents very often or often emphasized learning to see each person as having dignity and worth had more favorable RMC Index scores than did the respondents whose parents rarely or very rarely emphasized this value.

TABLE V
F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS ON
PERCEIVING EACH PERSON AS HAVING
DIGNITY AND WORTH

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Seeing Each Person as Having Dignity and Worth</u>				
Very Rarely	19	69.79		
Rarely	49	68.73		
Moderate	176	68.90	0.81	n.s.
Often	167	65.02		
Very Often	72	64.54		

Hypothesis I (c). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index Scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on cooperation.

In order to determine if there was a significant relationship between the RMC Index scores and degree of parental emphasis upon cooperation, a one-way classification analysis of variance was applied. As shown in Table VI, an F score of 4.36 was obtained indicating significance at the .01 level. Those respondents who reported that their parents emphasized the value of cooperation very often received the most favorable RMC Index score, while those respondents who reported that their parents emphasized cooperation very rarely received the least favorable RMC Index score.

TABLE VI

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS
ON COOPERATION

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Learning Cooperation</u>				
Very Rarely	9	91.11		
Rarely	21	66.62		
Moderate	120	68.63	4.36	.01
Often	210	68.67		
Very Often	130	60.94		

The finding of a relationship between favorable RMC Index scores and a high degree of parental emphasis upon cooperation supports research by Terman (1938) which revealed that the happy husbands and wives have the personal trait of cooperativeness to a greater degree than do the unhappy husbands and wives. Cavan (1959) also indicates that the marriageable person has the quality of cooperation. Landis and Landis (1968, p. 301) further stressed the importance of cooperation in a marital relationship by stating that "even when the choice [of a mate] is less than perfect, people can learn to become good husbands and wives through thoughtful, cooperative effort. . . ."

Hypothesis I (d). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on self-discipline.

As illustrated in Table VII an F score of 1.78 was obtained when the one-way classification analysis of variance was applied to Hypothesis I (d). The results indicate that there was no significant difference in the RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on learning of self-discipline.

TABLE VII
 F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
 ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS
 ON SELF DISCIPLINE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Learning Self Discipline</u>				
Very Rarely	20	67.95		
Rarely	31	73.29		
Moderate	132	66.53	1.78	n.s.
Often	181	68.88		
Very Often	126	62.37		

Hypothesis I (e). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on spiritual development.

When this hypothesis was subjected to the one-way classification analysis of variance, a significant difference was found in RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on spiritual development. As shown in Table VIII, the F score of 3.06 indicated a .05 level of significance. The respondents with the most favorable RMC Index scores were those whose parents emphasized spiritual development often. The subjects with the least favorable RMC Index scores indicated that their parents emphasized spiritual development very rarely.

The finding is consistent with studies by Burchinal (1957) and Dyer and Luckey (1961) which indicated a positive relationship between religious participation and marital satisfaction.

TABLE VIII
F SCORES REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS
ON SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Spiritual Development</u>				
Very Rarely	28	77.43		
Rarely	48	74.83		
Moderate	134	66.29	3.06	.05
Often	122	64.47		
Very Often	154	64.62		

Hypothesis I (f). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on loyalty.

An F score of 2.61 was obtained when the above hypothesis was examined using the one-way classification analysis of variance. As reported in Table IX, this F value was significant at the .05 level

which indicated a significant relationship between the RMC Index scores and the degree of parental emphasis on development of loyalty. The group of respondents with the most favorable RMC Index scores reported that their parents emphasized the development of loyalty very often while those with the least favorable RMC Index scores indicated that their parents emphasized the development of loyalty very rarely.

TABLE IX
F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX
SCORES ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL
EMPHASIS ON LOYALTY

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Learning Loyalty</u>				
Very Rarely	14	71.79		
Rarely	34	68.74		
Moderate	146	68.55	2.61	.05
Often	173	68.04		
Very Often	120	60.17		

This finding is in accord with the traditionally held belief that fidelity or loyalty is one of the aspects of a successful marriage in the United States. Also inherent in loyalty is the acceptance of an

individual even though his personality traits are less than ideal. An individual who is capable of being loyal is able to look beyond his own personal wishes of the moment and display "other-centered" behavior. Thus, loyalty can be related to mature behavior which is one of the qualities important in the fulfilling of needs of the spouse.

Hypothesis I (g). There is no significant difference in the readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on feeling a genuine concern and responsibility toward others.

A one-way classification analysis of variance was used to determine if a relationship existed between RMC Index scores and the degree of parental emphasis upon feeling a genuine concern and responsibility toward others. As illustrated in Table X, an F score of 4.85 was obtained indicating a significant relationship at the .001 level. The findings indicate that the subjects who reported that their parents very often placed emphasis on the development of a feeling of genuine concern and responsibility toward others had the most favorable RMC Index scores; the subjects who indicated that their parents very rarely emphasized this value had the least favorable RMC Index scores.

The finding that the more favorable RMC Index scores are related to a high degree of parental emphasis upon feeling genuine concern and responsibility for others is related to Terman's (1938) research concerning the personality traits of the happy husband and wife. Terman found that the happily married men were characterized by benevolent attitudes toward others. In addition to a kindly attitude toward others, the happily married women frequently had missionary attitudes and enjoyed serving those who were dependent or underprivileged. It is

logical that the person who has learned to feel genuine concern and responsibility for someone other than self would be more able to fulfill the marital needs of a future spouse than would the person who felt no similar concern or responsibility for others.

TABLE X
F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS ON
FEELING GENUINE CONCERN AND RESPONSIBILITY
TOWARD OTHERS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Development of Feeling Genuine Concern and Responsibility Toward Others</u>				
Very Rarely	14	74.21		
Rarely	22	67.00		
Moderate	138	71.43	4.85	.001
Often	201	67.83		
Very Often	110	58.44		

Hypothesis I (h). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on expressing sincere appreciation of others.

Using the one-way classification analysis of variance the relationship between the RMC Index scores and the degree of parental emphasis on expressing sincere appreciation of others was examined. An F score of 4.38 was obtained which was significant at the .01 level. The respondents with the most favorable RMC Index scores, as shown in Table XI, were those whose parents very often emphasized expressing sincere appreciation of others; the respondents with the least favorable RMC Index scores were those who reported that their parents very rarely emphasized this behavior.

TABLE XI

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS ON
EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR OTHERS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Expressing Sincere Appreciation for Others</u>				
Very Rarely	13	77.00		
Rarely	32	76.44		
Moderate	130	70.22	4.38	.01
Often	204	66.69		
Very Often	109	59.92		

This finding may be related to a study by Peterson (1964, p. 47) in which the various theories of love were analyzed in an attempt to define the components essential to a love "that can endure the vicissitudes of marriage." One of the components of love revealed by the study was appreciation which was defined in part as ". . . the psychological product of companionship . . ." (p. 46). A study by Burgess, Locke, and Thomes (1963) revealed that appreciation was considered an important aspect of marriage. In this research over one-fourth of the subjects reported they wanted to have their mates appreciate their goals of achievement; over one-fifth of the subjects wanted to be appreciated "just as I am" by their spouses (p. 261).

It appears that appreciation of others is an important part of enduring love as well as an important type of behavior which fills the perceived needs of the husband and wife. Another logical assumption is that the individual who can sincerely appreciate others will be more able to recognize and to fulfill the mate's needs than would the person who has no regard for others.

Hypothesis I (i). There is no significant difference in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis on taking responsibility for the consequences of one's own actions.

Table XII shows that an F score of 2.73 was obtained when the one-way classification analysis of variance was used to examine this hypothesis. This indicates a significant relationship at the .05 level between the RMC Index scores and the degree of parental emphasis upon accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. The

respondents who reported that their parents very often emphasized accepting responsibility for the consequences of actions received the most favorable RMC Index scores while those subjects who reported that their parents rarely placed emphasis on this factor received the least favorable scores on the RMC Index. This finding may be related to the theory that one of the most important factors in achieving a successful marriage is the maturity of the spouses (Bowman, 1970). Landis and Landis (1968) state that one of the aspects of maturity is the ability to assume the responsibility for one's mistakes. The mature person is characterized by enough confidence in self to enable him to recognize his mistakes and to take the blame for them.

TABLE XII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN RMC INDEX SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF PARENTAL EMPHASIS ON
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSEQUENCES
OF ONE'S OWN ACTIONS

Description	No.	\bar{X}		Level of Significance
<u>Parental Emphasis on Child's Taking Responsi- bility for the Consequences for His Own Actions</u>				
Very Rarely	15	69.27		
Rarely	29	80.76		
Moderate	103	67.32	2.73	.05
Often	198	66.42		
Very Often	145	63.90		

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of high school youth concerning their preparedness for marriage and to relate their preparedness for marriage at the present time to the degree of parental emphasis regarding the learning of certain values during the respondent's childhood.

The sample was composed of 499 eleventh and twelfth grade youth who were enrolled in home economics classes in seven Oklahoma high schools. The largest proportion of the subjects were female, white, Protestant, and from families of lower-middle and upper-lower socioeconomic status. The data were obtained during the month of February, 1971.

The instrument used in this study was developed for the purpose of investigating high school students' perceptions of their preparedness for marriage. The questionnaire included the following: (a) an information sheet for securing background data and (b) Stinnett's Readiness for Marital Competence Index designed to determine the degree to which the students feel prepared to fulfill basic emotional needs in a future spouse.

The chi-square test was used in an item analysis of the Readiness for Marital Competence Index to determine those items that significantly differentiated between the subjects scoring in the upper quartile

and the lower quartile groups on the basis of total scores. The one-way classification analysis of variance was used to determine if a significant difference existed between the Readiness for Marital Competence Index scores according to the degree to which the subjects' parents emphasized the learning of each of the following: (a) determination and perseverance, (b) seeing each person as having dignity and worth, (c) cooperation, (d) self-discipline, (e) spiritual development, (f) loyalty, (g) feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others, (h) expressing sincere appreciation of others, and (i) taking responsibility for the consequences of your own actions.

The results of the study were as follows:

1. All 36 items in the Readiness for Marital Competence Index were significantly discriminating between the upper quartile and lower quartile groups at the .001 level.
2. Mean sub-scores on the Readiness for Marital Competence Index indicated that the subjects felt most prepared to fulfill the need of love in a future mate.
3. No significant differences were found to exist in the RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis upon the following factors: (a) determination and perseverance, (b) seeing each person as having dignity and worth, and (c) learning self-discipline.
4. A significant difference at the .01 level was found to exist in the RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis upon (a) cooperation and (b) expressing sincere appreciation of others. The most favorable RMC Index scores were received by those respondents who reported that their

parents very often emphasized these values; the least favorable RMC Index scores were received by those respondents who reported that their parents very rarely emphasized these values.

5. A significant difference at the .05 level was found to exist in the RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis upon (a) spiritual development, (b) loyalty, and (c) taking responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. The most favorable RMC Index scores were received by those respondents who reported that their parents often or very often emphasized these values; the least favorable RMC Index scores were received by those respondents who reported that their parents rarely or very rarely emphasized these values.
6. There was a significant difference at the .001 level in the RMC Index scores according to the degree of parental emphasis upon feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others. The respondents who reported their parents emphasized this factor very often received the most favorable RMC Index scores while those respondents who reported their parents emphasized this factor very rarely received the least favorable RMC Index scores.

In general, according to this study, it appears that the respondents with the most favorable RMC Index scores indicate that their parents very often emphasized qualities which can be considered as positive factors in the development of good interpersonal relationships. Specifically, favorable RMC Index scores appear to be related to a high

degree of parental emphasis on cooperation, spiritual development, loyalty, feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others, expressing sincere appreciation for others, and accepting consequences for one's actions. High degrees of parental emphasis upon determination and perseverance, seeing each person as having dignity and worth, or self discipline were not significantly related to favorable RMC Index scores. The results also indicated that the youth felt most prepared to fulfill the emotional need of love in a future mate and least prepared to fulfill the emotional need of personality fulfillment in a future mate.

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APPENDIXES

- ____ 10. For the major part of your life have you lived:
- ____ 1. On farm or in country
 - ____ 2. Small town under 25,000 population
 - ____ 3. City of 25,000 to 50,000 population
 - ____ 4. City of 50,000 to 100,000 population
 - ____ 5. City of over 100,000 population
- ____ 11. What is your parents' marital status?
- ____ 1. Living together
 - ____ 2. Separated or divorced (with no remarriage)
 - ____ 3. One of parents deceased (with no remarriage)
 - ____ 4. Divorced (with remarriage)
 - ____ 5. One of parents deceased (with remarriage)
- ____ 12. What is the occupation of the head of your family (teacher, policeman, etc.)?
-
- ____ 13. What is the primary source of the income of your family?
- ____ 1. Inherited savings and investments
 - ____ 2. Earned wealth, transferable investment
 - ____ 3. Profits, royalties, fees
 - ____ 4. Salary, Commissions (regular, monthly, or yearly)
 - ____ 5. Hourly wages, weekly checks
 - ____ 6. Odd jobs, seasonal work, private charity
 - ____ 7. Public relief or charity
- ____ 14. What is the highest educational attainment of the principal earner of the income of your family?
- ____ 1. Completed graduate work for a profession
 - ____ 2. Graduated from a 4-year college
 - ____ 3. Attended college or university for two or more years

- ____4. Graduated from high school
- ____5. Attended high school, completed grade 9, but did not graduate
- ____6. Completed grade 8, but did not attend beyond grade 9.
- ____7. Less than grade 8.
- ____15. (Omit)
- ____16. Which one of the following most nearly describes the type of discipline you received as a child from your father?
- ____1. Very permissive
- ____2. Permissive
- ____3. Moderate degree of both permissiveness and strictness
- ____4. Strict
- ____5. Very strict
- ____17. Which one of the following most nearly describes the type of discipline you received as a child from your mother?
- ____1. Very permissive
- ____2. Permissive
- ____3. Moderate degree of both permissiveness and strictness
- ____4. Strict
- ____5. Very strict
- ____18. Which one of the following describes the degree of closeness of your relationship with your father during childhood?
- ____1. Above average
- ____2. Average
- ____3. Below average
- ____19. Which one of the following describes the degree of closeness or your relationship with your mother during childhood?
- ____1. Above average

- ____ 2. Average
 ____ 3. Below average

____ 20. As a child who did you receive most of your discipline from?

- ____ 1. Usually my mother
 ____ 2. Usually my father
 ____ 3. Both mother and father about equally

____ 21. How much were you praised as a child?

- ____ 1. Very rarely
 ____ 2. Rarely
 ____ 3. Moderate
 ____ 4. Often
 ____ 5. Very often

____ 22. From whom did you receive the most affection as a child?

- ____ 1. Mother
 ____ 2. Father
 ____ 3. Both mother and father about equally
 ____ 4. Other _____
 (Specify)

____ 23. As a child did your family participate in recreation together?

- ____ 1. Very rarely
 ____ 2. Rarely
 ____ 3. Moderate
 ____ 4. Often
 ____ 5. Very often

____ 24. As a child did your father find time to do things together with you?

- ____ 1. Very rarely
 ____ 2. Rarely
 ____ 3. Moderate
 ____ 4. Often
 ____ 5. Very often

____ 25. As a child did your mother find time to do things together with you?

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 26. As a child did your parents encourage you to respect the feelings of other children?

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

As a child, how much were each of the following disciplinary methods used with you by your parents?

____ 27. Physical punishment

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 28. Deprivation of privileges

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 29. Being isolated (forced to stay in room, etc.)

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 30. Withdrawal of love

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

- _____ 31. Use of reasoning
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often |
| _____ 2. Rarely | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate | |
- _____ 32. Use of tangible rewards
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often |
| _____ 2. Rarely | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate | |
- _____ 33. Do you feel that you can talk with your parents freely about your problems and things that concern you?
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often |
| _____ 2. Rarely | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Average | |
- _____ 34. Which parent do you feel has had the greatest influence in determining the kind of person you are?
- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ 1. Mother | |
| _____ 2. Father | |
| _____ 3. Both mother and father about equally | |
- _____ 35. Which one of the following do you feel has had the greatest influence in determining the kind of person you are?
- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. One or both parents | _____ 4. A public figure such as a president or movie star |
| _____ 2. A brother or sister | |
| _____ 3. Friends of my own age | |
| | _____ 5. Other |

(Specify)

How much emphasis did your parents place on your learning each of the following values?

____ 36. Determination and perseverance

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 37. Seeing each person as having dignity and worth

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 38. Cooperation

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 39. Self discipline

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 40. Spiritual development

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 41. Loyalty

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

____ 42. Feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ____ 1. Very rarely | ____ 4. Often |
| ____ 2. Rarely | ____ 5. Very often |
| ____ 3. Moderate | |

- _____ 43. Expressing sincere appreciation for others
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often |
| _____ 2. Rarely | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate | |
- _____ 44. Taking responsibility for the consequences of your own actions
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often |
| _____ 2. Rarely | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate | |
- _____ 45. Did your parents express affection toward you openly as a child?
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often |
| _____ 2. Rarely | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate | |
- _____ 46. Which one of the following do you feel has influenced you most in the formation of your attitudes toward marriage?
- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Parents | _____ 4. Church |
| _____ 2. Friends my own age | _____ 5. Mass media
(books, magazines,
movies, etc.) |
- _____ 47. How prepared do you feel for marriage at the present time?
- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ 1. Very prepared | _____ 4. Unprepared |
| _____ 2. Prepared | _____ 5. Very Unpre-
pared |
| _____ 3. Uncertain | |
- _____ 48. Which of the following do you believe to be most important in achieving marital success (select one)?
- | |
|---|
| _____ 1. Being in love |
| _____ 2. Determination to make the marriage succeed |
| _____ 3. Having common interests |

(continued)

____ 4. Compatibility of personalities

____ 5. Mutual respect and consideration

____ 49. What is your present dating situation?

____ 1. Seldom date

____ 4. Going steady

____ 2. Moderately date

____ 5. Engaged

____ 3. Date often

Oklahoma State University
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Department of Family Relations and Child
Development FRCD 3142 NS/fd 12/70

PREPAREDNESS SCALE
(Male Form)

Directions: This instrument is an attempt to determine how well prepared individuals feel they are in performing their future marriage roles. We are not concerned with how well prepared you think you "ought" to be, but how prepared you feel you actually are. Please be as frank as possible in your answers. Remember, your name is not required on this questionnaire.

For each item below you are to indicate the degree to which you feel you are prepared or unprepared by circling the number in the appropriate box at the left of each item.

Response code: Very Prepared = VP (circle 1); Moderately Prepared = MP (circle 2); Undecided = UD (circle 3); Moderately Unprepared = MUP (circle 4); Very Unprepared = VUP (circle 5).

	VP	MP	UD	MUP	VUP	Concerning my marriage relationship with my future wife, I feel I am prepared in the following:
___ 1.	1	2	3	4	5	Promoting a feeling of security in her.
___ 2.	1	2	3	4	5	Expressing my affection for her.
___ 3.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing my admiration for her.
___ 4.	1	2	3	4	5	Satisfying her desire for affection.
___ 5.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing her that I evaluate her highly.
___ 6.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to feel that she is an attractive person.
___ 7.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing my confidence in her.
___ 8.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting her know that I feel emotionally close to her.
___ 9.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting her know that I believe we have a common purpose in life.
___ 10.-11.	(Omit)					

	VP	MP	UD	MUP	VUP	
____12.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to achieve her potential to become what she is capable of becoming.
____13.	1	2	3	4	5	Bringing out the "best" qualities in her.
____14.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her become a more interesting person.
____15.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to see herself more positively.
____16.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to increase her circle of friends.
____17.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to improve the quality of her interpersonal relationships outside marriage.
____18.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to improve her personality.
____19.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to act according to her own beliefs rather than simply "following the crowd."
____20.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to have confidence in herself.
____21.-22.	(Omit)					
____23.	1	2	3	4	5	Being a good listener when she talks to me.
____24.	1	2	3	4	5	Encouraging her when she is discouraged.
____25.	1	2	3	4	5	Seeing things from her point of view.
____26.	1	2	3	4	5	Being considerate of her feelings.
____27.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing her that I understand what she wants to achieve in life.
____28.	1	2	3	4	5	Respecting her wishes when making important decisions.
____29.	1	2	3	4	5	Accepting disagreement from her.

	VP	MP	UD	MUP	VUP	
___30.	1	2	3	4	5	Accepting her differentness.
___31.	1	2	3	4	5	Avoiding habits which annoy her.
___32-33.	(Omit)					
___34.	1	2	3	4	5	Expressing my disagreement with her honestly and openly.
___35.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting her know how I really feel about something.
___36.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping her to express her feelings to me.
___37.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting her know about my expectations in life.
___38.	1	2	3	4	5	Seeing beyond what she says and being aware of her true feelings when her feelings are different from her words.
___39.	1	2	3	4	5	Being aware that what she says may not always indicate how she really feels about something.
___40.	1	2	3	4	5	When she is angry at me trying to understand why she is angry.
___41.	1	2	3	4	5	Being observant as to whether she has understood correctly the meaning of the message I have communicated to her.
___42.	1	2	3	4	5	When I am troubled, letting her know what is bothering me.
___43.-44.	(Omit)					

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PREPAREDNESS SCALE
(Female Form)

Directions: This instrument is an attempt to determine how well prepared individuals feel they are in performing their future marriage roles. We are not concerned with how well prepared you think you "ought" to be, but how prepared you feel you actually are. Please be as frank as possible in your answers. Remember, your name is not required on this questionnaire.

For each item below you are to indicate the degree to which you feel you are prepared or unprepared by circling the number in the appropriate box at the left of each item.

Response code: Very Prepared = VP (circle 1); Moderately Prepared = MP (circle 2); Undecided = UD (circle 3); Moderately Unprepared = MUP (circle 4); Very Unprepared = VUP (circle 5).

	VP	MP	UD	MUP	VUP	Concerning my marriage relationship with my future husband, I feel I am prepared in the following:
___1.	1	2	3	4	5	Promoting a feeling of security in him.
___2.	1	2	3	4	5	Expressing my affection for him.
___3.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing my admiration for him.
___4.	1	2	3	4	5	Satisfying his desire for affection.
___5.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing him that I evaluate him highly.
___6.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to feel that he is an attractive person.
___7.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing my confidence in him.
___8.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting him know that I feel emotionally close to him.
___9.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting him know that I believe we have a common purpose in life.
___10.-11.	(Omit)					

	VP	MP	UD	MUP	VUP	
____12.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to achieve his potential to become what he is capable of becoming.
____13.	1	2	3	4	5	Bringing out the "best" qualities in him.
____14.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to become a more interesting person.
____15.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to see himself more positively.
____16.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to increase his circle of friends.
____17.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to improve the quality of his interpersonal relationships outside marriage.
____18.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to improve his personality.
____19.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to act according to his own beliefs rather than simply "following the crowd."
____20.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to have confidence in himself.
____21.-22.	(Omit)					
____23.	1	2	3	4	5	Being a good listener when he talks to me.
____24.	1	2	3	4	5	Encouraging him when he is discouraged.
____25.	1	2	3	4	5	Seeing things from his point of view.
____26.	1	2	3	4	5	Being considerate of his feelings.
____27.	1	2	3	4	5	Showing him that I understand what he wants to achieve in life.
____28.	1	2	3	4	5	Respecting his wishes when making important decisions.
____29.	1	2	3	4	5	Accepting disagreement from him.

	VP	MP	UD	MUP	VUP	
____30.	1	2	3	4	5	Accepting his differentness.
____31.	1	2	3	4	5	Avoiding habits which annoy him.
____32.-33. (Omit)						
____34.	1	2	3	4	5	Expressing my disagreement with him honestly and openly.
____35.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting him know how I really feel about something.
____36.	1	2	3	4	5	Helping him to express his feelings to me.
____37.	1	2	3	4	5	Letting him know about my expectations in life.
____38.	1	2	3	4	5	Seeing beyond what he says and being aware of his true feelings when his feelings are different from his words.
____39.	1	2	3	4	5	Being aware that what he says may not always indicate how he really feels about something.
____40.	1	2	3	4	5	When he is angry at me, trying to understand why he is angry.
____41.	1	2	3	4	5	Being observant as to whether he has understood correctly the meaning of the message I have communicated to him.
____42.	1	2	3	4	5	When I am troubled, letting him know what is bothering me.
____43.-44. (Omit)						

VITA /

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Master of Science

Thesis: RELATIONSHIP OF MARRIAGE PREPAREDNESS TO PARENTAL EMPHASIS ON
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