

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION PATTERNS
WITHIN STRONG FAMILIES AND
SELECTED BACKGROUND FACTORS

by

KENNETH GERARD DYE

Bachelor of Arts
Abilene Christian College
Abilene, Texas
1962

Master of Arts
Eastern New Mexico University
Portales, New Mexico
1966

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Dissertation Proposal Approved:

Nick Stinnett

Dissertation Adviser

Althea Wright

Elaine Jorgenson

Kenneth McLean

Norman McDuba

Dean of the Graduate College

997246

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

For centuries the family existed with relatively few changes. Society, being what it was, brought about a relatively stable environment in which to grow up, marry, rear children, live into old age and die. The family seemed to be the accepted agency for stability, personal growth and fulfilling the needs of children. With more recent discoveries in communication, transportation and technological reorganizations, the family began to come under attack as to its usefulness; whether it survives will be determined out of necessity for human understandings and personal growth or simply by tradition.

Pathology appears to be the great emphasis within family life resulting from the enormous problems existing in personal lives. High divorce rates, juvenile delinquency, suicides, physical abuse within the family and problems of every description are now raising the greatest of questions, "Will the family survive?". Research indicates that one of the most important goals of people is to have a strong satisfying family life (Blood, 1969). Even with research indicating importance of the family, it still appears that our emphasis seems to be set on diagnosing the problems rather than exploring patterns within strong families to prevent these problems from ever arising. Therefore, it is important for society as a whole to have healthy families which meet the individual

needs of the family members. Zimmerman (1972) supports this by noting that when adverse conditions strike society, those societies with strong family systems tend to recuperate rapidly while societies with weak family systems have great difficulty recovering.

What brings about good family systems? What helps to create and sustain strong families? From past research good communication seems to be the key to quality family relationships. Howe (1963) states, "Every man is a potential adversary, even those we love. It is only through dialogue that we are safe from enmity toward one another." It is through dialogue or exchange of conversation, person to person, that people are able to communicate their feelings, needs and desires. Thus this thread of commonality found in the writings of many social scientists concerning healthy relationships within families is that of communication. The need for open, clear and meaningful communication is frequently linked with positive human growth and development. Havighurst (1964), who developed the concept of developmental tasks, suggests that the ability to communicate effectively is an essential part of the developmental process in every stage of life. Communication with those who are near means more than survival. It is the means by which we learn to live with self and relate to others.

Duvall (1971) sets forth the concept of the family life cycle containing eight stages. The family has its beginning, its growth and development, waning stages and finally is no more. For each of the eight stages in the family life cycle, developmental tasks arise. Through these, communication is a key factor in growth. Erikson (1963), well known by students of human development for his eight stages of man, insists that in each stage of progress from infancy to maturity, much

depends upon good communication for positive growth benefits. Social scientists are in general agreement that people must understand each other, in order to accomplish their developmental tasks and build effective relationships. Fromm (1956) has noted that each person has a basic need to relate to others and to overcome separateness, and that overcoming this sense of separation comes through communication with others. We have a need to share thoughts and feelings with other persons. We want to be understood. We enjoy being with other individuals with whom we feel free and comfortable in disclosing thoughts and feelings. We enjoy the companionship of those who understand and empathize with us. We appreciate the person who gives us the benefit of doubt and can overlook the silly or negative things we sometimes say.

Those people who are close to an individual such as spouse, parents, siblings and friends usually have feelings of genuine concern for that person's welfare, as well as feelings of respect, appreciation and love. However, it is not enough that they simply have these feelings; people need to have these feelings expressed to them. Walroos (1974) states that family relationships--indeed all interpersonal relationships--are more meaningful and enjoyable when empathy, understanding, respect, concern and appreciation are mutually expressed.

Researchers and psychiatrists have long recognized the central role communication plays in the mental and emotional health of individuals. Satir (1972) affirms this in some of her writings. Spitz (1945) indicates from his research that infants deprived of physical handling and other forms of communication tended to become emotionally unresponsive. Many also began a physical decline and succumbed eventually to disease. Levine (1960) found that for rats, physical, mental and emotional develop-

ment as well as the biochemistry of the brain and resistance to leukemia were positively affected by physical handling, one of the most basic forms of communication. Adults who also experience extreme communication deprivation may develop psychoses or temporary mental disturbance. Berne (1964) observed in persons confined to long periods of solitary imprisonment, similar effects of these psychoses or temporary mental disturbances.

Rogers (1954) indicates there to be a direct relationship between emotional disturbance and communication difficulties. He says:

The whole task of psychotherapy is the task of dealing with a failure in communication. The emotionally maladjusted person, the neurotic, is in difficulty first because communication within himself has broken down and second because as a result of this, his communication with others has been damaged. If this sounds somewhat strange, let me put it in other terms. In the neurotic individual, parts of himself which have been termed unconscious, or repressed, are denied to awareness, become blocked off so that they no longer communicate themselves to the conscious or managing part of himself. As long as this is true, there are distortions in the way he communicates himself to others, and so he suffers both within himself and in his interpersonal relations (p. 35).

Part of the reason for pessimism about family life today is the high rate of dissolution in families through divorce. Lederer and Jackson (1968) wrote that in the United States the institution of marriage is in a state of crisis. Many writers note that social problems such as juvenile delinquency, drug abuse and high suicide rates are associated with unsatisfactory family relationships (Hicks and Platt, 1970). The Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children (1969) suggested that the prevention of serious emotional problems through the strengthening of the family life is of prime importance. Ibister (1973) and others discuss the importance of the family unit to the survival of the human race. Family authorities, therefore, advance the thesis that good com-

munication is the life blood of the marriage relationship as well as the key to family interaction.

Communication among the members is necessary to the successful functioning of the family... it should be obvious that needs cannot be satisfied, problems solved, or goals reached without communication (Epstein and Westley, 1959, p. 1).

Satir (1965) asserts that increased recognition is being given to the belief that a positive relationship exists between a couple's capacity to communicate and marital adjustment. Many authors in the field of family therapy (Ackerman, 1966; Haley, 1963; Jackson, 1959; Satir, 1972a) agree that quite often family problems stem from communication distortion, and the main emphasis in family treatment should be on improvement of intrafamily communication.

Based on an extensive amount of research done with personal interviews, questionnaires, and case studies the empirical data seems to indicate strongly that communication is important to the successful functioning of today's family. And yet, even though much information is available with regard to this need, empirical data on communication within strong families is almost nothing. For families to both prevent problems and increase better communication patterns, they must be aware of what good communication patterns are. This necessitates investigating those strong families for their communication patterns. This is the intent of the present research.

Need for Research

Even though the concept of family strengths seems to be both a valid one and extremely necessary for families to understand, little research has been done in the area. Since pathology has been the main emphasis, family strengths has received little attention. Otto (1962, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1972, 1975) with others such as Zimmerman and Cervantes (1960), Reeder (1973), Grams (1967), and Stinnett (1976), have made contributions to this area and yet with the importance and necessity for understanding family strengths these are few as compared to those doing research in the areas of pathology. Even less research has been conducted concerning communication patterns in strong families.

Information concerned with communication patterns of strong families would be important to the following:

- a) Family therapists who are concerned with assisting dysfunctional families to develop more satisfying relationships;
- b) Teachers in family life education programs in public schools, higher education, and family agencies;
- c) To those responsible for designing and conducting marriage and family enrichment programs.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were to:

1. Measure the degree to which ten selected traits within the Family Communication Pattern Scale characterize the strong families included in this study.
2. Determine, through a percentage and frequency the degree to which each of ten communication patterns included in the Family Communication Pattern Scale characterized the respondent and spouse in each of the strong families in the study.
3. Examine the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores and (a) age (b) sex (c) number of years married and (d) number of children.

Definitions of Terms

Communication

Communication does not refer to verbal, explicit, and intentional transmission of messages alone. As used in the present study, the concept of communication would include all those processes by which people influence one another. All actions and events have communicative aspects; as soon as they are perceived by a human being such perception changes the information which an individual possesses and therefore influences him (Bienvenu, 1975).

Family Strengths

Are those forces and dynamic factors in relationship matrix which encourages the development of the personal resources and potentials of

the family and which make family life satisfying and fulfilling to family members (Otto, 1975a, p. 16).

Strong Families

Are those families whose members fulfill each others' needs to a high degree and whose members have a high degree of happiness in the husband-wife and parent-child relationship. The family is also intact with both parents present in the home.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Family Strengths

Even though the literature and research related to family strengths has been relatively limited in past years, research is being directed more and more to this area. People are beginning to ask, not just how to solve the pathological problems that exist in families, but also how to strengthen the existing functional family which has many strengths. Because of this desire for strengthening good marriages, an increasing number of researchers are beginning to turn toward those elements that will give strength to these relationships.

One of the earliest researchers to call attention to the area of family strengths was Otto (1962, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1972, 1975). Others making contributions were Zimmerman and Cervantes (1960), Reeder (1973), and Grams (1967).

In one of the earlier research studies by Otto (1962, 1966), he examined 27 families and asked questions regarding what they perceived to be the family strengths existing in their relationships. One of the more noticeable results found in this study was that the affective aspects of family relationships provided the greater source of strength. The most mentioned aspects were the giving and receiving of love and the understanding that existed between the spouses, parents and the children. Other additional variables discovered in this research were that strong

families did things together and shared their religious and moral convictions.

In later research, Otto (1967) discovered what many people had felt for years, that families tend to be more aware of their problem areas and difficulties than of their capacities and potentials for strength. His research showed that families have latent strengths or capacities of which, in most instances, these families were unaware and were not using.

Otto (1963) concluded that family strengths are a process rather than an end product. These ever changing related components existing in a family combine to provide the strength that gives consistency and elasticity to the relationship. He identified twelve components for building the framework to enable one to identify family strengths:

- 1) The ability to provide the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the family.
- 2) The ability to be sensitive to the needs of the family members.
- 3) The ability to communicate.
- 4) The ability to provide support, security, and encouragement.
- 5) The ability to establish and maintain and create constructive and responsible community relationships in the neighborhood and in the school, town local and state governments.
- 6) The capacity to maintain and create constructive and responsible relationships in the neighborhood and in the school, town local and state governments.
- 7) The ability to grow with and through children.
- 8) An ability for self-help, and the ability to accept help when appropriate.

- 9) An ability to perform family roles flexibly.
- 10) Mutual respect for the individuality of family members.
- 11) The ability to use a crisis or injurious experience as a means of growth.
- 12) A concern for family unity, loyalty, and interfamily cooperation (pp. 333-336).

Blackburn (1967) characterized a strong family in terms of role fulfillment and satisfaction with the parent-child and husband-wife dyads. Within the context that Blackburn described the family, it is seen as an important source of physical and emotional strength. Strong husband-wife relationships exist where the husband and wife have high feelings of mutual respect, affection and love for each other (Cutright, 1971). Those individuals making up strong families usually come from similar backgrounds and economic classes with similar goals and expectations: They are also compatible sexually (Barton, Kawash, and Cattell, 1972).

Reeder (1973) developed a model of family characteristics hypothesized as being operationally helpful for problem-solving behavior in families with a mentally retarded child. The successful family:

- 1) Is integrated into society.
- 2) Maintains an internal focus of authority, decision-making and emotional investment.
- 3) Has ties of affection and support among all members.
- 4) Has open channels of communication.
- 5) Has a centralized authority structure to coordinate problem-solving efforts.
- 6) Has the ability to communicate and evaluate conflicting ideas

according to their intrinsic merit rather than the status of their source.

- 7) Is able to reach a consensus on family goals and related role allocations and expectations.
- 8) Prefers specific value orientations.

Otto (1962) observed family strengths as constantly changing elements within the family subsystems which were at the same time interacting and interrelated. These elements can be identified as separate strengths, but when observed in totality result in strengthening the family. Otto (1975) defines family strengths as:

Those forces, and the dynamic factors in the relationship matrix which encourages the development of the personal resources and potentials of members of the family and which make family life deeply satisfying and fulfilling to family members (p. 16).

Otto's framework stresses the ability to grow and remain flexible as the family moves through stages of development. It is this capacity to remain flexible to change that is central to strength.

Zimmerman and Cervantes (1960) reported in their research of qualities that contributed to successful families:

- 1) Successful families have more intimate family friends and have more in common with their friends than do unsuccessful families.
- 2) "Social" family principle is that of common values. This unique, purposeful common value principle begins with mating and extends through the life history of the family and the outward and family friends.
- 3) In every city, in every degree of intimacy and every measure of friendships similarity, the co-working of intimacy and

similarity has been associated strikingly with success.

The more friends are like each other, the more successful they are in avoiding divorce, desertion, juvenile arrest records and other phases of the breaking up of homes and domestic relations.

- 4) Having a child continue in high school is a positive function of child protection and the family success.
- 5) Parents with an ideal for their children, such as school continuance can most thoroughly implement that ideal in the minds of the children by surrounding their household from the beginning with friends who also possess the same ideals.
- 6) The totality of all the impressions of life other than parental have been received by the children from members of friend families.
- 7) Friendship between similar-minded adults living in proximity over a period of years resulted in its most basic or primary type. The friendship of this type was between equals, is volunteristic, involves common experiences and is not primarily for the appetitive pleasure or political, economic or social gain.

Thus Zimmerman and Cervantes consider those families to be successful who allowed only other families like themselves into their homes and circle of friends. In terms of the families' friends, they found that only a few reported no friends at all (1%), while from 70% to 80% claimed having approximately 5 or more intimate family-group friends. Depending upon the city, from three-tenths to almost half the family-

group friends were relatives. The family-group friends were not restricted to the one stage of family life cycle which enabled the family as a whole to be able to relate to a wide diversity of family types.

Baumbeck (1971) in his study on the impact of adolescents in relationships to family conflicts concluded that the development of good problems solving techniques is critical to families working successfully through crisis. Also, Anthony (1969) noted that strong families pull intellectual and emotional resources and tend to work out constructive solutions together in times of crisis.

deLissovoy (1973) in his longitudinal study of high risk marriages concluded that there were certain factors that help to sustain marriages. These were a kin network of economic and psychological support and church activities.

Ball (1976) found that satisfactory interfamilial communication was a characteristic of strong families. Factors contributing to good communication included: (a) talking out problems together (b) honesty (openness) (c) listening (d) talking together. Solomon (1972) concluded that there is a positive correlation between emotional stability and a good family identity determined by a person's attitude toward their surname.

Blackburn (1967) and Figley (1973) report their findings that successful parent and child relationships also tend to strengthen and hold the family together as a unit. Children affect the husband and wife relationships in many ways. Many resources indicate that children actually weaken the family unit, but that the commitment the couple has to the children--to rear them to maturity and send them into the world

with moral, ethical, spiritual and religious values, seems to make the family stronger.

Walters and Stinnett (1971) report that couples without children tend toward extremes in adjustment, being either extremely unhappy or extremely happy while those with children approach average in happiness. Another outstanding factor seemingly central to the stability strength of strong families is commitment. Commitment has been defined as the process in which individuals give their energy and loyalty to a central theme. Committed family members strongly believe what the family stands for as they continue to demonstrate this commitment. Kanter (1968) states that many of the social problems in our society are seen as stemming from a lack of commitment. Figley (1973) reports that strong families have good lines of communication open to all family members. In these families strong mature love relationships are present and most strong families are considered equalitarian in that all family members contribute to making decisions. But regardless of how these strong families face problems they are afraid to ask for help when crisis arises. The weaker family has the tendency to wait until the crisis becomes insurmountable to ask for help. Also, religion plays an important part in the lives of strong families (Matthews, 1977). Religion functions to support and give strength to these families.

Sauer (1976) describes strong families as having (a) mutual respect and understanding, (b) expressions of affection among family members, (c) parental expressions of interest in their children and their activities, (d) religious convictions are important to their lifestyle.

Another strength of the American family is that it continues to

meet the needs of men and women. These needs range greatly in variety from providing shelter, protection, reproduction, emotional education, family development, affection, love and meeting sexual needs, as reported by Barton, Kawash, Cattell, (1972). Navran (1967) noted significant differences between happily married couples and unhappily married couples. Happily married couples:

- a) 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
- g) make more use of supplementary non-verbal techniques of communication

Grams (1967) reported three main sources existing that support the family. The church is one main source, supporting the family through internal structure and externally by supporting the internal and external structure (Crockett, Babchuk and Ballweg, 1969; and Grams, 1967). Grams also reported that education is a characteristic of strong families for through education we become more aware of how to successfully live together in families.

In addition to these observations Grams reports that the third main source of strength is the ability of family members to live in terms of priorities. Those families who decide together what things are most important and work together with these priorities in mind are strong families. Sauer (1976) reported that strong families were

characterized by:

- a) mutual respect and understanding
- b) expressions of appreciation among family members
- c) parental expression of interest in their children and their activities
- d) religious convictions are important to their lifestyle

Stinnett (1976) in his research on strong families in Oklahoma reports that:

- a) Strong families express appreciation to family members often.
- b) Strong families have good communication patterns and that this communication was of a positive nature as evidenced by their frequent expression of appreciation of each other.
- c) These families had a high degree of commitment to each other.

They were committed to helping and making each other happy. Their actions were geared toward promoting each other's welfare. The family was the number one priority to the person's involved in these studies (Stinnett, 1976; Stinnett and Sauer, 1977).

Truitt (1972) reports in her research of marital needs satisfactions among strong families that a positive relationship exists between marital need satisfaction and sex, with the husband having the greater amount of satisfaction than the wife. A positive relationship was also found to exist between marital needs satisfaction and these strong families and the degree of optimism, indicating that those respondents having their marital needs met to a high degree also have a high degree of optimism. The research indicated that characteristics of strong families are:

- a) have a high belief in God
- b) are highly optimistic

- c) have their needs for love met
- d) have a great sense of meaning and purpose in life

The research further indicated from personality testing that these strong families were having their needs met within the family relationship to such a large degree that there was not a strong inclination to develop relationships and loyalties outside the family structure. This study concluded by indicating that members of strong families tended to possess the following characteristics:

- 1) Have a high degree of religious orientation with a strong belief in God.
- 2) Are highly optimistic.
- 3) Have a high degree of marital needs satisfaction suggesting that the basic needs of love, respect, personality fulfillment, past life integration, communication, and meaning in life, are successfully fulfilled to a high degree in high strength families.
- 4) FIRO-B inclusion scores indicate that these strong family members do not desire to have a high degree of social involvement, suggesting that these family members tend to center their lives around the family, limiting loyalties outside the family.
- 5) Express a low degree of behavior which tends to control others.

Sauer (1976) reported in her findings that the strong families indicated mutual respect and understanding were the most important factors contributing to marriage satisfaction. This finding is similar to Otto's (1962) report that mutual respect and understanding were listed as major sources of family strengths. This finding is also supported

by research done by Stinnett, Carter, and Montgomery (1972). That respect was so frequently mentioned by these strong families is also consistent with other research by Matthews and Milhanovich (1963). Hicks and Platt (1970), indicate that unhappily married individuals feel that their self-respect is attacked and depreciated by their spouse. The greatest proportion of respondents wished to change nothing about their marital relationship. The parents in these strong families revealed a pattern of expressing appreciation and giving compliments to their children, spending time with them, participating in their activities and in general exhibiting a pattern of expressing a strong interest in their children. These findings are consistent with research evidence by Walters and Stinnett (1971), suggesting that parental support and acceptance, are related to positive emotional and intellectual development of children. The findings further reveal that nearly half of the respondents did not want to change anything about the parent-child relationship and were satisfied with not only parent-child relationship, but also satisfied with husband-wife relationship. A major finding of this research was that members of strong families enhance each others' self-esteem primarily by complimenting and expressing appreciation to each other.

Ammons (1976) reports in his research that a major conclusion is that strong family members expressed high levels of personality needs which tend to contribute to successful interpersonal relationships. The respondents also indicated a high level of need for achievement and much ambition to succeed and endure. These strong family members had low levels of need for exhibition (the need to be the center of attention) and aggression (attack contrary views), and autonomy (independence, to be free in decisions and actions). This study also suggested that marriage

partners who have a high degree of a total-vital relationship tend to complement each other in terms of their personality needs. These strong families also expressed a high need for sex and that this need distinguished them from the strong family members who did not have as high a degree of a vital-total marriage relationship. The research also indicated that a significant positive association existed between the wife's need for nurturing and the husband's need for exhibition reflecting a complementary relationship. This complementary relationship suggests that there is a great deal of husband-wife interdependence. These couples seem to have more a symbiotic (mutually beneficial) relationship.

According to Miller, Corrales and Workman (1975), recognition of family strengths and of methods for utilizing strength for enrichment has been a new and enormously important development. Clarke (1976) and Mace (1972) have reported marriage enrichment programs which focus on positive exchanges between a couple and enable couples to recognize and appreciate their strengths. The focus on strengths encourages educators and couples to recognize the potential for continued growth and development as a couple. Hinkle and Moore (1971) and Schlein (1971) have developed a communication framework for utilization by couples in continually developing and strengthening their relationship.

Bowman (1976) reports that families need opportunities to come together with other families to identify strengths, sharpen communication skills and establish goals. This is done through a family weekend where families spend the weekend in planned exercises to strengthen the individual family unit.

Communication

Communication and Marital Happiness

Chapman (1974) states that satisfying patterns of communication are a basic requirement for happy family relationships. Yet, communication is one of the more neglected areas of marriage and family study. Stinnett (1971) gives some evidence in his research indicating that college students desire more information in the area of communication than in the other aspects of marriage.

The importance of communication as a factor involved in marital success has been noted in several research investigations. Karlsson (1951) found that communication of role expectations was found to be associated with marital satisfaction suggesting that an important prerequisite for marital adjustment is that the partners' expectations was found to be associated with marital satisfaction suggesting that an important prerequisite for marital adjustment is that the partners' expectations are communicated to each other. Karlsson also found that communication of intentions is positively related to marital satisfaction, and that communication of love and respect is associated with marital satisfaction. Locke (1956) seemed to affirm this research by reporting that marital adjustment is positively related to the following aspects of communication: expressions of affection, talking things over, and joint participation in most outside activities and interest.

Navran (1968) reports that happily married husband and wives significantly differed from unhappily married husbands and wives and that they:

- 1) Much more frequently talked over pleasant things that happened

during the day.

- 2) Felt more frequently understood by their spouses; i.e., that their messages were getting across.
- 3) Discussed shared interests.
- 4) Were less likely to break communication off or inhibit it by pouting.
- 5) More often talked with each other about personal problems.
- 6) Made more frequent use of words which had a private meaning for them.
- 7) Generally talked most things over together.
- 8) Were more sensitive to each others feelings and made adjustments to take these into account when they spoke.
- 9) Were more free to discuss intimate issues without restraint or embarrassment
- 10) Were more able to tell what kind of day their spouse had without asking.
- 11) Communicated non-verbally to a greater degree (p. 179).

Feldman (1965) found that the more time that couple spends talking with each other, the more likely they are to experience high marriage satisfaction. Couples who spend time talking together were also found to feel closer to each other after the discussions. In early studies of communication with regard to family life Terman (1938) and Locke (1951) found that one of the chief complaints of dissatisfied wives was that their husbands did not talk things over with them frequently enough, and that divorced couples tended to talk things over less frequently than happily married couples. Locke, Sabagh, and Thomas (1956) using the Locke Marital Adjustment Test and the Primary communication inventory,

found correlations of from .36 to .72 between marital adjustment and communication among randomly selected couples. A Swedish study by Karlsson (1963) reports that communication of love and respect is associated with marital happiness.

Bienevenu (1970) in his marital communication inventory (MCI) using 172 married couples as subjects, found several elements which differentiated between good and poor communication and the handling of anger and conflict. Ort (1950) reports that happily married couples said they resolved many of their conflicts through discussion, while those unhappy couples reported using aggression, avoidance of the issue, or physical violence. Satir (1972) and Bach (1971) discussed the extreme necessity in approaching interpersonal conflict. The tactics of "fighting fair" which Bach writes about in his book The Intimate Enemy (1969) includes a discussion of issues and avoidance of loss of esteem to either partner.

Several research studies report that good and poor communication is often differentiated by the tone of voice. Shipman (1960) found that happiness in couples was definitely related to absence of irritation and voice tones. Ely (1970) and Collins (1971) report in their research the further support for the validity of the relationship between communication and marital happiness.

Communication and Family Relationships

Psychotherapists (Ackerman, 1966, 1972; Jackson, 1959, 1972; Brammer and Shostrom, 1960; Boyer, 1960; Haley, 1962, 1963, 1971; Watson, 1963; Elizur, 1969; Satir, 1972) present the ideas that family problems stem from communication distortion and suggest from their research that the emphasis in family treatment would be on the improvement

of intra-family communication. Ferreira and Winter (1968) researched information exchange and silence in normal and abnormal families. Schizophrenic children rarely talk even at designated turns. The conclusion was that the communication breakdown in abnormal families was a characteristic of the whole family. Bateson, Haley, and Wohland (1963), found that mothers of schizophrenic children sent messages which conflicted and created a situation placing the child in a double bind. This was later confirmed by Watzlawich (1967) with his statement that the lack of clarity or double-level messages is one of the most common manifestations of disturbed communication.

Satir (1965) analyzed communication into various components with some of them being: 1. who speaks to whom, 2. who blames or praises, 3. message clarity, 4. verbal and nonverbal message congruency. Looking for cognitive and affective change in a client's self perception is one of the ways she works with families in helping them with their communication patterns.

Another aspect of family relationships is that of the communication patterns which exist between the parents and the children. Much is being written on establishing good relationships between parents and children. Ginott (1965) presents the thought that a new code of communication based on respect and skill is the key to establishing a relationship of mutual responsibility, love and respect between parent and child. Dreikurs (1964) in an earlier writing shows the intensity of communication needs by placing an entire chapter of listening for parents in his book, Children the Challenge. Gordon (1970) writing in his book, Parent Effectiveness Training suggests that a parent communicating genuine acceptance of the child just as he is, is creating

a relationship in which the child can achieve, develop, make constructive changes, learn to solve problems and become more productive and creative. Peppin (1963) researched the relationship of parental acceptance as to children's academic achievement and concluded that parents of over-achievers were significantly more accepting of their children than were the parents of underachievers. Hurley (1962) reports a positive relationship between parental acceptance and children's intelligence.

Self-disclosure

Researchers (Terman, 1938; Locke, 1951; Feldman, 1966) report that both quantity as indicated in their research of communication as compared to quality (Hobart and Klausner, 1959; Navran, 1967; Bienevenu, 1970) of communication are related to marital adjustment. Udry (1966) suggests that selective disclosure is the way to develop a good lasting relationship and that a relationship built both on quantity and quality is not necessarily the best one. Cutler and Dyer (1965) report that spouses can do irreparable damage by open communication about violations of expectations and these can lead to non-adjusted responses.

Komarovsky (1967) reports that men and women that rank very meager on self-disclosure are unhappy in marriage. But, marital happiness is not necessarily guaranteed by those couples falling in that category of full disclosure. Jourard (1971) reported a similar finding. Regula (1975) concluded that insufficient self-disclosure weakens growth and intimacy in a marital relationship. He also claimed that one of the gifts of Marriage Encounter, the Catholic churches weekend experience for enriching marriages, is that through self-disclosure couples move toward intimacy and marital growth.

Role Expectations

Hobart and Klausner (1959) report that communication of role expectation is significantly related to marital happiness. Kotlar (1965) discovered that marital satisfaction was associated with role specialization along task and expressive lines.

Burr (1971) differentiated between communication and role expectation and role behavior influence and role behavior influencing marital happiness. His research indicated that the problems with some of the couples were not because they did not communicate role expectations, but because their communication of role expectations brought no change in behavior of spouse.

Marital Conflict

Although some conflict normally occurs in families it is not inevitable, and it can be minimized. Because of differences in values, couples will not agree on everything, and mature couples will not expect to agree always. Couples who disagree have a choice as to whether the disagreements will produce conflict (Stinnett, 1977).

Benefits of Conflict

Research with couples experiencing a moderately high degree of marital conflict show that we can learn how to successfully deal with conflict. Patterson, Hopes, and Weiss (1975) report that couples were taught the following skills in a series of training sessions:

- 1) To stop responding to each other in a destructive hostile manner.

- 2) To increase the number of pleasant, supportive responses to each other.
- 3) To develop negotiating skills (for example, learning to specify exactly what they would like to change in the relationship, each person agreeing to alter some aspect in his or her behavior in exchange for changes in the behavior of the other.

A follow-up study of these couples one to two years after their training sessions had terminated found that most of the couples resolved conflicts more successfully, experienced fewer conflicts, and reported a higher degree of marriage happiness.

Kieren, Dianne, Henton, and Marotz (1975) state that conflict often serves the useful purpose of aiding precise identification of what the marital problem actually is. Conflict can contribute to the real issues being brought out into the open. Lantz and Snyder (1969) affirm this and further state that when the actual problem is identified, both partners think more clearly about the situation and the chances of resolving difficulties greatly increase.

Lantz and Snyder (1969) state that conflict offers a very positive benefit if it results in a couple developing a greater understanding of each other. A greater appreciation for each other's past experiences and values often result from conflict situations.

They also state that conflict produces a beneficial by-product if it renews a couples' appreciation of their marriage relationship.

Beck (1966) states that marital conflict generally follows a well-ordered pattern. There are certain stages within this pattern however, if the couple cannot resolve the conflict then the nature of it is

serious. It may escalate through all the stages. The stages are:

- 1) Latent stage
- 2) Trigger stage
- 3) Clash stage
- 4) Increase-of-conflict stage
- 5) Search-for-allies stage
- 6) Search-for-alternate-sources-of-gratification stage
- 7) Dissolution stage

Reasons for Conflict

Blood, (1969) in dealing with reasons for conflict states that one of the most basic reasons for marital conflict is the intimacy involved in the marriage relationship. Schmidt, and Kochan (1972) also considers a reason for conflict to be when couples have goals that are incompatible.

Ways of Dealing with Conflict

Barry (1970) reports that happily married couples more often discuss conflict situations, whereas unhappily married couples tend to avoid the issue. The research evidence indicates depressed hostility and conflict often are a greater threat to the relationship. Also, other studies show that there is less residual hostility among individuals who communicate their negative feelings to the person causing their frustration. Rausch, Barry, Hurtel, and Swain (1974) write that the avoidance pattern attempts to deal with marital conflict by refusing to acknowledge or be involved in it. By using the avoidance of conflict pattern, they keep conflict and tension underground. Satir (1967) in viewing the avoidance pattern of dealing with marital conflict feels it to be unhealthy creating a

major barrier to effective communication between the marriage partners over a period of time.

Basic Principles for Dealing with Conflict

Bach and Deutsch (1971), in their book Pairing recommend some basic principles for dealing with conflict. These principles provide some simple and specific guidelines for handling conflict situations:

- 1) Be specific when you introduce a complaint.
- 2) Don't just complain; ask for a reasonable change that will make the situation better.
- 3) Give and receive feedback of the major points, to make sure you are understood; to assure your partner that you understand the issue.
- 4) Try tolerance. Be open to your own feelings and equally open to your partners.
- 5) Consider compromise.
- 6) Do not allow counter demands to enter the picture until the original demands are clearly understood and there has been a clear-cut response to them. Deal with one issue at a time.
- 7) Don't mind rape.
- 8) Attack the issue and not each other.
- 9) Forget the past. Stay with the issue at hand.
- 10) Do not burden your partner with grievances.
- 11) Think about your real thoughts and feelings before speaking.
- 12) Remember that there is never a winner in an honest intimate fight. Both either win more intimacy or lose it.

Blood (1969) further writes that one way couples may solve conflict

is by consensus and compromise or one partner may concede to the other or if neither partner wants to give in a couple may decide on accommodation. Accommodation is each partner going his or her separate way.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Selection of Subjects

The subjects for this study were selected in the following manner:

1. Extension home economists in each of Oklahoma's 77 counties were asked to select two or more strong families in their county using these criteria:
 - a) the family members appear to have a high degree of happiness in the husband-wife and parent-child relationships;
 - b) the family members appear to fulfill each other's needs to a high degree;
 - c) the family is intact with both parents present in the home;
 - d) the family has at least one school age child, 21 years or younger living at home.
2. Only respondents who rated themselves as having a high degree of satisfaction in their marital and parent-child relationships were used in the final sample.

The final sample consisted of 72 individuals representing 48 families.

Not all the respondents were husband-wife pairs, but were spouses answering the questionnaire, sometimes with mate and sometimes alone.

Administration of Instruments

The instrument used for this study was mailed to subjects during March and April, 1975. Cover letters (see Appendix A) explaining the research study and assuring anonymity were sent to 90 families. A stamped self-addressed return envelope was included with each questionnaire.

Instruments

A questionnaire, designed to measure various aspects of family life which a review of the literature indicated were possible components of family strength, was devised by Dr. Nick Stinnett, Associate Professor, Department of Family Relations and Child Development, at Oklahoma State University. Some of the various scales were taken from previously standardized instruments, while others were constructed specifically for this study.

The completed questionnaire was presented to a panel of four experts in the area of Family Relations. They were asked to rate the items in terms of the following criteria:

1. Does the item possess sufficient clarity?
2. Is the item sufficiently specific?
3. Is the item specifically related to the concepts under investigation?
4. Are there other items that need to be included to measure the concepts under investigation?

A revised version of the instrument, based on suggestions made by the judges, was then administered to twenty families. Further modifications were made as a result of suggestions made by the families who

participated in this pretest. The final questionnaire consisted of seventy items (see Appendix A). Information regarding background in parent-child relations was determined from general sections of the questionnaire.

For the purposes of this study the following sections of the questionnaire were utilized:

- a) Items designed to obtain background information were:
 - age - question number 3
 - sex - question number 1
 - socio-economic status - question number 5, 6, and 10
 - number of years married - question number 13
 - number of children - question number 15
- b) The Family Communication Pattern Scale which is a ten-item scale designed to obtain information concerning family communication patterns - question number 58. This scale is described in more detail below.

Family Communication Pattern

The Family Communication Pattern Scale is a ten-item likert scale designed to identify dominant communication patterns existing in the family. There are five degrees of response to each item. The responses are scored in such a way that the highest numerical value is given to the response reflecting the most positive communication pattern. While the lowest numerical value is one given to the response reflecting the most negative communication patterns. The ten items included in the scale are based upon a review of literature and reflect patterns of response which the review of literature has shown to be important in contributing

to positive, satisfying communications and inter-personal relationships. Each person in the sample rated self, spouse and oldest child in the items included in the Family Communications Pattern Scale.

Analysis of Data

Percentages and frequencies were used to analyze the background characteristics of the subjects and were used to analyze the degree to which the respondent and spouse engages in each of the following communication patterns:

1. Listens well
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others
5. Likes to talk more than listen
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others
7. Says directly what he/she thinks
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct
9. Does not let others know what is bothering him/her
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying
whether communication process is unclear

The Mann-Whitney-U Test was used to examine the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores and sex.

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores and: a) age b) number of years married c) number of children.

The Chi Square was used in item analysis of the Family Communication Pattern Scale.

Limitations of Study

Because of the nature of this study, certain limitations are recognized. The respondents were from Oklahoma only so this limitation could be overcome with a national sample. Some of the respondents are not husband-wife pairs, but answer the questionnaire individually from their families, but not as pairs. Also there was not a large number of urban families.

Sex, age, number of years married and number of children were the chosen variables to be examined within the study. The literature has shown these variables to be related to marriage happiness. Since these variables are recognized to be important within the areas of pathology and communication, the same would be important as communication is related to family strengths.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of the Subjects

Table I is a description of the 72 subjects participating in this study. Those in the study making up the sample consisted of 40.28% males and 59.72% females. The age spread consisted of a minimum of 20 years to over 50 years. The greatest percentage (79.17%) was in the 31-45 age group. These subjects were not all husband-wife pairs.

The sample consisted of rural, white, middle-aged, middle-class, protestant individuals. A large percentage (88.89%) specified their residence as either a farm (48.61%) or city under 25,000 population (40.28%). Most of the sample (66.20%) had been married between 15 and 25 years, with the range spreading from five to over 35 years. The sample fell into divisions of white (90%) and protestant (80%). The largest percentage of respondents were either from the upper-middle (50.00%) or lower-middle (29.17%) socio-economic class as measured by the McGuire-White Index of Social Status (1955).

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECTS

Variable	Classification	No.	Per Cent
Sex	Male	29	40.28
	Female	43	59.72
Race	White	65	90.28
	Black	5	6.95
	Indian	2	2.78
Age	20-25	1	1.39
	26-30	5	6.95
	31-35	15	20.83
	36-40	21	29.17
	41-45	21	29.17
	46-50	2	2.78
	over 50	7	9.72
Religion	Catholic	12	16.67
	Protestant	58	80.56
	None	2	2.78
Socio-Economic Status	Upper	6	8.33
	Upper-middle	36	50.00
	Lower-middle	21	29.17
	Upper-lower	6	8.33
	Lower-lower	3	4.17
Years married	5 - 9	7	9.86
	10-14	9	12.68
	15-19	27	38.03
	20-24	20	28.17
	25-29	5	7.04
	30-34	1	1.41
	35+	2	2.82
Number of Children	2	27	37.50
	3	29	40.28
	4	5	6.94
	5	7	9.72
	6	2	2.78
	12	1	1.39
	13	1	1.39

TABLE I (Continued)

Variable	Classification	No.	Per Cent
Residence	Farm or Country	35	48.61
	Small Town under 25,000	29	40.28
	City of 25,000 to 50,000	3	4.17
	City of 50,000 to 100,000	5	6.94
	City over 100,000	0	0.00
Primary Source of Income	Husband	68	94.44
	Husband-Wife Equally	4	5.56

The Item Analysis

For the purpose of obtaining an index of the validity of the items in the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores, the chi-square test was utilized to determine if each item significantly differentiated between those subjects scoring in the upper quartile and those subjects scoring in the lower quartile on the basis of the total scores. As indicated in Table II eight of the ten items in the Family Communication Pattern Scale (Self Rating) were significantly discriminating. As indicated in Table III, eight of the ten items in the Family Communication Pattern Scale (Rating of Spouse) were significantly discriminating.

In an earlier study (Stinnett, 1976), an Item Analysis was conducted on the Family Communication Pattern Scale in which the respondents from the strong families were compared with the respondents receiving marriage

counseling and experiencing serious marriage problems. The results indicated that all ten items in the scale (both self rating and rating of spouse forms) were significantly discriminating between the two groups.

TABLE II
ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF THE UPPER AND LOWER
QUARTILES OF THE PATTERN OF COMMUNICATION SCALE SCORES
(SELF RATING)

Item	df	χ^2	Level of Sig.
Indicate the degree to which each of the following applies to you:			
1. Listens well	4	12.925	.0116
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view	3	15.690	.0013
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory	4	16.937	.0020
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others	3	14.883	.0019
5. Likes to talk more than listen	4	15.543	.0037
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others	3	10.219	.0168
7. Says directly what he/she thinks	3	10.580	.0142
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct	4	10.590	.0316
9. Does not let others know what is bothering him/her	4	4.085	n.s.
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear	4	7.768	n.s.

TABLE III
 ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF THE UPPER AND LOWER
 QUANTILES OF THE PATTERN OF COMMUNICATION SCALE SCORES
 (RATING OF SPOUSE)

Item	df	χ^2	Level of Sig.
Indicate the degree to which each of the following apply to your spouse:			
1. Listens well	3	14.000	.0029
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view	2	20.000	.0001
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory	4	14.384	.0062
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others	3	13.364	.0039
5. Likes to talk more than listen	3	6.381	n.s.
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others	4	11.723	.0195
7. Says directly what he/she things	4	18.685	.0009
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct	4	16.483	.0024
9. Does not let others know what is bothering him/her	3	3.275	n.s.
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear	3	10.222	.0168

Responses to Items Within the Pattern of Communication Scale
(Self Rating)

As shown in Table IV, 54.16 per cent of the respondents rated themselves very high or high as to their listening patterns within the communication process. The majority (66.66%) of the respondents rated themselves very high or high indicating that they tried to see things from the other point of view. The highest percentage of the respondents, 88.99 per cent answering very high or high, reported that they were sensitive to the feelings of others. The majority (59.72%) of those answering very high or high felt they checked to be sure they understood what others were saying when the communication process was unclear. The pattern of the responses of the persons in these families was that they rated themselves very high or high on favorable communication patterns.

TABLE IV
RESPONSE TO ITEMS WITHIN THE PATTERN OF COMMUNICATION SCALE
(SELF RATING)

Item	Very High		High		Moderate		Low		Very Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Listens well	5	12.50	30	41.66	32	44.44	1	1.38	--	--

Indicate the degree
to which each of
the following applies
to you:

TABLE IV (Continued)

Item	Very High		High		Moderate		Low		Very Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view	20	27.77	28	38.89	24	33.33	--	--	--	--
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory	17	23.61	18	25.00	24	33.33	6	8.33	4	5.56
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others	25	34.72	39	54.17	5	6.94	3	4.17	--	--
5. Likes to talk more than listen	10	13.89	12	16.67	28	38.89	19	26.39	2	2.78
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others	7	9.72	21	29.17	23	31.95	18	25.00	2	2.78
7. Says directly what he/she thinks	7	9.72	28	38.89	3	30.56	11	15.28	3	4.17
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct	11	15.28	18	25.00	20	27.78	15	20.83	7	9.70
9. Does not let others know what is bothering him/her	3	4.17	16	22.22	22	30.56	27	37.50	4	5.56

TABLE IV (Continued)

Item	Very High		High		Moderate		Low		Very Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear	14	19.44	29	40.28	23	31.94	6	8.30	--	--

Responses to Items Within the Pattern of Communication Scale

(Rating of Spouse)

As shown in Table V, 56.95 per cent of the respondents rated their spouse very high or high: their spouse listened well. The majority (66.67%) responded very high or high that their spouse tried to see things from the other's point of view. The highest percentage, 75 per cent rated their spouse a very high or high, indicating that their spouse was sensitive to the feelings of others. In two categories, 56.94 per cent of the respondents rated their spouse with a very high or high indicating that their spouse said directly what he/she thinks and that their spouse checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear. The pattern of the responses of the individuals from strong families answering very high or high in describing their spouse indicates favorable communication patterns.

TABLE V
 RESPONSE TO ITEMS WITHIN THE PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION SCALE
 (RATING OF SPOUSE)

Item	Very High		High		Moderate		Low		Very Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Indicate the degree to which each of the following applies to you:										
1. Listens well	12	16.67	29	40.28	26	36.11	4	5.56	1	1.39
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view	18	25.00	30	41.67	20	27.78	4	5.56	--	--
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory	24	33.33	14	19.44	15	20.83	12	16.67	4	5.56
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others	24	33.33	30	41.67	15	20.83	3	4.17	--	--
5. Likes to talk more than listen	8	11.11	14	19.44	25	34.72	21	29.17	4	5.56
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others	6	8.33	21	29.17	21	29.17	18	25.00	4	5.56
7. Says directly what he/she thinks	17	23.61	24	33.33	22	30.56	6	8.30	--	--
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct	13	18.05	21	29.17	19	26.39	14	19.44	4	5.56

TABLE V (Continued)

Item	Very High		High		Moderate		Low		Very Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
9. Does not let others know what is bothering him/her	5	6.94	11	15.28	32	44.44	17	23.61	6	8.33
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear	15	20.83	26	36.11	22	30.56	7	9.72	1	1.39

Examination of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores (Self Rating) according to sex.

Whenever the Mann-Whitney-U Test was utilized to examine this hypothesis, a Z score of -0.23 was obtained which was not significant. This indicates that no significant difference exists in pattern of communication between respondents of strong families who were included in this study. Results are shown in Table VI.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores (Rating of Spouse) according to sex.

Whenever the Mann-Whitney-U Test was utilized to examine this hypothesis, a Z score of -0.21 was obtained which was not significant.

This indicates that no significant difference exists in patterns of communication between respondents of the strong families included in this study, concerning how they rated each other. See Results below in Table VI.

TABLE VI
Z SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PATTERN OF COMMUNICATION SCORE
ACCORDING TO SEX

Patterns of Communication Scale Score	Z Score	Level of Significance
Self Rating	-0.23	n.s.
Rating of Spouse	-0.21	n.s.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Scale Scores (Self Rating) according to age.

When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used an H score of 11.35 was obtained which was significant at the point .05 level.

The age group of 26-30 had the highest average rank score reflecting the most favorable communication patterns. Those in the age group 46 and over had the lowest average rank scores reflecting the least favorable communication patterns. Results can be seen in Table VII.

TABLE VII
H VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION PATTERN SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO AGE (SELF RATING)

Age	Number	Average Rank Scores	H	Level of Significance
46 and over	9	20.89		
31-35	15	36.30		
36-40	21	31.83	11.35	.05
41-45	21	39.52		
26-30	3	61.33		

Hypothesis IV: There is no significant difference in Patterns of Communication Scale Scores (Rating of Spouse) according to age.

When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used an H score of 8.67 was obtained which was not significant. See Table VIII for results.

Though not significant, as was true in Hypothesis III, the age group 26-30 had the highest average rank score and those in the age group of 46 and over had the lowest average rank score reflecting the least favorable communication patterns. The results can be viewed below in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

H VALUE DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION PATTERN SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO AGE (RATING OF SPOUSE)

Age	Number	Average Rank Scores	H	Level of Significance
46 and over	9	25.56		
31-35	15	39.57		
36-40	21	31.07	8.67	n.s.
41-45	21	36.02		
26-30	3	60.83		

Hypothesis V: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Scale Scores (Self Rating) according to years married.

When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used an H score of 5.508 was obtained which was not significant. The results can be viewed in Table IX.

TABLE IX
H VALUE DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION PATTERN SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO YEARS MARRIED (SELF RATING)

Years	Number	Average Rank Scores	H	Level of Significance
5-9	7	26.79		
10-14	9	38.56		
15-19	27	29.56	5.51	n.s.
20-24	20	40.42		
25-29	5	41.00		

Hypothesis VI: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores (Rating of Spouse) according to years married.

When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used, an H score of 3.604 was obtained which was not significant. The results can be seen in Table X.

TABLE X
H VALUE DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION PATTERN SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO YEARS MARRIED (RATING OF SPOUSE)

Years	Number	Average Rank Scores	H	Level of Significance
5-9	7	38.43		
10-14	9	28.50		
15-19	27	31.20	3.604	n.s.
20-24	20	40.30		
25-29	5	34.40		

Hypothesis VII: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores (Self Rating) according to number of children.

When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to measure this hypothesis, a significant relationship was found to exist between the Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores and the number of children. As Table XI indicates, an H value of 13.23 was obtained indicating a significant relationship at the .01 level. Those respondents with four children expressed the highest average rank scores reflecting the most favorable communication patterns. The second highest average rank score was expressed by those respondents with three children. Those respondents who reported having two children expressed the lowest average rank scores reflecting the least favorable communication patterns. See Table XI for results.

TABLE XI

H VALUE DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION PATTERN SCALE SCORES
 ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY
 (SELF RATING)

Number of Children	Number	Average Rank Scores	H	Level of Significance
2	27	26.52		
3	29	37.52	13.229	.01
4	5	59.60		
5	7	34.86		

Hypothesis VIII: There is no significant difference in Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores (Rating of Spouse) according to number of children.

When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used an H Score of 5.315 was obtained which was not significant. See Table XII for results.

TABLE XII

H VALUE DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION PATTERN SCALE SCORES
 ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY
 (RATING OF SPOUSE)

Number of Children	Number	Average Rank Scores	H	Level of Significance
2	27	27.78		
3	29	39.24	5.315	n.s.
4	5	40.00		
5	7	36.86		

While not significant, those respondents with four children had the highest average rank score as was true in Hypothesis VII.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A strong satisfying, fulfilling family life is one of the more important goals for people in this society. There are, however, few proven guidelines on how to achieve a successful, satisfying family life. The majority of research has been directed toward pathology of the family rather than how to build and strengthen the relationships within the family. This is easily evident from the fact that most research is directed toward problems rather than being concerned with the creativity needed to avoid those problems. Inherent within the concept of a strong family is the need for good communication patterns among those family members. However, though important, research among strong families as to what good communication patterns consist of is virtually non-existent. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between communication patterns within strong families and selected background factors such as age, sex and number of years married.

Making up the sample were 48 families comprised of 72 husbands and wives representing strong families. These were recommended as strong family members by the Extension Home Economists in all counties in Oklahoma and also indicated on the questionnaire that they rated a very high degree of satisfaction with their husband-wife and parent-child relationships. Further descriptions of the respondents are that they

had at least one child 21 years or younger, were primarily white, and predominantly from rural areas and small towns. The data were collected during the months of March and April, 1975.

Percentages and frequencies were used to analyze the background characteristics of the subjects with regard to sex, race, age, religion, socio-economic status, number of years married, and primary source of income. Percentages and frequencies were also used to analyze the degree to which the respondent and spouse engaged in each of the following communication patterns.

1. Listens well.
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view.
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory.
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others.
5. Likes to talk more than listen.
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others.
7. Says directly what he/she thinks.
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct.
9. Does not let others know what is bothering him/her.
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear.

The Mann-Whitney-U Test was used to examine the hypothesis as to whether there is a significant relationship between the Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores and sex.

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis as to whether there is a significant relationship between the Family Communication Patterns Scale scores and age, number of years married and number of children.

The Chi Square was used in item analysis of the Family Communication Pattern Scale.

RESULTS

The results and conclusions of the study were as follows:

1. The item analysis of the Family Communication Pattern Scale (Self Rating) indicated eight of the ten items in the scale were significantly discriminating.
2. The item analysis of the Family Communication Pattern Scale (Rating of Spouse) indicated eight of the ten items in the scale were significantly discriminating.
3. Percentages and frequencies were utilized; the greater percentage of the respondents rated themselves very high or high that they listen well, try to see things from the other's point of view, were sensitive to the feelings of others, and checked to be sure that they understood what others were saying when the communication process was unclear.
4. Percentages and frequencies were utilized to determine that the greater number of those responding rated their spouse in the following ways: that they listened well, they tried to see things from the other's point of view, were sensitive to the feelings of others, they said directly what they thought, and that they checked to be sure they understood what others were saying when the communication process was unclear.
5. The Mann-Whitney-U Test was utilized to determine if significant differences existed between the respondents in their Family Communication Pattern Scale Scores (Self Rating),

- according to sex. No significant differences were found.
6. The Mann-Whitney-U Test was utilized to determine if significant differences existed between the respondents in their Family Communication Pattern Scale scores, according to sex, as they rated their spouse. No significant differences were found.
 7. When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that no significant differences existed in Family Communication Pattern Scale scores, according to age, as they rated themselves, it was determined that a significant difference existed at the .05 level. The age group of 26-30 had the highest mean score followed by the age group of 41-45.
 8. When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that no significant differences existed in Family Communication Pattern Scale scores (Rating of Spouse), according to age, no significant differences were found.
 9. No significant differences were found when the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that Family Communication Pattern Scale scores (Self Rating) would be significantly related to the number of years the couple was married.
 10. No significant differences were found when the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that Family Communication Pattern Scale scores (Rating of Spouse) are significantly related to the number of years the couple was

married.

11. The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance did indicate that Family Communication Pattern Scale scores (Self Rating) were significantly related (at the .01 level) to the number of children. Those respondents with four children had the highest average rank score. Those with the second highest average rank score were respondents with three children.
12. When the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that the number of children was related to the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores (Rating of Spouse), no significant relationship was found.

Conclusions and Discussion

There appears to be little question that communication within marriage is one of the most neglected areas of research. Chapman (1974) reinforces this need by stating that satisfying patterns of communication are a basic requirement for happy family relationships. Some evidence even indicates (Stinnett, 1971) that students in college desire more information in the area of communication than in other aspects of marriage. Therefore, if good communication patterns between spouses are essential for fulfilling marital needs, the communication patterns among strong families should be identified.

The findings of the present study that strong families have positive communication patterns, are reinforced by the suggestions and findings of other writers and researchers. Otto (1963, 1975), Reeder (1973) and Ball (1976) all report that good communication is a necessary characteristic of strong families. Duvall (1971), Journard and Lasakow (1958)

claim that one of the first developmental tasks of a couple is to establish a good system of marital communication and that the most consistent and intimate communication occurs in the marital relationship. In a study of divorced and happily married couples Locke (1951) found that happily married couples usually talked things over. Navran (1967) discovered similar findings that happily married husbands and wives not only talked more often, but also felt more frequently understood by their spouse and that their messages were getting across. Ort (1950) reported that happily married couples said they resolved conflict through discussion, while unhappy couples said they used aggression and avoidance of the issue. Karlsson (1963) in his research concluded that communication of role expectations was found to be associated with marital satisfaction, suggesting that an important prerequisite for marital adjustment is that the partners' expectations are communicated to each other. He also found that the communication of intentions, love and respect are associated with marital satisfaction. Feldman (1965) also reported that the more time a couple spends talking with each other, the more likely they are to feel closer to each other and to experience high marriage satisfaction.

One of the major conclusions of this research is that the items (8 out of 10) in the Family Communication Pattern Scale, both self rating and rating of spouse, are very discriminating, representing an index of the validity of the scale. This is consistent with an earlier study by Stinnett (1976) who concluded that all ten items in the scale (both self rating and rating of spouse) were significantly discriminating between the two groups.

The Family Communication Pattern Scale (Self Rating) characterized

the communication patterns of the strong families by determining that they listened well, tried to see things from the other's point of view, were sensitive to the feelings of others, and checked to be sure they understood what others were saying when the communication process was unclear. In rating their spouse they indicated that they listened well, tried to see things from the other's point of view, were sensitive to the feelings of others, said directly what they thought and checked to be sure they understood what others were saying when the communication process was unclear. These findings are similar to Navran (1967) who determined that happily married husbands and wives significantly differed from unhappily married couples in that they more often expressed some of these same elements in their communication processes.

That members of strong families expressed such positive communication patterns is not surprising when marriage is considered in the light of two people relating to one another on the basis of their interpersonal relationship skills. Since there is a basic need to relate to others and overcome separateness (Fromm, 1956), this is done through more effective communication processes with others. An important key in this process is designing this interaction so that it helps others to feel good about themselves. Fromm (1956) describes this as a productive orientation toward relationships. The communication patterns expressed by respondents in this study tends to contribute to people feeling good about themselves. For example, mutual reinforcement of self concept is likely when spouses: listen, try to see things from the other's point of view, are sensitive to the feelings of others, and check to be sure they understand what others are saying if something is unclear.

Not all the items within the Family Communication Pattern Scale (Self rating or Rating of Spouse) were discriminating. Those not discriminating (Self Rating) were number 9, "Does not let others know what is bothering him/her" and number 10, "Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear". The two items (Rating of Spouse) which were not discriminating were number 5, "Likes to talk more than listen," and number 9, "Does not let others know what is bothering him/her". Also, not all items which were discriminating received very high or high percentages from the respondents. Those items were (Self Rating), "Communicates messages that are contradictory, likes to talk more than listen, rarely shares his/her feelings with others, 'hints' at what he/she wants rather than being direct, does not let others know what is bothering him/her, says directly what he/she thinks". The items in the Rating of Spouse were, "Communicates messages that are contradictory, likes to talk more than listen, rarely shares his/her feelings with others, 'hints' at what he/she wants rather than being direct, does not let others know what is bothering him/her". This could be explained by Komarovsky (1967) who reported that some couples have found that too much honesty and openness in communication is a problem in their relationship. Cutler and Dyer (1965) also found that open communication about certain things was not helpful to the couples in their study. These researchers explain how even strong families will have varying degrees of strength within their communication patterns.

The finding that no significant differences existed in the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores according to sex suggests that there is a sexual equality concerning communication skills (both husbands and wives expressing positive communication patterns) and satisfaction with

communication patterns. This equality may be an important factor contributing to the strengths of these families. The present finding is in contrast with some previous research indicating that women are significantly less satisfied than men with marital communication patterns (Stinnett, Collins and Montgomery, 1970 and Gurin, 1960); this contrast is probably due to the fact that the sample in the present study was composed entirely of strong families.

The Family Communication Pattern Scale scores (Self Rating) were significantly related only to the variables of age and number of children. The age group with the most positive Family Communication Pattern Scale scores was 26-30. Forty six and over expressed the least favorable average rank score. Those respondents with four children in the family expressed the most positive Family Communication Pattern Scale scores.

The finding that the group 26-30 had the greatest degree of significance with the group 46 and over having the least degree of significance agrees with Bradburn (1965) who reports that older people rate their marriage as "very happy" less often than younger people do. The span of time from the beginning of a family with the marriage of a young couple to their ultimate death, is referred to as the family cycle. Cavan (1953) reports that with each stage, changes occur in the organization and roles of interpersonal relationships. Much of the descriptive literature indicates that the postparental stage is a very difficult one (Tibbitts, 1951 and Waller and Hill, 1951). In spite of this research, Stein (1977) reports that when urban middle-class postparental couples describe their life, the problems do not seem to be as insurmountable and the adaptations are seldom pathological. This correlates with Hays and Stinnett (1971) who reported that over 51 per cent of the sample

indicated that the present time was reported as the happiest time of life among middle-aged respondents. (The age range of the respondents was primarily from 40 to 54). This finding coincides with the results of Deutscher (1964) who found that the majority of middle-aged husbands and wives who were in the postparental stage rated their present period of life as more satisfactory than the earliest stages of family life.

The finding that a significant difference existed in the Family Communication Pattern Scale scores according to the number of children suggests that the structural family variables such as size, age and number of children may be important as proposed by Bossards (1953), Elder and Bowerman (1963), Boocock (1966) and Nisbet (1961). The present finding in this study is in contrast with some previous research indicating that the group size is of little significance, but more important is the relation between the parents themselves and the involvement of the parents with the children. Nye (1952) also reports that adolescents in small families have better relations with their parents than those in large families. Stein (1977) adds that small families are more likely to contain parents with a strong and positive orientation to each of the children they have. These contrasts may be due to the fact that the sample is composed of strong families.

Recommendations

Because of the small amounts of research done with strong families, there is a great need for more research to be done in this area. To determine if the perceptions of this research are general or regional in nature, additional research should be conducted on a national level. From a national sample data could be gathered from large urban areas with more diversity in religious preference, race, age, size of residence, socio-economic status and number of children. Research examining family strengths among various ethnic groups would be particularly helpful. An interesting study would be to examine varying cultures to see if some of the principles that join together to create strong families in America would be similar to those in other countries.

Additional recommendations for future research would be to use interview techniques rather than just depend on the questionnaire. This could provide more depth for the study. Children could be questioned along with parents to determine from the children's viewpoint whether their family was strong and what contributed to this strength. With regard to the hypothesis of this study, longitudinal research could be especially beneficial to determine changes in communication patterns with age and number of children.

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APPENDIX

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**Department of Family Relations & Child Development
(405) 372-6211, Ext. 6084

74074

April 7, 1975

Dear Friend:

With more families being broken by divorce and separation today than ever before, you and many other Americans are asking the question, "How can family life be made stronger and more satisfying?". The Department of Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University is conducting a state-wide research project which is attempting to find an answer to this question. There are many strong families and you have been recommended as a family that would be interested and qualified to help us gain greater understanding of positive family relationships.

We would like to ask you to participate in this research by completing the enclosed questionnaire. There is a questionnaire for you and one for your spouse. If possible, would you both complete the questionnaires (please answer them separately and do not compare answers) and return them in the self-addressed, pre-paid envelopes by May 1. If for some reason one of you can not assist with the research, we would greatly appreciate it if the other would send his or her questionnaire to us separately.

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

It is expected that the information gained from this research will be of benefit to families and also of benefit to persons in the helping professions such as teachers, ministers, and counselors.

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

Sincerely yours,

Nick Stinnett, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

NS/jg

Oklahoma State University
Division of Home Economics

Department of Family Relations
and Child Development

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

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

1. Family Member: Mother _____ Father _____
2. Race: 1. White _____
 2. Black _____
 3. Indian _____
 4. Oriental _____
 5. Other _____
3. Age: _____
4. What church do you attend? _____
5. Who earns most of the income for your family?
 1. Husband _____
 2. Wife _____
 3. Other _____
 4. Husband and wife
about equally _____
6. What is the educational attainment of the husband?
7. What is the educational attainment of the wife?
8. Husband's Occupation: _____
9. Wife's Occupation: _____
10. Major source of income for the 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 _____
11. Residence:
1. On farm or in country _____
2. Small town under 25,000 _____
3. City of 25,000 to 50,000 _____
4. City of 50,000 to 100,000 _____
5. City of over 100,000 _____
12. Indicate below how religious your family is: (rate on the 5 point scale with 5 representing the highest degree of religious orientation and 1 representing the least.)
- 1 2 3 4 5
13. How long have you been married to your present spouse? _____
14. If this is not your first marriage was your previous marriage ended by:
- Divorce _____
- Death of spouse _____
15. How many children do you have? _____
16. What are their ages? _____
17. Have you been satisfied with the number and spacing of children born to your marriage?
1. Yes, I am satisfied _____
2. No, Children were born too soon after marriage _____
3. No, Too many children were born _____
4. No, Spacing of children was too close together _____
5. No, Spacing of children was too far apart _____
6. No, Did not have as many children as desired _____

Please answer all the items in this questionnaire pertaining to parent-child relationships as they apply to your relationship (and your spouse's relationship) with your oldest child living at home.

18. Indicate the degree of closeness of your relationship with your child (oldest child living at home) on the following 5 point scale (with 5 representing the greatest degree of closeness and 1 representing the least degree).

1 2 3 4 5

19. What is the age of your oldest child living at home? _____

Is this child boy _____ or girl _____ ?

20. Indicate the degree of closeness of your spouse's relationship with your child (oldest child living at home) on the following scale (with 5 representing the greatest degree of closeness and 1 representing the least degree).

1 2 3 4 5

21. Please rate the happiness of your marriage on the following 5 point scale (5 represents the greatest degree of happiness and 1 represents the least degree of happiness). Circle the point which most nearly describes your degree of happiness:

1 2 3 4 5

22. Please rate the happiness of your relationship with your child on the following 5 point scale (5 represents the greatest degree of happiness and 1 represents the least degree of happiness). Circle the point which most nearly describes your degree of happiness:

1 2 3 4 5

23. What would you most like to change about your marriage relationship?

24. What do you feel has contributed most to making your marriage satisfying?

25. What do you feel has contributed most to making your relationship with your child strong?

26. What would you most like to change about your relationship with your oldest child living at home?

27. Some people make us feel good about ourselves. That is, they make us feel self-confident, worthy, competent, and happy about ourselves. What is the degree to which your spouse makes you feel good about yourself? Indicate on the following 5 point scale (5 represents the greatest degree and 1 represents the least degree).

1 2 3 4 5

28. (a) What exactly does your spouse do that makes you feel good about yourself?

(b) What exactly does your spouse do that makes you feel bad about yourself?

29. Indicate on the following 5 point scale the degree to which you think you make your spouse feel good about himself/herself. (5 represents the greatest degree and 1 represents the least).

1 2 3 4 5

30. What exactly do you do that makes your spouse feel good about himself/herself?

31. Indicate on the following 5 point scale the degree to which your child makes you feel good about yourself. (5 represents the greatest degree and 1 represents the least).

1 2 3 4 5

32. What exactly does he/she do that makes you feel good about yourself?

33. Indicate on the following 5 point scale the degree to which you think you make your child feel good about himself/herself. (5 represents the greatest degree and 1 represents the least.)

1 2 3 4 5

34. What exactly do you do that makes him/her feel good about himself/herself?

35. How would you rate the degree of commitment of:

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very Low
1. Your spouse to you.	___	___	___	___	___
2. You to your spouse.	___	___	___	___	___
3. Your child to you.	___	___	___	___	___
4. You to your child.	___	___	___	___	___

36. Rate the degree to which:

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low
1. Your spouse stands by you when you are in trouble.	—	—	—	—	—
2. You stand by your spouse when he/she is in trouble.	—	—	—	—	—
3. Your spouse is concerned with promoting your welfare and happiness.	—	—	—	—	—
4. You are concerned with promoting your spouse's welfare and happiness.	—	—	—	—	—

37. Rate the degree to which:

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low
1. Your spouse understands your feelings.	—	—	—	—	—
2. You understand your spouse's feelings.	—	—	—	—	—
3. Your child understands your feelings.	—	—	—	—	—
4. You understand your child's feelings.	—	—	—	—	—

38. Rate the degree of affection expressed by:

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low
1. Your spouse to you.	—	—	—	—	—
2. You to your spouse.	—	—	—	—	—
3. Your child to you.	—	—	—	—	—
4. You to your child.	—	—	—	—	—

39. Rate the degree of interest which:

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low
1. Your spouse has in you.	—	—	—	—	—
2. You have in your spouse.	—	—	—	—	—

40. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your marriage relationship by circling the appropriate response. There are no right or wrong answers. The response code is as follows: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. My spouse and I quarrel very often in private. | SA A U D SD |
| 2. My spouse and I quarrel very often in public. | SA A U D SD |
| 3. My spouse and I often put each other down. | SA A U D SD |
| 4. My spouse and I are often sarcastic with each other. | SA A U D SD |
| 5. My spouse and I often ridicule each other. | SA A U D SD |
| 6. My spouse and I often bring up each other's "mistakes" of the past. | SA A U D SD |
| 7. Our marriage satisfaction has declined over the years. | SA A U D SD |
| 8. My spouse and I do not feel as emotionally close to each other now as we did in the earlier period of our marriage. | SA A U D SD |
| 9. My spouse and I spend much less time together now than we did in the earlier period of our marriage. | SA A U D SD |
| 10. My spouse and I enjoy being with each other less now than we did in the earlier period of our marriage. | SA A U D SD |
| 11. In comparison with the earlier years of our marriage much more of the time that my spouse and I now spend together is duty time such as entertaining, participating in the children's activities at school, and participating in various church and civic activities. | SA A U D SD |
| 12. I feel that much of the life has gone out of our marriage. | SA A U D SD |
| 13. From the beginning of our marriage my spouse and I have never done many things together. | SA A U D SD |
| 14. From the beginning of our marriage most of the time that my spouse and I have spent together has been "duty" time such as entertaining and participating in various church and civic activities. | SA A U D SD |

15. From the beginning of our marriage I have received less satisfaction from our marriage relationship than from some other areas of life such as homemaking, career, children, and community involvement. SA A U D SD
16. From the beginning of our marriage my spouse and I have not had a strong emotional involvement with each other. SA A U D SD
17. Since the beginning of our marriage my spouse and I have not experienced a great deal of enjoyment in simply talking with each other. SA A U D SD
18. Since the beginning of our marriage my spouse and I have shared few common interests. SA A U D SD
19. While there is little open conflict between my spouse and me, neither is there much to really excite me about the marriage. SA A U D SD
20. My spouse and I enjoy doing many things together. SA A U D SD
21. I enjoy most of the activities I participate in more if my spouse is also involved. SA A U D SD
22. I receive more satisfaction from my marriage relationship than from most other areas of life. SA A U D SD
23. My spouse and I have a positive, strong emotional involvement with each other. SA A U D SD
24. The companionship of my spouse is more enjoyable to me than most anything else in life. SA A U D SD
25. I would not hesitate to sacrifice an important goal in life if achievement of that goal would cause my marriage relationship to suffer. SA A U D SD
26. My spouse and I take an active interest in each other's work and hobbies. SA A U D SD
41. Rate your degree of determination to make your relationship with your spouse satisfying; (rate on following 5 point scale with 5 representing greatest degree of determination and 1 representing the least degree.)

1 2 3 4 5

42. Rate your degree of determination to make your relationship with your child satisfying: (5 representing the greatest degree and 1 representing the least).

1 2 3 4 5

43. Rate your spouse's degree of determination to make your marriage relationship satisfying: 5 representing the greatest degree and 1 representing the least).

1 2 3 4 5

44. Rate your spouse's degree of determination to make relationship with child satisfying: (5 representing the greatest degree and 1 representing the least).

1 2 3 4 5

45. Please indicate below who usually makes the decision about each of the following:

	Usually Husband	Usually Wife	Husband and Wife about equally
1. Family Finances	_____	_____	_____
2. Childrearing	_____	_____	_____
3. Religious matters	_____	_____	_____
4. Where to spend vacation	_____	_____	_____
5. Whether wife shall work	_____	_____	_____
6. Where to live	_____	_____	_____
7. Whether husband changes jobs	_____	_____	_____

46. Are you satisfied with the way in which you and your spouse make decisions?

No _____ Yes _____

47. When there is a serious disagreement between you and your spouse about a course of action to take who usually gets his/her way?

48. When there is conflict (serious disagreement) between you and your spouse, how does he/she usually deal with it?

49. Please indicate how often your spouse responds to conflict (serious disagreements) in each of the following ways:

	Very often	Often	About half the time	Some- times	Hardly ever
1. Tries to avoid talking about it.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Tries to convince the other person why his viewpoint is wrong.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

- | | Very
often | Often | About half
the time | Some-
times | Hardly
ever |
|--|---------------|-------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 3. Tells the other person off. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Considers disagreements as a game of wits and tries to outmaneuver the other person. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Tries to identify exactly what the problem is, what are the feelings of each person about the problem, and the different ways of solving the problem. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
50. When there is a conflict (serious disagreements) between you and your spouse or another family member, how do you usually deal with it?

51. Please indicate how often you respond to conflict in each of the following ways:

- | | Very
often | Often | About half
the time | Some-
times | Hardly
ever |
|--|---------------|-------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Try to avoid talking about it. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Try to convince the other person why his viewpoint is wrong. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. I consider a disagreement as a game of wits and try to outmaneuver the other person. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. I try to identify exactly what the problem is, what are the feelings of each person about the problem, and the different ways of solving the problem. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

52. Indicate below how much conflict you experience with your spouse: (5 represents a great degree of conflict and 1 represents very little conflict).

1 2 3 4 5

53. Indicate below how much conflict you experience with your child: (5 represents a great degree of conflict and 1 represents very little conflict).

1 2 3 4 5

54. Indicate below how much conflict your spouse experiences with your child: (5 represents a great degree of conflict and 1 represents very little conflict).

1 2 3 4 5

55. Rate the degree to which you are satisfied with the communication pattern between you and:

1. Your spouse

2. Your child

Very Satisfied _____

Very Satisfied _____

Satisfied _____

Satisfied _____

Uncertain _____

Uncertain _____

Dissatisfied _____

Dissatisfied _____

Very Dissatisfied _____

Very Dissatisfied _____

56. If the communication pattern between you and your spouse is good, what do you think has made it good? (If unsatisfactory, what do you think has made it unsatisfactory?)

57. If the communication pattern between you and your child is good, what do you think has made it good? (If unsatisfactory, what has made it unsatisfactory?)

58. We would like to get information about communication patterns in families. Indicate the degree to which each of the following applies to you, your spouse and your child. (5 indicates highest degree; 1 indicates lowest degree).

	You					Your spouse					Child				
1. Listens well	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2. Tries to see things from the other's point of view	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3. Communicates messages that are contradictory.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
4. Is sensitive to the feelings of others.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	You					Your spouse					Child				
5. Likes to talk more than listen.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
6. Rarely shares his/her feelings with others	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
7. Says directly what he/she thinks.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
8. "Hints" at what he/she wants rather than being direct.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
9. Does not let other know what is bothering him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
10. Checks to be sure he/she understands what others are saying when the communication process is unclear.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

59. How often do you and your spouse talk together?

60. How often do you and your child talk together?

61. How often do your spouse and child talk together?

62. How often do you and your spouse do things together: (rate on the following 5 point scale with 5 representing very often and 1 representing very rarely).

1 2 3 4 5

63. What are two things which you most enjoy doing together?

64. How often do you do things with your child: (rate on the following 5 point scale with 5 representing very often and 1 representing very rarely).

1 2 3 4 5

65. What are two things which you most enjoy doing with your child?

66. How often does your spouse do things with your child? (rate on the following 5 point scale with 5 representing very often and 1 representing very rarely).

1 2 3 4 5

67. How much of a problem is today's busy pace of life for your family? (rate on the following 5 point scale, with 5 indicating it is a great problem and 1 indicating it is little or no problem.)

1 2 3 4 5

68. What things do you do to prevent this problem from hurting your family life?

69. From the following list of values which are often considered to be important in human development, please check the five (5) values which you consider most important for an individual to learn.

- 1. Determination and perseverance _____
- 2. Self-reliance _____
- 3. Seeing each person as having dignity and worth. (This involves respecting rights and needs of others.) _____
- 4. Moral courage. (Courage to stand by one's inner convictions) _____
- 5. Spiritual development _____
- 6. Cooperation _____
- 7. Honesty and integrity _____
- 8. Loyalty _____
- 9. Self-discipline _____
- 10. Feeling genuine concern and responsibility _____
- 11. Initiative _____
- 12. Intellectual inquisitiveness _____
- 13. Responsibility in performing tasks _____
- 14. Self-respect _____
- 15. Friendliness _____
- 16. Appreciation _____
- 17. Assuming responsibility for the consequences of one's own behavior _____

70. Following are fifteen basic, normal personality needs that everyone has in different degrees. In themselves, none of the needs is either good or bad. They are simply the needs that motivate and influence behavior. Each of these fifteen needs is described below in brief, general terms.

We are interested in how you see yourself in terms of the degree to which you have these needs. This should be what you feel most accurately describes your present level of each need, not the level which you feel you should have or the level which you want to have.

Score yourself on each of the needs. For scoring, use the 1 to 5 point scale. Circle the point on the scale which best describes your level of that need. Keep in mind that 1 represents the lowest level of the need, while 5 represents the highest level of the need.

1. ACHIEVEMENT - ambition, to succeed, to do one's best to accomplish something of great significance. 1 2 3 4 5
2. DEFERENCE - dependence, to follow orders (and others), to conform, to be conventional. 1 2 3 4 5
3. ORDER - neatness, to have organization, be systematic, and plan in advance; orderly schedule. 1 2 3 4 5
4. EXHIBITION - attention, to be the center of things, to be noticed, to talk about oneself. 1 2 3 4 5
5. AUTONOMY - independence, to be free in decisions and actions; to be nonconforming without obligations. 1 2 3 4 5
6. AFFILIATION - need for people, friends, groups, to form strong attachments. 1 2 3 4 5
7. INTRACPTION - need to know, to understand - what and why, to analyze and empathize. 1 2 3 4 5
8. SUCCORANCE - to receive help, encouragement, sympathy, kindness from others. 1 2 3 4 5
9. DOMINANCE - to be a leader, to lead, direct and supervise, to persuade and influence others. 1 2 3 4 5
10. ABASEMENT - conscience, to feel guilty and accept blame; to confess wrongs, admit inferiority. 1 2 3 4 5
11. NURTURANCE - to give help, sympathy, kindness to others, to be generous. 1 2 3 4 5
12. CHANGE - variety, novelty, to experiment, try new things, experience change in routine. 1 2 3 4 5
13. ENDURANCE - perseverance, tenacity; to finish what is started, to stick to something even if unsuccessful. 1 2 3 4 5

14. SEX - need for opposite-sex, for sexual activities; to do things involving sex.
15. AGGRESSION - to attack contrary views, to criticize, to tell what one thinks of others.

Please go back and see if you have answered each question.

VITA

Kenneth Gerard Dye

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION PATTERNS WITHIN STRONG FAMILIES AND SELECTED BACKGROUND FACTORS

Major Field: Higher Education

Minor Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Austin, Texas, March 29, 1940, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth A. Dye. Married June 3, 1961, to Jane Jones in Ruidoso, New Mexico. Father of three children, Stansell, 12, and Shannon, 8, and April, 4.

Education: Four years in Kingston, Jamaica, 1967-1971. Graduated from Abilene Christian University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1962. Graduated from Eastern New Mexico State University in 1967 with a Master of Arts degree. Completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in July, 1977. One year in Management studies at the University of the West Indies.

Professional Experience: Have spoken on lectureships and evangelistic meetings both in the U. S., South America, and the West Indies. Speaker for related areas of Family Living for university and church groups, both in the U. S. and West Indies. Helped establish the Jamaica School of Preaching and Biblical Studies in Kingston, Jamaica and served on its faculty for one year. Directed the first annual Caribbean Lectureship in Kingston, Jamaica and have since served as stateside coordinator for this lectureship in Puerto Rico, Bahamas, Trinidad and Antigua. Minister for the church of Christ in various places since 1962. Minister at the Stillwater church of Christ since 1973.

Professional Organizations: Member of American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, Executive Director of the Institute of Family Strengths, Editor of The Family, published semi-annually by Institute of Family Strengths, Member of Omicron Nu.