

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE
HELD BY ADOLESCENTS IN INTACT, BROKEN,
AND RECONSTITUTED FAMILIES

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by

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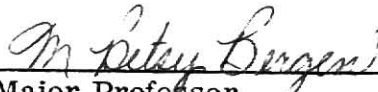
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

A widespread belief of many experts in the field of family relations is that the family is the primary socializing agency for training the young in both marriage and parenthood. It is a widely accepted assumption that parents are the chief agents of marital socialization for their children (Hill and Aldous, 1969, p. 888). Paul Wallin (1954) presented the position held by many family sociologists that despite the influence of other societal elements, marriage is primarily defined for young people by the marital relationship of their parents. The value orientations attached to marriage and family life and the level of motivation to marry and have children are lasting products of socialization in the parental family (Hill and Aldous, 1969, p. 890). Research support of this assumption is limited but does lend backing to the idea that the parents' marriage pattern makes a difference in presenting marriage as an attractive way of life to offspring.

If it is true that marriage and family attitudes, perceptions, and images are presented and reinforced by parental models, what happens to children whose exposure to these models is discontinued due to separation, death, or divorce? Further, what is the impact on marital socialization among children who live in reconstituted families and who have been intimately exposed to two patterns of parental marriage?

These are important and necessary questions to ask, particularly with the percentages of both single-parent families and remarriages involving families with children on the rise (Duberman, 1973). In the 1960 Census, 12.5 percent of 44.2 million families were classified as "one-parent families." Researchers have found that between 6 percent and 12.2 percent of American children live in reconstituted homes (Smith, 1945; Bowerman and Irish, 1962). Simon (1965) estimated that eight million children live with a stepparent. These statistics point to the need for research of the family relations of both broken and reconstituted families.

Need for Research

Research investigation into socialization for marriage among children from broken and reconstituted homes has been meager. Several research studies dealing with attitudes and perceptions of adolescents towards marriage and family life have been conducted, but these studies have been limited to adolescents from intact families.

The largest body of literature dealing with limiting structural factors of the family is concerned with father absence and its effect on sex-role learning (Hill and Aldous, 1969). Mother absence and maternal deprivation have been treated in the literature, also; however, the consequences of maternal or paternal deprivation on attitudes toward marriage or socialization of the children have not been explored.

Studies have been conducted which compared adolescents from intact, broken, and reconstituted families on various aspects of social and psychological

adjustments (Nye, 1957; Landis, 1962; Perry and Pfuhl, 1963; Burchinal, 1964). Bowerman and Irish (1962) studied the relationships of stepchildren to their parents. None of these studies investigated attitudes toward marriage. Wallin (1954) and Landis (1960; 1962) investigated college students' attitudes towards marriage. These studies included both children of intact families and children of divorce.

It is evident that a research concern regarding socialization for marriage among young people from broken and reconstituted families has, for the most part, escaped the attention of family social scientists. Research on marital perceptions and attitudes of adolescents from broken homes is meager and virtually is nonexistent among adolescents living in reconstituted families. The need for an exploratory study in these areas has led to this investigation.

Definitions of Terms

An intact family was defined as a mother, a father, and their biological children. This definition excluded foster children, adopted children, or children brought to the family from a previous marriage by either parent.

A broken family was one in which one of the parents had been removed (Fairchild, 1944). This family type was thus composed of a parent-child group "consisting of a parent and one or more own sons or daughters . . . living together" (Schlesinger, 1966, p. 103).

Reconstituted families were "reconstructed families, those into which a stepparent had been incorporated" (Bowerman and Irish, 1964, p. 114). They were composed of a parent, one or more offspring, and a stepparent. A stepparent was

the spouse of the adolescent's parent by a subsequent marriage.

Attitude toward marriage was defined as perception of marriage as a desirable or as an undesirable relationship. Operationally defined, attitude toward marriage was the score obtained in the Hill Favorableness of Attitude Toward Marriage Scale (1951). Measurements were obtained of attitudes toward: the difficulty of marital adjustments; the responsibilities of marriage; loss of freedom; sexual exclusiveness; doubts about marital success; predicted happiness in marriage; and the advisability of remaining single.

Operationally defined, attitude toward divorce was the score on the Hardy Divorce Opinionnaire (1957). Beliefs about divorce were measured by agreement or disagreement to statements concerning the effects of divorce upon children and society, the degree of abuse of divorce, the obligation of spouses to remain married, and divorce as a solution to an unhappy marriage.

Marriage role expectations were defined as attitudes toward anticipated marital roles. Operationally defined, marriage role expectation was the score on a six-item marriage role expectation scale which was designed for this research. Expectations were measured by indicating whether statements on marital decision-making, household tasks, and child rearing would be true or false for a future marriage.

Ideal family size was interpreted to mean the number of children perceived as the best number for a family to have. Preferred family size was defined as the number of children the subject would like to have, if and when he or she married.

Hypotheses

This study was designed to determine what differences exist in attitudes and beliefs about marriage and family life among adolescents living in intact, broken, or reconstituted families. The hypotheses were:

Hypothesis I. There is no difference in the attitude toward marriage held by adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis II. There is no difference in the attitude toward marriage held by male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis III. There is no difference in the attitude toward divorce held by adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis IV. There is no difference in the attitudes toward divorce held by male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis V. There is no difference in marriage role expectations of adolescents from intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis VI. There is no difference in the marriage role expectations of male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis VII. There is no difference in perceptions of the ideal family size held by adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis VIII. There is no difference in perceptions of the ideal family size held by male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis IX. There is no difference in the preferred number of children of adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis X. There is no difference in the preferred number of children of male and female adolescents.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research concerned with the attitudes toward marriage and divorce of adolescents living in reconstituted or broken families is virtually nonexistent. There are both studies that deal with attitudes of adolescents toward marriage, and studies that deal with the problems and adjustments of stepchildren and children from broken homes. This review will include literature relative to adolescent (1) attitudes toward marriage, (2) attitudes toward divorce, (3) marriage role expectations, (4) family size preference, and (5) affectional orientation to parents.

Attitudes toward Marriage

Socialization for marriage and parenthood begins in the parental family (Hill and Aldous, 1969). Levy and Monroe (1936) stated that one's drive to marriage begins in childhood in one's own home.

Wallin (1954) pointed out that young people are exposed to a number of experiences which contribute to their conception of marriage and influence their evaluation of marriage as desirable or undesirable for themselves. Most experiences are vicariously experienced through exposure to marriage depicted by magazines, newspapers, radio, television, and movies. The most important exposure,

in terms of impact, is the daily lives of their parents. Adolescents first, and most continuously, encounter marriage in the home as modeled by their fathers and mothers. If the parent marriage is perceived as highly satisfying, the vicariously assimilated view of marriage as a positive, desirable institution is reinforced or at least not contradicted. If the parental marriage is seen by the child as conflict-ridden and unhappy, the perception of marriage as a desirable goal may be challenged.

Wallin (1954) hypothesized a positive association between marital success of parents and favorableness of their children's attitudes toward marriage. The Attitude Toward Marriage Scale (Hill, 1951) was used to test this hypothesis. The hypothesis was supported by male subjects; but female subjects were favorable to marriage regardless of whether they came from happy, unhappy, or divorced homes.

King (1944) investigated the attitudes of 183 college women toward marriage and motherhood. Analysis of the data showed that rural and urban women held the same attitudes toward marriage. For both rural and urban women, 98 percent registered a desire to get married. The majority of both groups indicated that "desire for companionship" and "desire for security" were their chief reasons for wanting to marry. The three girls in the sample who did not want to marry explained that they would rather pursue a career.

Punke (1942), in a survey of several thousand high school students in nine states, reported that more girls expected to marry than did boys. He also found a greater percentage of seniors than freshmen who expected to marry. Among the

seniors, 89.9 percent of the males and 93.1 percent of the females expected to marry.

In a study involving children ranging in age from 10 to 17 years, Broderick (1965) found that 67 percent of the 10- to 11-year-old boys and 79 percent of the girls aged 10 to 11 wanted to marry some day. The older adolescents were even more positive in their intentions to get married some day: 75 percent of the 17-year-old boys and 94 percent of the 17-year-old girls. In this study, as in the previously cited works by Wallin and Punke, females were more approving in their attitudes toward marriage than were males. Wallin (1954) suggested that perhaps women to a greater extent than men look upon marriage as the "essential framework" in their adult lives.

Rose (1955) sought to find if college students formulated preferences about marriage based on their parents' behavior. He found that preferred age of marriage correlated closely to actual age at parent's marriage, but there was no relation between students' desired family size or occupation choice and parents' actual behavior. Rose (1955, p. 9) concluded, "Our findings have indicated that children select, consciously or unconsciously, some of the life patterns of their parents as models for their behavior but ignore others."

It was the opinion of Hill and Aldous (1969) that the few studies in this area are inadequately designed to determine the impact of early socialization in developing a positive attitude toward marriage. They concluded "that parents' marriage pattern does make a difference in making marriage as a way of life attractive to its offspring" (p. 890).

Attitude toward Divorce

The marriage pair is one of the few relationships in our society which plans for permanence. Society has traditionally taken a negative attitude toward divorce. In one study (Bowman, 1965), nearly 90 percent of 1151 college students indicated that when they marry they would consider marriage for life. Only 7 percent said they would get a divorce if the marriage were not successful. In contrast to Bowman's findings, Burgess and Wallin (1953) found that of 913 engaged men and 911 engaged women, approximately two-thirds felt that a couple should get a divorce if they ceased to be in love.

In a study by Bernard (1938), 87.5 percent of a sample of 500 male and female college students agreed that divorce was an expedient social device and registered no opposition to it on moral, ethical, or religious grounds. Males were more favorable to divorce than females were; 94 percent of the males compared to 81 percent of the females had a positive attitude toward it. In addition, 56 percent of the males felt that grounds for divorce should be increased; 22 percent of the females agreed.

Hobart (1973), in a study of 695 English-speaking and 374 French-speaking university and trade school students in Canada, found that only 8 percent of the English-speaking group and 11 percent of the French-speaking students felt that divorce was never justified. In response to what conditions would justify divorce, 71 percent of the English-speaking students and 57 percent of the French-speaking students felt that divorce would be justified if a couple were incompatible or unhappy. Another 61 percent of the English-speaking group and 57 percent of the

French-speaking group believed divorce to be justified if the couple no longer loved each other.

A Washington Public Opinion Laboratory (Freeman and Showel, 1952) poll of 515 adults found that one-third felt that divorce was acceptable if a couple no longer wanted to remain married. The researchers termed this an "emancipated" attitude implying emphasis on individual needs as opposed to a "familistic" orientation implying emphasis on the family unit. They felt that an association existed between a negative, familistic attitude toward divorce and success in marriage. By reviewing the literature relating background factors to rate of divorce and studies related to success or failure in marital adjustment, they concluded that those factors found to be significantly associated with success or failure in marriage were similarly associated with attitudes toward divorce. The factors found to be significantly associated to high familism and low divorce rate were: strong religious orientation, high socioeconomic level, high educational level, and happiness of parent's marriage.

A review of literature on divorce revealed that there is little research concerning attitudes toward divorce, especially among adolescents. One study (Freeman and Showel, 1952) concluded that there may be an association between attitudes toward divorce and success or failure in marriage. The results of four other studies (Bernard, 1938; Burgess and Wallin, 1953; Bowman, 1965; and Hobart, 1973) were contradictory. Some subjects reported a somewhat negative attitude toward divorce, while other subjects were considerably more positive in their attitudes toward divorce.

Marriage Role Expectations

Many family social scientists believe that marriage role expectations are learned mainly in the family of orientation. Children's perceptions of marriage roles are learned through observations of the roles played by parental models.

A few studies have dealt with the marriage role expectations held by adolescents. Payne (1956) found that a majority of the 456 girls expected to work after marriage but only one-fourth of the 416 boys expected that their wives would work.

Dunn (1959) developed a marriage role expectation inventory. Among 436 adolescents she found that traditional expectations of marital roles were held more often by males, rural dwellers, and lower class adolescents; while equalitarian expectations were more often held by females, urban, and upper class adolescents.

Moser (1960), using Dunn's instrument, reported that marriage role expectations were independent of sex, social class, religious affiliation, number or sex of siblings, and mental maturity scores. The least equalitarian beliefs were held towards homemaking and employment and the most equalitarian expectations were in the areas of social participation, childcare, and personal characteristics.

Similar results were found in a study of college students by Dyer and Urban (1958). Subjects had equalitarian attitudes toward childrearing but traditional attitudes toward homemaking.

Estimates based on unidentified studies of college females, calculated that 50 percent wanted exclusively to be homemakers when they married; 20 percent expected to combine marriage and a career, and 30 percent wanted to work, have

children, then return to a career (Kommarovsky, 1953).

A number of studies investigated adolescents' perceptions of marital roles. Connor, et al. (1954) studied conceptions of "good" parent and child roles among a sample of 26 families composed of mother, father, and college-student daughter. The "traditional" good father was seen as an adequate financial support and disciplinarian, while the "traditional" good mother did the housework and set a good example. The "developmental" good father and mother were viewed as persons who fostered the growth and development of the various family members. It was concluded that children perceived positively a developmental framework of family roles more often than parents. Further investigation by Connor, et al. (1958) did not support this conclusion.

An investigation (Bowerman and Elder, 1964) of adolescents' perceptions of family decision-making reported that the largest number of adolescents felt that their parents shared equally in decision-making followed by husband-dominance with wife-dominance the least prevalent. Older adolescents were more likely to perceive the father as the primary decision maker, while younger adolescents felt that the parents were equal. Females perceived their families as mother-dominant more than the males did.

Walters and Ojeman (1952), in a study of 132 adolescents, found that boys responding to hypothetical situations placed women in a superordinate position more often than girls did. Girls most often chose a partnership role for women.

The research cited has indicated that a majority of adolescents hold equalitarian viewpoints toward marital roles, with the occasional exception of attitudes

toward homemaking. Boys generally held more traditional marriage role expectations than girls. Age, social class, and residence have also been reported as affecting marriage role perceptions; however, there was virtually no research on the marriage role expectations of adolescents from broken or reconstituted families.

Family Size Perceptions

Blake (1966) reviewed thirteen public opinion polls and surveys of white American attitudes on ideal family size taken between years 1936 and 1961. These polls consistently reported that family size preferences for white Americans of all ages ranged between two and four children. From 78 to 94 percent of women and from 77 to 91 percent of men in each poll stated that two, three, or four children were the ideal number. Blake's review found that the variation between sexes was slight, but women typically wanted, on the average, the same number or slightly more children than men did. In addition, men and women under thirty years of age desired more children than did older persons.

In a study designed to critique the methodology of the April, 1941, Gallup Poll on ideal family size, Schmid and Engel (1942) polled 1200 college students on perceptions of the ideal family size. The students were separated into three groups matched by sex, age, grade, and marital status. Since the researchers believed that the Gallup survey questions were biased (leading), the students were questioned in different ways. The results agreed with the Gallup findings that Americans were preferring larger families. Among the students, 61 percent of the women and 46 percent of the men wanted three or more children. Economic factors, inter-

ference with freedom, and the uncertainty of the future were the primary reasons given for limiting family size preferences.

Hobart's (1973) study of 695 English-speaking and 374 French-speaking university and trade school students in Canada dealt with both ideal number of children and preferred number of children. In the English-speaking sample, 51 percent perceived the ideal number of children in a family to be three or less and 51 percent wanted three or fewer children. In the French-speaking sample, 56 percent perceived the ideal number of children in a family to be three or less while 58 percent wanted three or fewer children.

An extensive study of the fertility values of 15,000 women from 45 colleges across the United States was conducted by Westoff and Potvin (1967). The mean number of children desired was highest among Catholic and Mormon women, 5.3 and 4.7 respectively; while Protestant (3.5), Jewish (3.4) and nonreligious women (3.2) desired significantly fewer children. The great majority of women did not agree that a married couple was obligated to want a large family. A significantly greater proportion of Catholics and Mormons than Protestants, Jews, and women with no religious preference subscribed to the statements that having children is the most important function of marriage and the ideal family has at least five or six children. The researchers also found a direct positive relationship between number of siblings and number of children desired.

In summary, the studies have consistently shown that both ideal and preferred family size perceptions range between two and four children. There was no adequate method to determine within this range the dominant preferences. It

may be concluded that men want fewer children than women do. There was some support for the idea that family size values are learned in the family of orientation. None of the studies dealt with the perceptions of adolescents toward family size.

Relationships with Parents

Attitudes of adolescents toward marriage seem to be heavily influenced by the closeness of the relationships with parents. Investigating the favorableness of perceptions of college students concerning marriage, Walters , et al. (1972) found that those who reported a happy childhood relationship with their parents were significantly more positive toward marriage than those who reported an "uncertain" relationship with their parents.

Landis (1962), in a study of family integration of 3000 college students, found that those who reported a father-close and mother-distant relationship had the most frequent doubts about their chances for a successful marriage. Being close to both parents was highly related to students reporting few doubts about their chances for a successful marriage. Landis concluded that how the child felt in relation to both parents was most predictive of personal and family values, with children who felt close to both parents holding the most positive ratings in terms of family and personal variables. Children tended to report that they felt close to the mother in all types of homes; happy, unhappy, or divorced. A close relationship to the father was reported only from children of happy families.

A study of the traumatic problems of children of divorce by Landis (1960) revealed that those who felt that their parents' marriages were unhappy prior to

the divorce held more negative attitudes toward divorce than those who felt that their parents' marriages were happy prior to the divorce. He cautioned that not all children of divorce react to the experience in the same way.

Bowerman and Irish (1962) did an extensive study of the relationship of adolescent stepchildren to their parents. Adolescents felt closer to biological parents than stepparents. Stepchildren adjusted better to stepfathers than to stepmothers. Children from divorced homes adjusted better to stepparents than did the children who had lost a parent by death. Stepchildren were more likely to express a preference for one parent or the other than were those residing with both biological parents. They most often preferred their "real" parent over the stepparent. Stepparents were believed also to be more discriminatory in discipline and attention towards the children. Stepchildren reported more feelings of rejection by both their biological parent and stepparent than did children from intact families. Adolescents living in intact families were more likely to desire to emulate their parents and adolescents in reconstituted families were more likely to desire to emulate their biological parent rather than their stepparent. In general, reconstituted families evidenced more stress, less cohesion, and poorer parent-child adjustment than did intact homes.

Effects of Broken Families

Several studies have dealt with the social-psychological impact of family dissolution and the social, psychological, and familial adjustments made by children of broken and reconstituted families. Nye (1956), in a study of 1,472

adolescents, concluded that children from broken homes, on the average, showed poorer adjustment to parents than did adolescents from intact families, but the difference was not great. In fact, Nye found that some of the adolescents who were best adjusted to parents came from broken families. The loss of the mother had more effect on adjustment to parents than did the loss of the father.

Another study by Nye (1957) compared selected characteristics of adolescents from unhappy intact families, happy intact families, and several types of broken homes. Adolescents in broken families showed less psychosomatic illness, less delinquent behavior, and better adjustment to parents than adolescents in unhappy intact families and did not differ significantly in school adjustment, church attendance, or having delinquent companions.

Landis (1962) compared children from divorced-broken families and unhappy intact families. Among 3000 college students, boys and especially girls from families broken by divorce tended to feel more distant from their fathers than did those from unhappy intact families. No significant differences were found in either "dating maturation" or doubts about having a successful marriage between students from divorced-broken homes and students from unhappy intact families.

Rosenberg (1965) in research on self-esteem concluded that children of divorced parents are more likely than children from intact homes to have low self-esteem. There was no significant difference in self-esteem of adolescents from intact families and adolescents from families broken by the death of a parent. Children of broken homes were more likely to show anxiety if the remaining parent

remarried than if they remained single. Adjustment to the reconstituted family was more difficult the longer the adolescent had lived in his biological family of orientation.

In a study comparing 113 adolescents from a school for delinquent boys and 111 adolescents living at home in intact families, Johnson (1952) found that adolescents separated from their families had positive feelings about parents, families, and fathers significantly more frequently than adolescents from intact homes.

A comparative study of 174 children from broken and reconstituted homes and 174 children from intact families matched by age, sex, race, and IQ found that children from broken and reconstituted families exhibited more behavioral problems (Russell, 1957). There was a tendency for certain kinds of problem behavior to be associated with the kind of home the child resided in after the family break. Enuresis, extreme anger, and disobedience were more common among children whose homes were broken by parental divorce than among children whose homes were broken by parental death.

Characteristics of adolescents from unbroken families, broken families headed by mother only, and three types of reconstituted families were investigated by Burchinal (1964). No significant differences were found among the measures of personality adjustment and social relationships among the five groups. Burchinal concluded that adolescents from broken and reconstituted families were no more likely to show personality maladjustment than children from intact families. Detrimental effects attributed to broken homes and remarriages were not evident in this

research.

Perry and Pfuhl (1963) compared adolescents from "solo" (one-parent broken) homes and "remarriage" (reconstituted) homes on three measures of social adjustment. Nonsignificant differences were found in delinquent behavior, psychosomatic complaints, and school grades.

Broken Homes and Remarriage

Although research into reconstituted families has been sparse, many investigators have noted problems in the steprelationships. Smith (1945) and Simon (1965) repeatedly observed that the relationships between stepchildren and step-parents are considerably more strained than between children and parents in intact homes. Fast and Cain (1966) maintained that successful steprelationships were not likely because social norms make it impossible for a stepparent to completely assume the parent role. Some researchers (Bernard, 1956; Benson, 1968) have found that the stepfather is more likely to develop an affectionate relationship with the stepchild than the stepmother. Bernard (1956) explained that the stepmother role made her the main socializing agent; hence, she encountered more conflicts with the children. Benson (1968) attributed this difference to the relative passivity of the father role. The stepmother spends more time with the children than the stepfather, supplying more opportunity for disharmony because of the nature of her role.

It was difficult to determine from the literature how broken families affect adolescents. Two studies (Nye, 1956; Russell, 1957) reported negative effects,

poorer adjustment to parents, and more behavior problems; but three studies (Perry and Pfuhl, 1963; Burchinal, 1964; Landis, 1962) found no significant differences in measures of personality and social adjustment between adolescents from intact, broken, and reconstituted families. Nye (1957) found that adolescents from broken homes fared better on several measures of adjustment than did those from unhappy intact homes. There was general agreement on the difficulties in family integration of reconstituted homes, but the effects of these problems were not clear.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Measuring Instruments

The questionnaire employed in this investigation used instruments and questions from previous research and items developed especially for this study to measure the dependent variables. These instruments and questions were combined to form a single questionnaire (Appendix B). The questionnaire was pre-tested among 100 college students enrolled in a course in family relations. A brief description of each instrument is given below.

Attitude Toward Marriage

Marital attitudes were measured by the Favorableness of Attitude to Marriage Scale developed by Hill (1951). Measurements were obtained of attitudes toward: the difficulty of marital adjustments; the responsibilities of marriage; loss of freedom; sexual exclusiveness; doubts about marital success; predicted happiness in marriage; and the advisability of remaining single. The instrument consisted of nine multiple-choice items that were scored to form a Guttman scale. Each item was scored, giving the scale a possible range of 0 to 9. Subjects' total scores represent their positions on a continuum defined as favorableness of attitude toward marriage. Scoring of the scale was interpreted that the higher the score, the

more favorable the attitude.

Reliability. Hill used Guttman's technique for scale analysis. He obtained coefficients of reproducibility of .92, .93, .93, and .93 from various groups of a total sample of 132 male college students and 222 female college students. The groups were chosen from the total sample on the basis of sex and emotional attachment or unattachment to a member of the opposite sex.

Validity. Straus (1969) presented Wallin's study (1954) using this instrument as evidence of construct validity. Wallin found that the scale scores for 215 college males made significant increases as the marital happiness of each parent group increased. For 394 college females, the distribution was U-shaped.

In addition to the quantitative data obtained on attitudes toward marriage, responses were obtained to four sentence completion stems. The researcher performed a content analysis of the responses and a neutral judge combined the responses into four to six categories for each sentence stem. Response categories to the stem "The best thing about marriage is" were: love and companionship; sexual relationship; security; and sharing and trusting your spouse. Categories of responses to "The worst thing about marriage is" included: financial problems and responsibilities; adjustment problems; arguments and poor communication; and lack of happiness. Response categories to "When I marry" were: "I want my marriage to be happy"; "I want to be financially secure"; "I want to have children"; and "I want to be ready." The responses to the sentence stem "Most people marry because" were: "of love and companionship needs"; "of loneliness and a need for

security"; "they have to"; and "sex." Each sentence stem had a response category "other" for responses that did not logically fit into any of the categories. The responses were analyzed by the chi-square method (Ferguson, 1971).

Attitude Toward Divorce

Attitudes toward divorce were measured by the Hardy Divorce Opinionnaire (1957). Attitudes toward divorce were measured by agreement or disagreement to statements concerning the effects of divorce upon children and society, the degree of abuse of divorce, the obligation of spouses to remain married, and divorce as a solution to unhappy marriage. Half of the items expressed an attitude favorable to divorce and half expressed a negative, unfavorable attitude toward divorce. The instrument consisted of 12 items presented in a Likert-type format.

For this study the instrument was scored by a method suggested by Shaw and Wright (1967). An overall attitude score was computed by assigning scores to the various response alternatives. Each subject's attitude score was the sum of the item scores. Possible range of scores was from 0 to 12 with the interpretation that the higher the score, the more favorable the attitude toward divorce.

Reliability. Shaw and Wright found split-half reliability to be .74 correct by the Spearman-Brown formula to .85.

Validity. In using a scoring method different from the one used in this study, Shaw and Wright found that the mean score for a small sample of college females was 31.3. For college males the mean was 38.0. They assumed this to

be at least minimal evidence of validity, but cautioned that the instrument should be used with caution until its reliability and validity could be more positively established.

Marriage Role Expectations

Expectations of marital roles were measured by six statements regarding marriage, three that expressed traditional attitudes toward marital roles and three that expressed equalitarian attitudes. Subjects indicated whether they expected the statements to be true or false for their future marriage. A total attitude score was computed by assigning scores to each item giving the scale a range of 0 to 6. Each subject's marriage expectation score was the sum of the six items. The items were scored so that the higher the score, the more equalitarian the attitude.

Reliability. Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (Ferguson, 1971) was computed to determine the internal consistency of the six marriage role items. A reliability coefficient of .59 was obtained.

Validity. The researcher, in a previous test of this instrument among college students, found that females were more equalitarian in attitude toward marital roles. This was assumed to be at least minimal evidence of validity.

Family Size Preference

Attitudes toward both preferred ideal family size and preferred future family size were measured using two questions from a study done by Snow (1973). These questions were similar to the ones employed in several of the Gallup opinion polls

(Blake, 1966). The questions were chosen for their apparent utility for use among adolescents.

Closeness to Parents and Happiness of Parents' Marriages

The subjects' feelings of closeness to parents and perceptions of the happiness of parental marriage were measured by three questions adapted from research by Landis (1962). Two questions were concerned with closeness to mother and father separately, and the third question asked subjects to rate their parents' marriage (until they were 12) as happy, average, or unhappy.

Procedure

The questionnaire was pretested among 100 college students enrolled in a course in family relations. The data were obtained by a questionnaire administered to the subjects during regular class periods by their classroom teachers. Standard instructions were read to the classes preceding administration of the instrument (Appendix A). A total of 353 questionnaires were received. Of these, 32 were discarded for incomplete responses or the family type was other than intact, reconstituted, or broken.

Subjects

The data for this investigation were obtained from 127 males and 194 females enrolled in psychology, family living, and/or home economics courses in three public senior high schools in Kansas. These adolescents ranged in age from

14 to 18 with a mean age of 16.5 years. All were single and living at home with at least one biological parent. The vast majority of the subjects were white (96.6 percent), five were Negro, and three were American Indian. Based on the level of parental education, it was estimated that the adolescents in the sample were of lower-middle to upper-middle class background. Over two-thirds of the parents had high school education, 15 percent had grade school education, and 20 percent had college degrees. A description of parental education by sex and family type is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Education of Parents by Sex and Family Type

Family Type	Parents of Male Subjects					
	Grade	Father High	College	Grade	Mother High	College
Intact	13	46	23	6	64	14
Reconstituted	2	16	2	1	16	3
Broken	6	11	3	2	15	5
Total	21	73	28	9	95	22
Family Type	Parents of Female Subjects					
	Grade	Father High	College	Grade	Mother High	College
Intact	26	81	32	21	99	20
Reconstituted	5	16	5	4	20	3
Broken	3	16	4	5	17	2
Total	34	113	41	30	136	25

Family Type

The subjects were divided into three experimental groups according to family types in which they lived. There were 46 adolescents from reconstituted families, 48 from broken families, and 225 from intact families. A description

of the sample by age, sex, and family type is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Subjects by Family Type, Age, and Sex

Family Type	Age				Total
	15	16	17	18	
<u>Male Subjects</u>					
Intact	7	32	37	9	85
Reconstituted	2	7	7	4	20
Broken	2	2	11	7	22
Total	11	41	55	20	127
<u>Female Subjects</u>					
Intact	21	53	59	7	140
Reconstituted	4	13	11	0	28
Broken	2	12	9	3	26
Total	27	78	77	10	194

A further analysis of the family relationships of adolescents living in reconstituted families is given in Table 3. Most of these adolescents were living with their mother and stepfather and a large majority reported that their biological parents had divorced. Approximately 21 percent indicated that their primary family had been broken by the death of a parent. Table 4 presents the number of years by sex that the adolescents had resided in the reconstituted family. Nearly half of the sample, 45 percent of the males and 46.3 percent of the females, had lived in a reconstituted home for nine or more years. Twenty-five percent of the females and 40 percent of the males had lived in their reconstituted family for four years or less.

Table 3

Adolescents in Reconstituted Families by Sex,
Current Residence, and Parental Status

Male Subjects N = 20			
Current Residence	Father & Stepmother	Mother & Stepfather	Total
<u>Parental Status</u>			
Divorced	5	11	16
Father dead, mother living	0	2	2
Mother dead, father living	2	0	2
Female Subjects N = 28			
	Father & Stepmother	Mother & Stepfather	Total
<u>Parental Status</u>			
Divorced	4	18	22
Father dead, mother living	0	3	3
Mother dead, father living	3	0	3

Table 4

Number of Years lived in a Reconstituted Family by Sex

Years	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 1 year	1	5	0	0
1 - 2 years	2	10	4	14.3
3 - 4 years	5	25	3	10.7
5 - 6 years	1	5	4	14.3
7 - 8 years	2	10	4	14.3
9 - 10 years	2	10	2	7.1
11 - 12 Years	2	10	2	7.1
13 - 14 years	1	5	0	0
15 - 16 years	3	15	7	25.0
17-18 years	1	5	2	7.1
Total	20	100	28	100.0

The family structure of adolescents in broken families is provided in Table 5. Slightly over 81 percent were living with mother only, primarily due to parental divorce; however, 25 percent of the group were in broken homes due to the death of the father. Of the 33 families broken by divorce, six adolescents resided with their fathers.

Table 5

Adolescents in Broken Families by Sex, Current
Residence and Parental Status

Current Residence	Male Subjects N = 22		
	Father Only	Mother Only	Total
<u>Parental Status</u>			
Divorce	4	10	14
Father Dead	0	6	6
Mother Dead	2	0	2
Total	6	16	22
	Female Subjects N = 26		
	Father Only	Mother Only	Total
<u>Parental Status</u>			
Divorce	2	17	19
Father Dead	0	6	6
Mother Dead	1	0	1
Total	3	23	26

A description of the number of years that the adolescent had resided in the broken family is given in Table 6.

Grade

The sample contained 65 tenth graders, 120 eleventh graders, and 136 twelfth graders. A further account of the adolescents by grade is given in Table 7.

Table 6
Number of Years Lived in a Broken Family by Sex

Years	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 1 year	1	4.5	3	11.5
1 - 2 years	2	9.1	3	11.5
3 - 4 years	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 - 6 years	2	9.1	2	7.7
7 - 8 years	4	18.2	1	3.8
9 - 10 years	1	4.5	1	3.8
11 - 12 years	1	4.5	0	0.0
13- 14 years	2	9.1	0	0.0
15 - 16 years	4	18.2	11	42.3
17 - 18 years	5	22.7	5	19.2
Total	22		26	

Table 7
Subjects by Grade, Family Type, and Sex

Family Type	Grade				Grade			
	10	11	12	Total	10	11	12	Total
	Male Subjects N = 127				Female Subjects N = 194			
Intact	16	29	40	85	29	56	55	140
Reconstituted	3	9	8	20	8	11	9	28
Broken	2	3	17	22	7	12	7	26
Total	21	41	65	127	44	79	71	194

Religious Preference

Religious preferences of the adolescents are shown in Table 8. The sample was composed of 110 Protestants, 40 Catholics, 113 stating no religious preference,

and 58 indicating "other" (Mormon, Quaker). The sample contained no Jews.

Table 8

Religious Preference of Subjects by Family Type

Preference	None	Catholic	Protestant	Other	Total
Intact	70	31	84	40	225
Reconstituted	23	5	13	7	48
Broken	20	4	13	11	48
Total	113	40	110	58	321

Home Location

A large majority (203) resided in a city, 74 in a small town, and 44 on a farm. This is shown in Table 9. The sample was more homogeneous than these arbitrarily selected classifications indicated. The adolescents who reported themselves as city dwellers actually resided in sparsely populated school districts that bordered city limits. Their home area resembled a small town more than a truly urban area.

Table 9

Home Location of Subjects by Family Type

Location	Farm	Small Town	City	Total
Intact	30	39	156	225
Reconstituted	7	16	25	48
Broken	7	19	22	48
Total	44	74	203	321

Number of Siblings

The mean number of siblings of the adolescents was fairly constant among the three family types. The mean for intact family adolescents was 3.5; for adolescents in broken families, 3.7; and for adolescents in reconstituted families, 3.7. Table 10 presents additional information on number of siblings.

Table 10

Number of Siblings of Subjects by Family Type and Sex

Number of Siblings	Intact			Recons. Broken		
	Male Subjects			Female Subjects		
0	2	0	0	1	0	0
1	8	2	0	9	5	3
2	17	3	7	27	4	3
3	24	6	6	38	5	8
4	18	4	3	32	5	2
5	8	4	5	16	3	4
6	5	0	0	9	1	3
7	2	0	1	4	4	1
8	1	0	0	3	0	1
9	0	1	0	0	1	1
10	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	85	20	22	140	28	26
Mean	3.271	3.550	3.455	3.586	3.786	3.962
S. D.	1.592	1.791	1.405	1.705	2.217	2.126

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Data Analysis

Data obtained on each of the measurements were analyzed by the multiple classification analysis of variance, using the least-squares method. Where significant effects were found, specific differences were determined by t tests (Ferguson, 1971). The data obtained for each subject were coded, key-punched on computer cards, and verified for accuracy. Statistical computations were performed by computer.

In addition to quantitative data obtained on measuring instruments, responses to four sentence stem completions were obtained. The researcher performed content analysis of the responses, separating them into 10 to 25 rationally distinct categories on the basis of key words or phrases. Since some of the sentence stems had as many as 25 different responses, it was necessary to summarize the data in order to reduce the number of categories. A faculty member of Kansas State University, serving as a neutral judge, combined the responses into logically-related categories. The result was a reduction to four to six categories for each sentence stem. The response frequency distributions to each of the sentence stems were compared between the subjects in the three family types and between the sexes. The chi square method (Ferguson, 1971) was used to test the null hypotheses of no

significant differences.

The analysis of variance was a three-factor design composed of age by sex by family type. The family type factor compared subjects from intact, broken, and reconstituted families. Separate analysis of variance was performed for each of the following: marriage attitude scale scores, divorce attitude scale scores, number of children planned, and number of children constituting an ideal family. The results of these analyses will be discussed separately.

Attitudes Toward Marriage

Results of the analysis of variance of the scores obtained on the Favorableness of Attitude Toward Marriage Scale are shown in Table 11. Significant differences were found between the sexes at the .01 level. The factors of age and family type were not significant, and no interaction effects were found.

Table 11

Analysis of Variance of Marriage Attitude Scale Scores

Source	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Sex	1	10.22	2.892*
Age	3	2.51	0.712
Family	2	1.07	0.304
Sex x age	3	0.96	0.272
Sex x family	2	1.62	0.457
Sex x age x family	6	0.36	0.102

*Significant at .01 level

Sex. The differences in mean marriage attitude scores between males and females were significant at the .01 level of confidence. The absence of second or third order interaction effects involving sex indicated that the sex difference did not change by age or family group. The mean score on the marriage attitude scale was 3.5 for males while the mean marriage attitude scale score for females was 4.2. The female subjects thus expressed a more favorable attitude toward marriage than the males did (Tables 12 and 13). Hypothesis II was rejected.

Table 12

Scores of Males on "Favorableness of Attitude to Marriage"
Scale by Family Type

Scale Scores	Family Type			Total
	Intact	Reconstituted	Broken	
(Low) 0	2	1	1	4
1	7	0	3	10
2	16	5	2	23
3	20	5	4	29
4	19	7	4	30
5	10	1	4	15
6	5	0	4	9
7	2	0	0	2
8	4	1	0	5
(High) 9	0	0	0	0
Total	85	20	22	127
Mean	3.541	3.300	3.591	3.512
S. D.	1.803	1.593	1.843	1.768

Table 13

**Scores of Females on "Favorableness of Attitude to Marriage"
Scale by Family Type**

Scale Scores		Family Type			Total
		Intact	Reconstituted	Broken	
(Low) 0		1	0	2	3
1		3	3	1	7
2		21	2	4	27
3		25	6	4	35
4		35	6	2	43
5		24	6	8	38
6		14	2	2	18
7		6	2	2	10
8		7	0	0	7
9		4	1	1	6
Total		140	28	26	194
Mean		4.271	4.071	4.000	4.206
S.D.		1.873	1.904	2.191	1.915

Family type. Hypothesis I was not rejected by the data. Adolescents from intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families did not differ significantly on attitudes toward marriage, although adolescents from intact families were slightly more positive. The mean scale scores for intact family adolescents were 4.00; for broken family adolescents, 3.81; and for adolescents from reconstituted families, 3.75. Table 14 illustrates the marriage attitude scale scores by family type.

Table 14

Scores on "Favorableness of Attitude to Marriage" by Family Type

Scale Scores	Intact	Reconstituted	Broken	Total
(Low) 0	3	1	3	7
1	10	3	4	17
2	37	7	6	50
3	45	11	8	64
4	54	13	6	73
5	34	7	12	53
6	19	2	6	27
7	8	2	2	12
8	11	1	0	12
(High) 9	4	1	1	6
Total	225	48	48	321
Mean	3.996	3.750	3.813	3.931
S. D.	1.877	1.804	2.028	1.886

Sentence completions. To obtain information about the adolescents' attitudes toward marriage in addition to the scores of the Favorableness of Attitude Toward Marriage Scale, the subjects were asked to complete four sentence stems about marriage: (1) "The best thing about marriage is . . ."; (2) "The worst thing about marriage is . . ."; (3) "When I marry . . ."; and (4) "Most people marry because" Significant differences between males and females were found on all four items. The results of the chi square tests in analyzing the sentence completions are shown in Table 15.

The analysis of the responses to the stem "The best thing about marriage is" revealed that the response categories "a sexual relationship" and "sharing and trusting in your spouse" contributed most of the chi square value. Males tended to

emphasize the sexual aspects of the marriage relationship more than would be theoretically expected on the basis of an assumption of no difference between males and females. In the category of "sharing and trusting in your spouse" males responded less frequently than would be expected while females responded more than theoretically expected. For both sexes, the greatest number of responses were in the category "love and companionship."

Table 15

Comparison of Marriage Attitude Sentence Completion
Responses by Family Type and Sex

Sentence Stem	Family Type		Sex	
	df	Chi square	df	Chi Square
The best thing about marriage is	8	7.73	4	32.68**
The worst thing about marriage is	8	11.36	4	33.55**
When I marry	8	17.63*	4	38.14**
Most people marry because	8	38.91**	4	9.79*

*Significant at .05 level of confidence

**Significant at .001 level of confidence

The analysis of the sentence stem "The worst thing about marriage is" indicated that female subjects, more than was theoretically expected, considered "arguments and poor communication" to be the worst thing about marriage. The male subjects, more than theoretically expected, considered the worst thing about marriage to be "financial problems and responsibilities." The males were less concerned than was theoretically expected about "arguments and poor communica-

tion." The females were seemingly more concerned with problems in the marriage relationship, while males were more concerned with problems associated with the responsibilities of marriage.

Most of the chi square value of the response differences to the stem "When I marry . . ." were contributed by the categories "I want my marriage to be happy" and "I want to be financially secure." Males responded more than was theoretically expected with a concern for financial security and stability, but they responded less than expected with desires to be happy. Female subjects responded to the categories in reverse to the males' responses. Females expressed greater interest in the quality of the relationship than they did in the financial aspects of the marriage.

In general, the responses to the sentence stems were consistent with the results obtained on the marriage attitude scale. Males displayed a more cynical, if not more negative, attitude toward marriage than the females did. Females generally were more positive and evidenced a greater concern for the marriage relationship. The more negative attitudes obtained on the marriage scale by males may be attributed to their concern related to the financial responsibilities associated with marriage.

The responses to the sentence stems provided additional information on the nonsignificant differences in the marriage attitudes of subjects in the three family types. The chi square analysis showed significant differences in the responses to the stems "When I marry . . ." and "Most people marry because . . ."

A review of the responses to "When I marry . . ." revealed that the categories "I want my marriage to be happy" and "I want to be financially secure"

provided most of the chi square value. Subjects from intact families, more than was theoretically expected, expressed a concern for financial security, while subjects from reconstituted and broken families were less concerned about financial security than was theoretically expected. Adolescents from reconstituted families were more concerned with finding happiness in marriage.

Subjects from intact families agreed "Most people marry because . . ." of "love and companionship needs" rather than "loneliness and a need for security." Subjects in reconstituted families disagreed, expressing the opinion that most people marry because of "loneliness and a need for security," or "they have to." Fewer subjects from reconstituted families than was expected felt that people married for "love and companionship needs." Subjects from broken homes believed that "sex" and "loneliness and a need for security" caused most people to seek marriage.

The responses to the sentence stems reflected the more slightly negative attitudes toward marriage held by adolescents of reconstituted families and broken families. The subjects in these groups were more cynical about why people marry. Adolescents from reconstituted homes expressed concern for happiness in their marriages. There were no significant differences in the chi square analysis of "The best thing about marriage . . ." and "The worst thing about marriage"

Attitudes Toward Divorce

The results for the analysis of variance for the scores obtained on the Hardy Divorce Opinionnaire are presented in Table 16. Significant differences

were found among the family types. Age and sex were not significant, nor were there any interaction effects.

Table 16

Analysis of Variance of Divorce Opinionnaire Scale Scores

Source	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Sex	1	1.38	0.164
Age	3	1.68	0.200
Family	2	28.25	3.361*
Sex x age	3	9.00	1.070
Sex x family	2	0.10	0.012
Sex x age x family	6	3.80	0.452

Sex. Male subjects held nonsignificantly more favorable views toward divorce than female subjects did. The mean divorce opinionnaire scale score was 3.93 for males and 3.70 for females. This difference was not significant, thus Hypothesis IV was not rejected. Table 17 provides a description of divorce opinionnaire scale scores by sex.

Family type. The F test revealed that the three family groups differed in attitude toward divorce at the .05 level of confidence. To locate the source of this significant F, t tests were calculated. The results of these t tests are shown in Table 18. Adolescents from reconstituted families were significantly more positive toward divorce than were adolescents from either intact or broken families. Hypothesis III was thus rejected by the data. The reason for the more favorable attitude toward divorce held by stepchildren was not clear, and no previous research

exists to assist in interpreting these results. A further analysis of the attitudes held by family type is given in Table 19.

Table 17

Scores on Divorce Opinionnaire Scale by Sex and Family Type

Scores	Males				Females			
	Intact	Recons.	Broken	Total	Intact	Recons.	Broken	Total
(Low) 0	8	0	3	11	21	2	3	25
1	13	2	2	17	24	3	3	30
2	9	6	3	18	16	4	6	26
3	10	1	4	15	19	6	2	27
4	17	1	3	21	10	2	5	17
5	9	3	1	13	15	1	4	20
6	6	0	1	7	11	2	1	14
7	3	1	2	6	9	0	1	10
8	7	1	2	10	3	3	1	7
9	2	1	1	4	6	1	1	8
10	0	3	0	3	3	3	0	6
11	1	1	0	2	3	0	0	3
(High) 12	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	85	20	22	127	140	28	26	194
Mean	3.718	5.050	3.727	3.929	3.557	4.607	3.500	3.701
S.D.	2.571	3.486	2.763	2.784	2.939	3.468	2.337	2.958

Table 18

Comparison of Mean Divorce Opinionnaire Scale
Scores by Family Type

Family Types	Means	t
Intact	3.62	
Reconstituted	4.79	2.22*
Intact	3.62	
Broken	3.60	.04
Reconstituted	4.79	
Broken	3.60	1.95

*significant at .05 level of confidence

Table 19
Scores on Divorce Opinionnaire Scale by Family Type

Scale Score	Intact	Reconstituted	Broken	Total
(Low) 0	29	2	5	36
1	37	5	5	47
2	25	10	9	44
3	29	7	6	42
4	27	3	8	38
5	24	4	5	33
6	17	2	2	21
7	12	1	3	16
8	10	4	3	17
9	8	2	2	12
10	3	6	0	9
11	4	1	0	5
(High) 12	0	1	0	1
Total	225	48	48	321
Mean	3.618	4.792	3.604	3.791
S. D.	2.801	3.445	2.516	2.888

Marriage Role Expectations

In the marriage role expectations scale, significant differences were found between the sexes and among the family types. The factor of age was not significant nor were there any interaction effects. Results of the analysis of variance of marriage role expectations are shown in Table 20.

Sex. The differences in mean marriage role expectation scores between males and females were significant at the .01 level of confidence. The mean scores were 4.6 for males and 5.0 for females, indicating that female adolescents held

more equalitarian views than males. Hypothesis VI was rejected.

Table 20

Analysis of Variance of Marriage Role Expectations Scale

Source	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Sex	1	5.42	4.172*
Age	3	1.04	0.799
Family	2	3.12	2.402*
Sex x age	3	0.85	0.656
Sex x family	2	0.07	0.054
Sex x age x family	6	1.36	1.050

*Significant at .10 level

Table 21

Comparison of Mean Marriage Role Expectation
Scale Scores by Family Type

Family Types	Means	<u>t</u>
Intact	4.86	.726
Reconstituted	4.98	
Intact	4.86	1.85*
Broken	4.48	
Reconstituted	4.98	2.10**
Broken	4.48	

*Significant at .10 level

**Significant at .05 level

Family type. The analysis of variance revealed a significant difference among the family types. In order to determine the sources of this difference, t tests were computed. The results of these t tests are provided in Table 21.

Adolescents from reconstituted families were most equalitarian in attitude (4.98),

followed by intact family adolescents (4.86) and those from broken homes (4.48). Children from broken families held significantly more traditional marriage role expectations than adolescents from other family types. Null Hypothesis V was rejected.

Ideal Family Size

The analysis of variance of perceptions of ideal family size indicated neither significant differences among the factors of age, sex, or family group nor significant interaction effects. Results of the analysis of variance on ideal family size are given in Table 22.

Table 22

Analysis of Variance of Perceptions of Ideal Family Size

Source	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Sex	1	1.91	0.714
Age	3	1.12	0.421
Family	2	2.49	0.932
Sex x age	3	0.44	0.165
Sex x family	2	3.44	1.288
Sex x age x family	6	4.19	1.569

Sex. The mean number of children which constitute an ideal family for females was 4.1 and for males, 3.8. This difference was not significant. Hypothesis VII was not rejected. This finding was consistent with previous research.

Family type. The mean number of children which constitute an ideal family for intact family adolescents was 4.2; for broken family adolescents, 4.0; and for

adolescents in reconstituted families, 3.9. These means are shown in Table 23. The differences among the means were not significant, thus the results indicated that Hypothesis VIII should not be rejected.

Table 23
Perceptions of Ideal Family Size by Family Type

Number	Intact	Reconstituted	Broken	Total
0	5	1	0	6
1	3	2	2	7
2	27	6	5	38
3	16	9	4	29
4	96	16	25	137
5	37	7	7	51
6	25	4	3	32
7	7	2	1	10
8	3	0	0	3
9	6	1	1	8
Total	225	48	48	321
Mean	4.227	3.896	4.021	4.115
S. D.	1.660	1.679	1.422	1.435

Preferred Family Size

Results of the analysis of variance of preferred family size are presented in Table 24. No significant effects were found.

Sex. Although nonsignificant, males expressed a desire for more children than females did. The mean desired for males was 2.93 and for females, 2.67. Hypothesis IX should not be rejected.

Table 24

Analysis of Variance of Attitudes Toward
Preferred Family Size

Source	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Sex	1	1.99	0.797
Age	3	6.01	2.406*
Family	2	1.79	0.718
Sex x age	3	3.93	1.571
Sex x family	2	4.48	1.794
Sex x age x family	6	2.34	0.937

*Significant at .10 level

Family type. Adolescents from intact families wanted more children than adolescents from the other two family types, although the difference was not significant. The mean number of children desired was 2.96 for intact family adolescents, 2.78 for broken family adolescents, and 2.66 for adolescents in reconstituted families. Further description of these means are given in Table 25. Hypothesis X should not be rejected.

Table 25

Preferred Family Size by Family Type

Number	Intact	Reconstituted	Broken
0	11	3	4
1	2	4	2
2	98	18	22
3	49	10	8
4	38	8	7
5	14	3	2
6	6	1	0
7	2	0	2
8	3	0	0
9	2	1	1
Total	225	48	48
Mean	2.929	2.750	2.729
S. D.	1.539	1.618	1.759

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

Female subjects were favorable to marriage regardless of whether they came from intact, broken, or reconstituted families. There were no significant differences in marriage attitude scale scores among girls in the three family types, although females from intact families were the most positive and females from broken homes the least positive.

Males were significantly less favorable towards marriage than were females from each type of family. In contrast to the female subjects, who did not significantly differ on the marriage attitude scale by family types, male subjects from reconstituted families were significantly ($p \leq .05$) less favorable to marriage than were either broken home or intact family males.

There were no significant differences in marriage attitude scale scores among adolescents from intact, reconstituted, or broken families. Intact family adolescents were the most favorable, followed by broken family adolescents, with adolescents from reconstituted families being the least favorable.

These differences may be ascribed to two rather closely associated factors. First, it was found that adolescents who reported their parents' marriages as "happy" had considerably higher means on the marriage attitude scale than those who reported their parents' marriages as "average" or "unhappy." Not surpris-

ingly, a greater percentage of intact family adolescents (65.3 percent) than broken family adolescents (35.4 percent) or reconstituted family (31.3 percent) adolescents came from homes reported as happy marriages. Second, those adolescents who reported "very close" relationships with parents had higher mean scores on the marriage attitude scale than those adolescents who were not as close to their parents. Again, intact family adolescents were closer to both mother and father than broken family adolescents, and broken family adolescents were closer to both parents than reconstituted family adolescents. It would seem that happiness of parents' marriage and family integration were contributing causal factors in the difference in means among the family types.

Reconstituted family adolescents, both male and female, were significantly more favorable toward divorce than were subjects from either intact or broken families. Reconstituted family males were most favorable (5.05), followed by females from reconstituted families (4.61), and by male subjects in the other two family types (3.73 for broken families and 3.72 for intact families). The positive attitudes toward divorce held by adolescents in reconstituted families may be imputed to a combination of factors. Reconstituted family adolescents reported poorer family integration, more distant relationships to parents and greater incidence of unhappy parental marriages when they were children than did adolescents from either broken or intact families. These were factors found to be associated with more positive attitudes toward divorce. The more favorable attitude toward divorce held by adolescents in reconstituted families might be due to their perceptions of divorce as a good solution for family strife and unhappiness.

Although the differences were not significant, males were more favorable toward divorce than females were, with the previously noted exception of females from reconstituted families. This finding was consistent with previous research. The difference may be attributed to an attitude held by males that marriage is only one facet of their future adult lives whereas female adolescents view marriage as the most important facet of their adult lives; hence, females view marital dissolution more negatively as a threat to their security, and even their identity. Divorce would seem to be more disruptive to the lives of females than of males. This was a tentative assumption, not supported by research.

The finding that the mean number of children perceived by female subjects as constituting the ideal family size was larger than that of male subjects was consistent with previous research; although males desired more children than females did, the difference was nonsignificant. This was somewhat of a surprise, since it may be assumed that girls are socialized into motherhood more than boys are into fatherhood. It may be, however, that female adolescents, although perceiving a larger number of children as the ideal, are more realistic about childbearing and childrearing and thus prefer to have fewer children. Their "need" for motherhood may be satisfied by two or three children.

The mean number of children desired by sex, age, or family fell within the range of 2-4, a finding consistent with previous research; however, the means found were slightly lower than means found in other studies, perhaps reflecting the societal trend toward smaller families.

Intact family adolescents had nonsignificantly greater means both for ideal

family size perceptions and desired number of children. The difference may have been due to family structure. A greater percentage of adolescents from intact families were either Catholics or "other" (which was primarily Mormon) than were in the non-intact family groups, and both Catholics and Mormons have reported preferring larger families and perceiving larger ideal families than other religious groups (Westoff and Potwin, 1967). Therefore, it was likely that religious beliefs influenced family size perceptions more than family structure did.

Female adolescents held more equalitarian attitudes toward marriage roles than males. This result was in general agreement with previous research findings. Adolescents from reconstituted families and intact families were significantly more equalitarian than broken family children. A tentative explanation for this may be that adolescents from broken homes lacking primary exposure to roles performed by both parental models adhere to the more traditional concepts of marital roles. Lacking an intimate model of marital division of labor and decision-making, broken family adolescents may "fall back" on traditional ideas for their marriage role expectations.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

An assumption generally supported by research is that the family is the chief socializing agency for instructing young people in both marriage and parenthood. Research support has been limited to study of intact families, and it seemed relevant to investigate the perceptions of marriage and family life held by adolescents who lived in reconstituted or broken families.

This study was designed to determine what differences exist in attitudes and beliefs about marriage and family life among adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families. The following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis I. There is no difference in the attitude toward marriage held by adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis II. There is no difference in the attitude toward marriage held by male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis III. There is no difference in the attitude toward divorce held by adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis IV. There is no difference in the attitudes toward divorce held by male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis V. There is no difference in marriage role expectations of

adolescents from intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis VI. There is no difference in the marriage role expectations of male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis VII. There is no difference in perceptions of the ideal family size held by adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis VIII. There is no difference in perceptions of the ideal family size held by male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis IX. There is no difference in the preferred number of children of adolescents living in intact, broken, and/or reconstituted families.

Hypothesis X. There is no difference in the preferred number of children of male and female adolescents.

Data were obtained from 127 males and 194 females enrolled in psychology, family living, and/or home economics courses in three Kansas public senior high schools. All subjects were single and lived at home with at least one biological parent. The subjects were divided into three experimental groups according to family type. There were 48 adolescents from reconstituted families, 48 from broken families, and 225 from intact families.

The following instruments were combined to form a single questionnaire which was administered to the subjects during class periods: the Hill Favorableness of Attitude Toward Marriage Scale; the Hardy Divorce Opinionnaire; a six-item marriage role expectations scale; two questions on ideal and preferred family size; and four sentence completion stems constructed to provide additional information on marriage attitudes.

Three-factor analyses of variance composed of age by sex by family type were performed for the scores obtained on each of the measures. Analysis of the marriage attitude scores revealed that females were significantly more favorable toward marriage than males. Family type was not a significant factor, nor was age. Responses to the sentence stems revealed that females were more concerned with quality of the marriage relationship than males, and males were more concerned with financial responsibilities of marriage.

Analysis of the scores obtained on the attitude toward divorce scale showed that reconstituted family adolescents were significantly more positive toward divorce than were adolescents from either intact or broken families.

Females held significantly more equalitarian marriage role expectations than male subjects did. Significant differences were found among the family types. Reconstituted family adolescents were the most equalitarian, followed by subjects from intact and broken families. Broken family adolescents were significantly more traditional than adolescents in the other two family types.

No significant sources of variance were found in the analysis of perceptions of ideal family size. Fifteen-year-olds wanted significantly more children than did the older adolescents. Neither sex nor family type were factors in family size perceptions.

Conclusions

On the basis of research findings, the following conclusions seem to be warranted:

1. Female adolescents have more favorable attitudes toward marriage than male adolescents, regardless of family structure.
2. Adolescents from reconstituted families are more positive in attitude toward divorce than are adolescents from broken or intact families.
3. Adolescents from broken families have more traditional attitudes toward marriage roles than adolescents from reconstituted or intact families.
4. The marriage role expectations of female adolescents are more egalitarian than male adolescents.
5. No differences exist in perceptions of ideal and preferred family size among adolescents in intact, broken, or reconstituted families. Males and females do not differ on perceptions of ideal and preferred family size.

This investigator found that, in some aspects, attitudes toward marriage and family life differ among adolescents living in intact, reconstituted, or broken families. Not enough information was obtained to conclusively determine the extent to which these differences can be attributed to family structure, per se, or to either family integration or the causes of the family dissolution. Further research is needed to clarify the effects of family structure on adolescents' attitudes toward marriage and family life. Additional research is needed to investigate the effects of parental death and parental divorce on family life attitudes.

There was tentative indication that the happiness of parents' marriage and the adolescents' feelings of closeness to parents had effects on adolescents' marriage perceptions. Is adjustment to the family situation a more important factor in determining attitudes toward family life than family structure?

Since this study dealt only with attitudes and perceptions, further investigation into the actual behavior of adults from different family structures in terms of marriage, divorce and number of children might provide additional information on the effects of reconstituted and broken families on marital values.

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APPENDIX A

ORAL INTRODUCTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

I am asking you to help in a study which is being conducted among a number of young people in the state of Kansas. You can help by sharing some of your ideas and opinions about marriage and family living. Each of you have been given a questionnaire which I would like to have you complete.

There are different types of questions included, but for most of them you will only need to make a circle or a check mark to give your answer. Instructions for each part are included in the questionnaire. Read them carefully.

Please read each question carefully and base your answer on your own frank opinions and feelings. If you are not sure about the meaning of a particular word or about what you are supposed to do, raise your hand for help. You are not expected to write your name on any part of this questionnaire. Are there any questions at this point?

Make sure you have answered each question before you turn it in.

APPENDIX B

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE ATTITUDE SCALES

Answer any or all of the following. Be sure to read the instructions.

1. I am: ☐ male
☐ female

2. My age at last birthday was:

<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 19
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 20
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 21

3. My grade in school is:

<input type="checkbox"/> 7th	<input type="checkbox"/> 10th	<input type="checkbox"/> college
<input type="checkbox"/> 8th	<input type="checkbox"/> 11th	<input type="checkbox"/> graduate school
<input type="checkbox"/> 9th	<input type="checkbox"/> 12th	

4. I am: ☐ single
☐ engaged
☐ married

5. I attend: ☐ no church
☐ a Catholic church
☐ a Protestant church
☐ a Jewish synagogue
☐ other religious group

6. I live: ☐ on a farm
☐ in a small town
☐ in Manhattan
☐ in Topeka
☐ in Abilene

7. I live with:

- a. ☐ my own father and mother
☐ my own father and stepmother
☐ my own mother and stepfather
☐ my mother only
☐ my father only
☐ my guardian
☐ other (please specify) _____

- b. I have lived with them
for _____ years.

8. My biological parents are:
☐ married to each other
☐ separated
☐ divorced
☐ both deceased
☐ father deceased, mother living
☐ mother deceased, father living
9. My race is: ☐ Negro
☐ Caucasian
☐ Oriental
☐ other (please specify) _____
10. I live in a family with _____ boys and _____ girls (include yourself but don't count your parents.)
11. My father has completed:
☐ grade school
☐ high school
☐ college
12. My mother has completed:
☐ grade school
☐ high school
☐ college

Please answer these questions in reference to the family you are now living with. Think about these questions carefully and place a check mark beside the answer which best represents your own feelings.

13. How close is your relationship with your mother?
☐ very close
☐ moderately close
☐ not very close
14. How close is your relationship with your father?
☐ very close
☐ moderately close
☐ not very close
15. In your opinion, up to the time you were 12 were your parents on the average happy or unhappy in their marriage?
☐ happy
☐ average
☐ unhappy

MARRIAGE ATTITUDE SCALE

Instructions: Listed below are some questions about marriage. Think about each question carefully and place a check-mark beside the answer which represents your response to the question.

16. If you marry, to what extent will you miss the life you would have had as a single person?
_____ very much
_____ to some extent
_____ very little
_____ not at all
17. In your opinion, to what extent will it trouble you to give up your personal freedom when you marry?
_____ very much
_____ to some extent
_____ very little
_____ not at all
18. In your opinion, will adjustment to married life be difficult for you?
_____ not at all
_____ not too difficult
_____ rather difficult
_____ very difficult
19. Do you ever have doubts as to whether you will enjoy living exclusively in marriage with one member of the opposite sex?
_____ frequently
_____ occasionally
_____ rarely
_____ never
20. In your opinion, to what extent will the responsibilities of married life be enjoyable to you?
_____ very enjoyable
_____ fairly enjoyable
_____ not too enjoyable
_____ not at all enjoyable
21. How happy do you think you will be if you marry?
_____ very happy
_____ happy
_____ unhappy
_____ very unhappy

22. Do you ever have doubts about your chances of having a successful marriage?
 _____ frequently
 _____ occasionally
 _____ rarely
 _____ never
23. Do you think you will find (or have found) a person who is a suitable marriage partner for you?
 _____ yes
 _____ no
24. Do you think it would be advisable for you always to remain single?
 _____ yes
 _____ no

FAMILY SIZE PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Below are some questions concerning family size. Place a check-mark beside the number which is your answer.

25. What do you consider to be the ideal size of a family?
 _____ 0 _____ 4 _____ 8 _____ 12
 _____ 1 _____ 5 _____ 9 _____ (if more write in
 _____ 2 _____ 6 _____ 10 number)
 _____ 3 _____ 7 _____ 11
26. If and when you marry, how many children would you like to have in your family?
 _____ 0 _____ 4 _____ 8 _____ 12
 _____ 1 _____ 5 _____ 9 _____ (if more write in
 _____ 2 _____ 6 _____ 10 number)
 _____ 3 _____ 7 _____ 11

DIVORCE OPINIONNAIRE

Instructions: Read each of the following statements concerning marriage and divorce. Then circle the letter beside each statement which best represents your own feeling about the statement.

A means "I agree with this statement"
 N means "I am more or less neutral about it"
 D means "I disagree with this statement"

- A N D 27. Divorce is a solution to many unhappy marriages.
- A N D 28. Marriage is a sacred contract which should be broken only under the most drastic circumstances.

- A N D 29. Children are better off living with one parent rather than two who cannot get along well together.
- A N D 30. Most divorces are foolish and ought to be stopped.
- A N D 31. It is better for a couple to stay together, to struggle along together if necessary, than to break up a home by getting a divorce.
- A N D 32. Divorce is a fine social institution since it stops much misery and unhappiness.
- A N D 33. Although some people abuse the divorce privilege, it is fundamentally a good thing.
- A N D 34. Marriage is essentially an agreement between two people, and if they wish to conclude that agreement they should be permitted to do so.
- A N D 35. Divorce is no real solution to an unhappy marriage.
- A N D 36. Children need a home with both a father and a mother even though the parents are not especially suited to one another.
- A N D 37. Divorce is one of our greatest social evils.
- A N D 38. If a couple find getting along with each other a real struggle then they should not feel obligated to remain married.

MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS

Instructions: Below are brief statements about marriage. For each statement indicate whether you expect the statement to be true or false for your own marriage. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer according to what you expect for your own marriage.

- _____ 39. It is just as important that a wife be affectionate and understanding as it is that she be thrifty and skillful as a housekeeper.
- _____ 40. If both the husband and wife work, household duties such as cooking and cleaning should be shared equally by both.
- _____ 41. It is more important for the husband to be a good financial provider than to be considerate and kind.
- _____ 42. Important decisions on how the family income will be spent should be made by the husband.

- _____ 43. It is more important for the wife to be able to cook, sew, and care for children than it is for her to have an education or technical skill.
- _____ 44. Responsibility for caring for the children should be shared equally by the husband and the wife.

SENTENCE COMPLETIONS

Instructions: Complete these sentences to express your real feelings. Please try to do every one. Be sure to make a complete sentence. Give the first answer that comes to your mind.

1. The best thing about marriage is _____
_____.
2. The worst thing about marriage is _____
_____.
3. When I marry _____
_____.
4. Most people marry because _____
_____.

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE
HELD BY ADOLESCENTS IN INTACT, BROKEN,
AND RECONSTITUTED FAMILIES

by

LAWRENCE HOMER GANONG

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An assumption held by family social scientists is that socialization for marriage and family life occurs primarily in the family. Research has been limited to the study of intact families so it was relevant to investigate the perceptions of marriage and family life held by adolescents who resided in broken or reconstituted families.

This study was designed to determine what differences exist in attitudes and beliefs about marriage and family life among adolescents living in intact, broken, or reconstituted families.

Data for this investigation were obtained from 127 males and 194 females enrolled in psychology, family living, or home economics courses in three public senior high schools in Kansas. All subjects were single and lived at home with at least one of their biological parents. There were 48 adolescents from broken families, 48 from reconstituted families, and 225 from intact families. Several instruments were combined to form a single questionnaire which was administered to the subjects during class periods: the Hill Favorableness of Attitude Toward Marriage Scale; the Hardy Divorce Opinionnaire; a six-item Marriage Role Expectations scale; two questions of fertility values; and four sentence completion stems.

Three factor analyses of variance composed of sex by age by family type were performed for the scores obtained on each of the measures.

Female adolescents were significantly more favorable toward marriage and held significantly more equalitarian marriage role expectations than male adolescents. Males were nonsignificantly more positive in attitude toward divorce.

Adolescents from reconstituted families were more positive in attitude toward divorce than were adolescents from broken or intact families. Broken family adolescents held more traditional attitudes toward marriage roles than did adolescents from the other family types. Intact family adolescents were nonsignificantly more favorable toward marriage.

No significant differences in either preferred family size or perceptions of ideal family size were found between males and females or among adolescents in intact, broken, or reconstituted families.

This investigation found that, in some aspects, attitudes toward marriage and family life differ among adolescents living in intact, broken, or reconstituted families. Further research is needed to determine the extent to which these differences can be attributed to family structure.