

THE NEED FOR ADJUSTMENT IN SELECTED AREAS OF FAMILY LIVING
AS PERCEIVED BY A GROUP OF YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES

by

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INTRODUCTION

Education for family living has increased in the past 30 years from the first pioneer presentation at Boston University by Dr. Ernest R. Groves in 1927 to the present day offering of marriage and family courses by more than eleven hundred professors in colleges and universities. In addition to this increase at the college level, family life education has found its way into many high schools and some junior high schools. Those who have developed courses for high school freshmen find that much of the material should be offered even earlier. Family life education is not something to be accomplished just before marriage, but a continuous unfolding process, graded for age and maturity.

Leland Foster Wood (1950), Director of the Family Life Commission of the National Council of Churches stated:

There are no short cuts in education for marriage, although there may be great value in short courses. Preparation for marriage involves all that pertains to emotional maturing and the socialization of personality. It is the making of persons that is involved and especially persons with capacity for shared living in the family.

Other changes have accompanied this expansion of the age level at which courses are offered. Increasing emphasis has been given to the fact that marriage education must reach boys as well as girls, men as well as women. Marriage and family life imply two sexes trying to understand each other and two parents trying to do their best for their children. According to Landis (1957) it is even more important that men and boys be reached since women tend to think more about marriage and in an informal way to prepare for it, while men are likely just to marry and become parents. In studying adolescent social and emotional maturation, he also found that the background factor most closely associated with desirable adolescent

development is the adolescent's having felt and still feeling close to his or her father.

The focus of education for family living has also changed. Instead of having the emphasis on skills, facts and history, the emphasis is on the quality of the relationship within a home. More and more of the research that is being done is on the dynamics of relationships within families (Bowman, 1956 and Ehrman, 1957).

Both Landis (1957) and Folkman (1955) stated that the problems approach should be replaced with a more positive approach. To raise the level of happiness instead of lowering the divorce rate seemed to them to be the better approach. If this should result in a lower divorce rate, no harm would be done. Marriage education courses with a positive approach would help parents grow with their children. "Much of the conflict between parents and children results from the assumption on the part of the parents that all the growing has to take place in the children" (Landis, 1957).

Foote and Cottrell (1955) rejected the position that personality traits are fixed at any given age. The idea of interpersonal competence as dynamic gives a picture of behavior as being changeable rather than static. If personality depends on behavior patterns, which are in turn dependent upon one's competence in different areas of interpersonal living, which again is dependent upon training, flexibility, motivation and empathy, then it behooves educators to turn their attention to these latter items if they would improve the personalities of marriage partners and thus increase the quality of the relationship within a given union. Foote and Cottrell (1955) stated:

To conceive of interpersonal relations as governed by relative degrees of skill in controlling the outcome of episodes of interaction is to diverge greatly from some other explanations of characteristic differences in behavior.

These authors would start with the measure of competence in various areas of interaction rather than with the problem.

The picture of family life education that seems to be evolving from the years of experience of many disciplines can best be described as education that (1) is offered to a number of age levels, graded for maturity; (2) is offered to both sexes, or to the whole family; and (3) is based on the view that personality can be changed through increased competence in interpersonal relations. All this is a challenge for tomorrow. The writer agrees with Wood (1950) and Landis (1957) that education for family living should be offered on all levels but is also aware of the presence of a generation of married couples that has had little or no training in this area. While there may be no short cuts to marriage education, the value of the short course such as could be offered by churches in their adult education programs should not be overlooked.

The church is in a unique position to serve both the challenge for tomorrow's family life education and the need of today's married couples. The church has its roots in family living. Christenson (1950) stated that those values which make up a man's religious code are also those principles upon which successful marriage is built. Marriage is often regarded as spiritual for its success is dependent upon a certain amount of self sacrifice and humanitarian interest.

The church is unique in its relation with families. It deals with the whole family, from the dedication of the babies to the burying of the deceased, while in the early stages of the life cycle it marries the young. Inasmuch as most marriages are performed by ministers, these ministers are in a favorable position for helping couples through premarital counseling. The relationship thus established may carry over to postmarital counseling

for couples needing help, or to family life education in general.

It is not enough for churches to be satisfied with the fact that their young people have a lower divorce rate. The positive approach of reaching for more optimum living must be pursued. Landis (1956) stated that children from chronically unhappy homes not broken by divorce were found to be worse off in their development than children from divorced homes.

Most of the major denominations recognize the opportunity for counseling and are training their ministers to take advantage of it. Wood (1950) found in a survey of 27 of the country's leading seminaries that 24 of the 27 offer courses in counseling. Fourteen offer courses in marriage and the family and 11 have clinical work included. Those responsible for these course offerings apparently are in agreement with Riggs' (1957) statement that building a Christian home is more fundamental and difficult than simply engaging in stereotyped religious practices.

Wood (1950) pointed out that two of the greatest handicaps to a more rapid expansion of a program of family life education by churches are lack of appropriate material and of teachers trained in the field. Much of the literature in the field is a statement of principles and procedure without supporting evidence of need. Studies of how people perceive their needs would supply partial evidence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A better understanding of the present study would be possible if it were presented against a backdrop of other studies made using similar techniques or having similar goals.

Terman's (1938) study on "Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness" and the study by Burgess and Cottrell (1939) on "Predicting Success and

Failure in Marriage" were the first two major investigations of marital happiness using a psychological approach. Burgess and Wallin (1953) used part of the Burgess-Cottrell schedules to do their study on "Engagement and Marriage." Landis (1946) did a study on "Time Required to Achieve Marriage Adjustment." Skidmore (1949) studied "Characteristics of Married Veterans." Karlsson's "Adaptability and Communication in Marriage" (1951) was done in Sweden. Both Karlsson (1951) and Locke (1951) in the study "Predicting Adjustment in Marriage: A Comparison of a Divorced and a Happily Married Group" used variations of the schedules worked out earlier by Burgess, Cottrell and Wallin.

Tate and Musick (1954) did their study "Adjustment Problems of College Students", only a part of which involves married students, at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Gardner, et al., (1955) did their work "Personality Characteristics and Marital Satisfaction" as part of a regional study on family influences on the personality development of children. Their study used some of Terman's (1938) schedules.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) and Burgess and Wallin (1953), Landis (1946), Skidmore (1949), and Tate and Musick (1954) all used students available or students' parents for their sample. Locke (1951) had a sample representative of the general population and Karlsson (1951) in Sweden patterned his sample closely after Locke's. Terman's (1938) sample was urban and semi-urban, middle and upper-middle class. Gardner, et al., (1955) made their presentation from the findings of a larger regional study with a well designed sample from midwest rural families.

The Burgess and Wallin study (1953) and the one by Tate and Musick (1954) were both longitudinal, i.e., testing was done at two different times, in both cases several years apart with the same persons. All the other

studies were cross sectional.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939), Burgess and Wallin (1953), Karlsson (1951), Landis (1946), Terman (1938), and Locke (1951) all made an attempt to measure the happiness or degree of adjustment of the couple. Either their adjustment was measured by their answers on a weighted check list or they were asked to rate their happiness or both. When both were used the results were correlated.

Skidmore (1949) and Tate and Musick (1954) both used the problems approach. Tate and Musick (1954) studied 92 students in 1940 and 1941 and again in 1946 and 1947. Problems in both personal and marital adjustment were checked at each time. The difference between the two testings was accepted as an indication of the adjustment that had been accomplished during the intervening years.

Locke (1951) in defining adjustment stated that:

Marital adjustment is the process of adaptation of the husband and the wife in such a way as to avoid or resolve conflicts sufficiently so that the mates feel satisfied with the marriage and with each other, develop common interests and activities and feel that the marriage is fulfilling their expectations.

Karlsson (1951) defined it by stating:

Adjustment has at least two different meanings. (1) It refers to a state of adjustment, meaning the adjustment at a specific time. (2) It refers to the process of adjustment, meaning the changes in the states of adjustment during a period of time. The result of the process of adjustment may be a better or worse state of adjustment than the initial one.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) stated:

It was assumed that one important indication of adjustment in marriage is essential agreement between husband and wife upon matters that might be made critical issues in the relationship. Couples who testify to agreement in such things as handling finances, dealing with in-laws, friends, demonstration of affection, and so on, are much more likely, in general, to be well adjusted in their marriages than couples who decidedly disagree on one or more of such items.

The present study is an attempt to locate those areas of family living in which a group of married couples perceived the need for adjustment. The problems of adjustment that come with marriage are viewed by the writer not as a negative aspect of married life, but as a normal developmental task encountered in a particular stage of the family life cycle. Landis (1946) indicated in his study of the length of time required to achieve adjustment that in some areas some couples never achieve a satisfactory adjustment.

The title of this paper specifies that the search is for the perceived need, not the actual need. They may or may not be the same. Hawkes (1957) stated:

What happens to the individual is not so important as how he perceives it, because it is not the physical nature of a stimulus which determines reaction but rather the way in which that stimulus is interpreted by the individual stimulated.

All that can be hoped for in a study of this kind is a finding of what the couples perceive to be their need. In many instances they would be unable to analyze their actual need.

REASONS FOR THE STUDY AND OBJECTIVES

Those people who are responsible for planning church programs for young married couples to meet these perceived needs should strengthen such programs. Little research is available as to the felt needs of young married couples which might be met by group education or individual counseling. A study of the experiences of a group of couples would provide a preliminary survey of the viewpoints of these couples.

Four objectives, therefore, of the present study were (1), to discover to what extent selected areas of living required adjustment, as stated by a group of married couples, during the first two years of their marriage; (2)

to discover in which of these areas the need for adjustment existed at the time of the study as stated by this group of married couples; (3) to explore the relation of certain background factors to the needs for adjustment as seen by this group; and (4) to discover in what areas this group of married couples would like to have instruction in a study course or discussion group.

PROCEDURE

In the preparation of a schedule for the present study, the first draft was immediately found to be too long and too subjective. A second much shorter version was drawn up and pretested with three couples. All three couples indicated that they felt they were "through before they started." "Surely you can't find out anything with that," "It was too short," were typical of their responses. The schedule (Appendix) used in the study was then drawn up with the goal in mind of avoiding the inadequacies and taking advantage of the strong points of the first two schedules.

The subjects for the present study were 47 married couples of the First Baptist Church of Manhattan, Kansas. Nineteen of the couples were reached at the regular monthly evening meeting of the church school class to which they belonged. Twenty-seven of the couples were entertained at dessert in the home of the writer in groups of three to five couples at a time. The other couple was contacted by special interview. Those couples represented by only one spouse were not included in the study. Those couples from which one member did not check the adjustment schedule were also eliminated. Seven couples were thus eliminated, leaving forty couples whose data could be analyzed.

Identical instructions were given to all couples concerning the schedule and the meaning of adjustment. The writer was present during the completion

of all schedules and had them in her possession at all times after their completion. Although the couples were identified by number to the writer, anonymity was pledged and kept in all cases.

The couples were asked to fill out a background information sheet (Appendix) and to check those items of an adjustment schedule (Appendix) that pertained to them. The couples were asked to fill out their schedules independently, not consulting their spouses. The schedule was so designed and tabulated that the differences and similarities in the way the two persons viewed their need for adjustment could be seen. Those areas of family living selected to be included in this study were Health, Children, Friends and Relations, Leisure Time, Family Economics, Personal Adjustment, Adjustment with Spouse, and Religion. The checking of a given area consisted of checking single items within the area that represented problems in which the checker felt a need for adjustment. Each item could be checked in any or all of the three columns. The first column was for problems that were present during the first two years of marriage. The second column was for problems that existed at the time of the study. The third column was for those problems the checker would like to have included in a course of family living.

No attempt was made in the present study to measure the degree of adjustment or to secure a rating of the happiness of the couples studied. What was sought was an indication of those areas of family living in which adjustment was required.

All of the couples included in the study showed a lively interest in the study and cooperated with the interviewer.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the Group

The ages of the wives in the group ranged from 19 to 51 years with a mean of 28.9 years. Husbands were from 22 to 56 years old with a mean of 30.8 years.

The length of marriage of the subjects ranged from a few months to 25 years, although a relatively small per cent was in either extreme. The mean length of their marriages was 7.44 years. The mean age at the time of marriage for the wives was 21.5 years; for the husbands, 23.4 years.

In only six of the couples did the wives have more education than the husbands. In three of these couples the husbands had returned to school to continue their education but their wives were not in school. The other three were older couples who had been married 16 years or more. Table 1 shows the educational status of the group.

Table 1. Educational status of the forty couples.

Amount of education	:	Number of husbands	:	Number of wives
Only high school		9		18
Some college		13		14
Completed college		11		7
Postgraduate work		7		1

The group was predominantly rural in background; 57.5 per cent of the wives and 50 per cent of the husbands were from rural farm homes. Only 15 per cent of the wives and 12.5 per cent of the husbands came from cities with a population of 25,000 or over.

Warner's Occupation Index (Warner, 1949) was used to classify the occupations of the group. The husband's occupation was used for those couples not in school and the husband's father's occupation for those couples still in school. Nineteen of the husbands were students at Kansas State College, engaged in only part time work not related, in most cases, to their course of study. The occupations of the other men included college professors and instructors, businessmen, professional army men, technicians and manual laborers. All of the men whose own occupation was used ranked in the first four levels of Warner's seven-point scale. In all but three cases the present generation was higher on the occupational scale than were their fathers. None of the fathers of the group were listed in the first level of professionals while ten per cent of this group were so classified. Although, as stated previously, 50 per cent of the husbands of the group studied came from rural farm background, none of the 40 has returned to the farm nor, judging from their courses of study in the case of students, do they plan to.

Seventy per cent of the wives were employed before marriage and 55 per cent of them were employed after marriage.

The mean number of children of the couples in this study was 1.5. Table 2 shows that eleven couples had no children. Of these eleven, seven were student and/or newlywed couples.

Table 2. Number of children per couple for the forty couples.

Number of children	:	Number of couples
0		11
1		9
2		10
3		8
4		2

All 80 persons in this study were church members. Both husband and wife of 38 of the couples were members of the same church. To attain this singleness of their church home some of the group changed from one denomination to another either at the time of marriage or later. Five of the wives changed their church membership to be with their husbands, 11 of the husbands changed their church membership to be with their wives, and nine couples sought a third church. In only two cases was the change interfaith (Roman Catholic to Baptist). The other changes were all interdenominational. The group was regular in church attendance. Seventy-one of the 80 persons or 88.7 per cent stated that they attended church four times a month.

It is possible that a group as highly churchd as the group studied would adjust to marriage (or any other interpersonal relationship) more easily than the general public. The adjustment having been made more easily would not necessarily alter the areas in which adjustment was needed. The difference would be one of degree more than direction.

As the data of this study were interpreted the writer was continually mindful that the subjects of the study were all members of a church and 78 of the 80 were members of the same church, all actively involved in the educational as well as the worship program of the church. Loeke (1951) found that being a member of a church was probably a mark of a conventional, sociable person, and was highly associated with marital adjustment. He further stated that "the later the age at which attendance at Sunday School is terminated the greater the chance of marital success."

The group was quite mobile. The couples had lived in an average of four different communities. One couple had lived in 15 different places. Eight couples had lived in only one place but all eight were newlywed students. School was listed most often as the cause for moves, but the

army was listed as the cause of the most moves. In other words, moving for school involved more people, but moving for the army required more moves of those people involved.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) found that those couples with poor adjustment differed significantly from those with good adjustment in their degree of mobility. Locke (1951), however, found no significant difference between the happily married and the divorced indicated by the number of towns, counties and states lived in since marriage.

In summary the group studied could be described as middle class, Protestant, predominantly rural in background, somewhat mobile and members of a college community. The majority of them had some college education, and all of them were actively involved in their church.

Comparison of Data

Comparison of Totals by Columns of the Schedule. Column one of the adjustment schedule consisted of those problems that were present in the first two years of marriage, column two of those problems that exist at present, and column three of those problems in which the subjects desire a study group. For this group of 40 couples it was found that the wives' checking exceeded the husbands' checking both in problems of the first two years of marriage and in problems existing at present. The husbands' checking slightly exceeded the wives' in the number of problems desired in a study group (Table 3).

Table 3. The mean number of checks for husbands and wives for the three types of problems.

	: Problems : during first : two years	: Problems : existing : at present	: Problems to : include in a : study group
Husbands' mean	4.55	3.42	3.85
Wives' mean	6.95	5.1	3.35

When the eight selected areas of family living were ranked according to the volume of checking within the different columns (Table 4) there was some shifting of position. Some problems of adjustment that assumed primary status early in marriage had been reduced through the years; some problems persisted through the years; some problems demanded greater adjustment at the present than in the first two years of marriage.

Table 5 in showing the total percentages of checking by areas compared more graphically the volume of checking by columns. When totals of husbands and wives were used the percentage of checking decreased for all areas from those problems present the first two years to those existing at present. When the checking of husbands and wives is kept separate this does not hold true (See Table 16 in Appendix).

Comparison of the Areas. This comparison will be made according to the total checking, the ranking of the area in the three columns, husbands' checking versus wives' checking, and the number of persons checking the different areas.

As shown in Table 6 the area of Children received the highest percentage of total checking with the husbands checking over 50 per cent of the possible items and the wives 75 per cent. This area held this primary position in both the second column, Problems Existing at Present, and the third column,

Table 4. Listing of areas in the rank order for their total checking and for each of the columns of the schedule.

Areas as ranked in total checking	: Areas : as ranked in column 1 : Problems the first : two years	: Areas : as ranked in column 2 : Problems existing at : present	: Areas : as ranked in column 3 : Desire for : study
Children	Adjustment with Spouse	Children	Children
Personal Adjustment	Children	Personal Adjustment	Religion
Family Economics	Family Economics	Family Economics	Personal Adjustment
Adjustment with Spouse	Personal Adjustment	Health	Friends and Relations
Religion	Health	Religion	Family Economics
Health	Religion	Friends and Relations	Adjustment with Spouse
Friends and Relations	Leisure Time	Leisure Time	Health
Leisure Time	Friends and Relations	Adjustment with Spouse	Leisure Time

Table 5. The total percentages¹ of possible checking actually checked for the three types of problems for each of eight areas.

Area	: Number : of possible : checks	: Problems : during first : two years	: Problems : existing : at present	: Problems to : include in a : study group
		Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
Health	480	12.4	12.2	6.1
Children	240	19.5	17.4	26.5
Friends and Relations	240	10.7	8.7	8.7
Leisure Time	400	11.75	8.5	5.7
Family Economics	400	16.9	13.2	8.4
Personal Adjustment	320	16.2	15.9	11.2
Adjustment with Spouse	480	22.0	8.1	6.8
Religion	480	12.0	10.9	12.7

¹ The numbers of possible checks were obtained by multiplying the number of items in the area (see schedule in Appendix) by the number of persons concerned—40 for husbands or wives only, 80 for the whole group.

Desire for Study (Table 4). Its ranking second in the total checking for the first two years of marriage might have been due to the absence of children during the early years of marriage. When the children were present later in marriage the interest in help in the guidance of their children increased. This increased interest might have been related to the broadening interest across the nation in family life education. Glose (1950) found in interviewing couples that they had apparently given up turning to grandmother for advice about the children and deferred to Gesell or Spock when baby acted

Table 6. Number of possible items to check¹ and the total numbers and per cents checked in all columns in each of eight areas by husbands and wives.

Area	Husbands			Wives			Total for both husbands and wives		
	: Number of possible items to check	: Number of possible items to check	: Per cent :checked	: Number of possible items to check	: Number of possible items to check	: Per cent :checked	: Number of possible items to check	: Number of possible items to check	: Per cent :checked
Health	240	61	25.4	240	88	36.6	480	149	31.0
Children	120	63	52.4	120	90	75.0	240	153	63.7
Friends and Relations	120	31	25.8	120	37	30.8	240	68	28.3
Leisure Time	200	55	27.4	200	49	24.4	400	104	25.9
Family Economics	200	73	36.4	200	81	40.4	400	154	38.4
Personal Adjustment	160	54	33.6	160	85	53.0	320	139	43.3
Adjustment with Spouse	240	67	27.8	240	111	46.2	480	178	37.0
Religion	240	70	35.0	240	73	36.4	480	143	35.7

¹ See footnote for Table 5, page 16.

queer. Hoefflin (1954), however, found that among the 100 rural families of her study in Ohio, printed material such as books and magazines was not only equalled by but slightly surpassed by advice from relatives and friends as a source of information on child care. The most checked single item of the present schedule "Knowing how to guide and discipline children" came from this area.

The area of Personal Adjustment ranked second in total checking. This was the position it held in the second column checking, having ranked only fourth in the first column checking. The problem of personal adjustment increased slightly for the wives after the first two years of marriage and decreased only slightly for the husbands. The area ranked third in the desire for study.

Family Economics was the third ranking area and decreased for both husbands and wives after the first two years. The single item "Knowing How to Manage Better" from this area received second high checking among the single items.

In his study Locke (1951) tested the significance of several economic items in relation to marital adjustment or maladjustment. Thirteen out of his 16 items supported the hypothesis that economic security would be more prevalent among happily married couples than among the divorced. Close (1950) found in her interviews that money questions loomed large to nearly all the couples. Skidmore (1949) stated that 34 per cent of the wives and 48 per cent of the husbands in his study listed financial problems as the most serious.

Adjustment with Spouse ranked fourth in total checking. It was the most checked area in the first two years and the least checked area in the column of problems existing at present (Table 4). It was the only area in which the wives' desire for study exceeded that of the husbands'. Tate and Musick (1954)

found in their longitudinal study that the only problem common to over 60 per cent of their sample after seven years of marriage was in the area of adjustment with spouse. In the present study, although Adjustment with Spouse was the least checked area for problems existing at present, two of the five most checked items were from this area.

Adjustment with Spouse and Personal Adjustment were both areas which ranked high in total checking, both considerably higher for wives than husbands. Landis (1957) stated that in the past women have had to carry most of the responsibility in adjusting to the husband.

Table 6 shows that the total checking by the wives exceeded the checking by the husbands in all areas but one. In the area of Leisure Time the husbands' checking was greater than the wives. The problem of adjustment with spouse dropped markedly after the first two years, but those of personal adjustment did not. It is possible that the subjects were able to adjust to their spouses but at the sacrifice of their personal satisfaction. Without specific guidance and education in the field of mental health it would be difficult to improve one's mental hygiene. Surely the relations within a family would improve if the mental health of persons in the family were improved. The possession of the general personality characteristics of tolerance, adaptability and sociability as defined by Karlsson (1951) would greatly influence marital satisfaction.

The area of Religion ranked fifth as an area requiring adjustment, decreasing slightly for the wives and increasing slightly for the husbands in the problems that exist at present over those problems present during the first two years. This area moved up to second place in desire for study.

Health ranked sixth in total checking. The increase for the wives of problems in health existing at present over those present in the first two

years could be accounted for by the problems of the wife's health while bearing the children and then the health of the children themselves. The single item from the area of health that ranked among the seven most checked items (Overcoming the feeling of strain and nervous tension) was considered by the writer to be more indicative of the individual's mental health than his physical health. This area ranked seventh in the desire for study.

Leisure Time ranked seventh in total checking. It ranked in fourth place, however, for the husbands as a problem existing at present, having increased since the first two years. It received the lowest checking in the desire for study.

The area of Friends and Relations received comparatively low checking by both husbands and wives in the first two columns. The exact ranking as read from Table 4 are eighth and sixth respectively. The area increased in rank but decreased in actual amount of checking. (See Table in Appendix). Locke (1951) found that the number of friends a husband and wife had in common was highly associated with marital adjustment. The couples' low checking in this area would bear out the statement previously made that couples in this group, because of their strong church bias, might have adjusted to marriage more easily than couples from the general population. Their low checking could have been either the cause or effect of this ease of adjustment.

In addition to noting the percentage of possible problems checked by the husbands and wives in the different areas it was interesting to note the number of persons who were involved in this checking. In addition to the number of persons involved Table 7 shows that slightly more wives than husbands did the checking with approximately 50 per cent of the couples checking seven areas in common. The smaller number of couples checking the area Friends and Relations in common did not infer that the checking was more independent.

Of those people checking the area at all, the percentage of couples checking in common approximated the other areas.

Table 7. Number of husbands and wives checking within the different areas and the number of couples checking in common.

Area	: : Total number : of persons : checking	: : Number of : husbands : checking	: : Number of : wives : checking	: : Number of : couples : checking in : common
Health	58	27	31	20
Children	50	24	26	20
Friends and Relations	34	17	17	12
Leisure Time	50	25	25	18
Family Economics	58	29	29	23
Personal Adjustment	57	25	32	21
Adjustment with Spouse	60	26	34	23
Religion	54	26	28	22

Comparison of the Extremes. As a means of comparing the extremes, the couples of this study were arranged in the order of their total checking and divided into quartiles. The ten couples ranking below the first quartile (the ones with the least checking) were then contrasted to the ten above the third quartile (the ones with the most checking). Those couples above the third quartile had more than five times the total checking of those below quartile one.

In an attempt to find in what ways the couples in these two groups differed, several background factors were compared. Little difference was found

between the two groups in terms of mean number of children, age, number of years married, urban or rural background, and whether or not they had had counseling or courses in family relations or did reading in the field.

Their religious background showed a greater discrepancy. In all the couples but one of the group below quartile one both the husband and wife were from the same denomination. This was true for only one couple in the group above quartile three. These differences in church background were all inter-denominational, not inter-faith.

The difference of education between husband and wife in a given couple was greater for those couples above quartile three than for those below quartile one. In seven of the couples below quartile one the husband and wife had the same amount of education. This was true for only one couple above quartile three. Table 8 shows the distribution of educational differences.

It seemed evident to the writer that these differences in religious background and differences in years of education of the two groups under study were not so striking as were the differences in personality traits of the individuals involved. A comparison of those ten couples making up the group with the least checking and the most checking revealed this. Among those couples with the least checking some were very quiet, reserved and non-communicative. Others were the opposite, i. e., secure, self-confident, aggressive and dominant. In the group with the most checking, the personality patterns were varied and ranged from one characterized by humility and extreme integrity to one characterized by loquaciousness, a high degree of communication and less poise. Such traits would tend to affect one's perception of his problems and his ability or willingness to communicate them to others. Terman (1938) went further and supported the theory that personality

factors were related to the degree of marital satisfaction.

Table 8. The difference in education of husband and wife for couples below quartile one and above quartile three.

Difference in years between husband's and wife's education											
	Less than wife's					More than wife's				Average difference	
Number of years difference	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Couples below quartile one					7		3				
Couples above quartile three	1			1	1	1	2		3	1	

Table 9. The totals of checking in each of the three columns of the questionnaire by those couples below quartile one and those above quartile three.

	Problems during first two years	Problems existing at present ¹	Problems to include in a study group
Couples below quartile one	53	28	30
Couples above quartile three	197	209	116

¹ The totals in column two were corrected to read the same as totals for column one for couples married less than two years.

The total checking for these groups below quartile one and above quartile three as presented in Table 9 show that whereas the number of problems that exist at present was only slightly more than half the number experienced in the first two years of marriage for those couples below quartile one there was an increase for those couples above quartile three. Not only did the couples above quartile three have almost four times as many problems as those

below quartile one the first two years, they had over seven times as many problems existing at present.

Table 10. The number of husbands and wives checking the seven most checked single items and the subsequent ranking of the items by the husbands and wives.

Area represented :	Item	: Number of :		: Ranking by	
		: husbands	: wives	: husbands	: wives
Children	Knowing how to guide and discipline	21	23	1	4
Family Economics	Knowing how to manage better	19	24	2	3
Health	Overcoming feeling of strain and nervous tension	15	21	5	6
Adjustment with Spouse	Accepting the personal habits and mannerisms of spouse	17	24	3	2
Religion	Knowing how to give children religious education	16	19	4	7
Adjustment with Spouse	Being able to accept criticism of spouse	12	23	6	5
Personal Adjustment	Ability to "take it"--small frustrations	9	25	7	1

Comparison of the Most-Checked Single Items. Six of the eight areas of family living included in the study are represented in the seven most-checked single items. Table 10 lists these seven items. "Knowing how to guide and discipline the children" and "Knowing how to manage money better" were problems for the most people. Adjustment with Spouse was represented twice with the items "Accepting the personal habits and mannerisms of spouse" and "Being able to accept criticism of spouse." When these single items were ranked

according to the number of wives checking and again according to the number of husbands checking, it was noted that the item checked by the most wives, "Ability to 'take it'--small frustrations", was checked by the least husbands. This item was from the area of Personal Adjustment. The item checked by most husbands was "Knowing how to guide and discipline children." This emphasizes again the statement made under the Comparison by Areas that the wives indicated that they perceived more need for adjustment in the realm of personalities, both of self and of spouse, than did the husbands.

When comparing the couples below quartile one and above quartile three by these most checked single items as presented in Table 10, it was found that the first item--"Knowing how to guide and discipline children" was the only item for which the increase from the lower checking group of couples to the highest was proportionate with the increase in the total checking for the same groups. This coincided with the finding that seven of the couples in the lower checking group were childless while only one couple in the higher checking group was childless.

Comparison of Present Problems and the Desire for Study. One of the findings most sought by the writer was a comparison of the checking of problems that exist at the present and those problems in which the subjects desired a study course, i.e., a comparison of columns two and three of the schedule.

Although it was stated earlier that the husbands indicated more desire for study than the wives in all but two areas, i.e., Children and Adjustment with Spouse (See Table 16 in Appendix), Table 11 shows that the number of wives who checked both existing problems and a desire for study exceeded the husbands who checked both, in all but three areas. The husbands then indicated a desire for study of many items in which they perceived no problem

Table 11. The percentage of the 40 husbands and 40 wives of the study who checked both (a) problems existing at the present and (b) a desire for study in the different areas.

	Health	Children	Relations	Friends and Leisure	Family	Economics	Personal Adjustment	Spouse Adjustment	Religion
Per cent of husbands	50	40	62	25	29	54	16	53	
Per cent of wives	40	70	60	27	37	30	23	57	

existing at present.

The area of Religion revealed more checking for desired study than past or present problems. There were relatively few adjustments to make as to belief or practice because of the common Protestant heritage of the subjects. But they indicated desire to study in this area--as a group of young people actively involved and interested in a Christian church would tend to do.

Throughout the schedule the wives indicated that they perceived more need for adjustment than the husbands. Perhaps they were with their problems more, with more time to think about and analyze them. Perhaps too, women in general are more communicative than the men on this subject. The husbands, however, indicated more desire for study. The husbands had more education than the wives and were perhaps more accustomed to approaching problems through study. It was considered possible by the writer that this checking in the column of Desire for Study by the husbands was an attempt to seem cooperative after not checking very much in the previous columns. It might have been a non-committal way of indicating interest.

Comparison of Independent versus Common Checking of Spouses. Identical checking was found between the husband and wife of single couples when compared by areas (Table 12). In the area of Health for example, Table 12 shows there were 20 couples in which both husband and wife checked some health problem. These couples represent 40 of the 58 persons checking health problems. If this were broken down by columns of the schedule (Tables 13, 14 and 15) and further by individual items within the areas the incidence of identical checking by husband and wife was very small. Some problems were perceived by the subjects more as individuals than as couples, others more as couples than individuals. The areas of Leisure Time and Personal Adjustment showed a

Table 12. The number of persons checking the different areas when their spouses did not and those checking in common with their spouses.

Area	:	:	:
	: Number of persons	: Number of couples	: Number of persons
	: checking when their	: in which both	: checking in common
	: spouse did not	: husband and wife	: with their spouses
	: checked the same		
Health	18	20	40
Children	10	20	40
Friends and Relations	10	12	24
Leisure Time	14	18	36
Family Economics	12	23	46
Personal Adjustment	15	21	42
Adjustment with Spouse	14	23	46
Religion	10	22	44

preponderance of independent checking¹ in all three columns of the questionnaire. For the areas of Friends and Relations, Family Economics, and Religion the husband and wife both checking the same area exceeded the independent checking in all three columns of the Schedule (Tables 13, 14 and 15).

Tables 13, 14 and 15 show that Adjustment with Spouse was a common problem both during the first two years and at present, but the wives' desire for study in this area was more than double the desire for study of the husbands.

¹ The checking was considered independent only if the number of couples represented in independent checking was double the number of couples in which both husband and wife checked the same area.

Table 13. The number of persons checking problems in the first two years independently from or in common with spouse.

Area	: Couples in which : both husband and : wife checked	: Number of husbands checking independently	: Number of wives checking independently
Health	11	9	12
Children	10	3	4
Friends and Relations	6	3	7
Leisure Time	8	5	11
Family Economics	15	6	6
Personal Adjustment	6	7	15
Adjustment with Spouse	15	4	15
Religion	10	4	7

It is the only area in which the wives' total checking in the column indicating a desire for study exceeds the husbands' total checking for the same column. (See Table in Appendix).

Problems in Personal Adjustment became a problem of the individual not just the problem of adjusting with another. (Tables 13, 14 and 15). Terman (1938) stated that the happiness of one spouse was to a surprising degree independent of the happiness of the other. One person might have had a problem adjusting to a given situation while his spouse, because of personality differences, remained completely unaware of any existing difficulty.

Family Economics ranked high and was a problem common to both husband and wife. This situation is not peculiar to this generation, but it is none the less pressing for all its universality.

Table 14. The number of persons checking problems existing at present time independently from or in common with spouse.

Area	: Couples in which : both husband and : wife checked	: Number of : husbands checking : independently	: Number of : wives checking : independently
Health	9	3	9
Children	7	4	10
Friends and Relations	5	3	5
Leisure Time	6	7	5
Family Economics	12	6	7
Personal Adjustment	8	3	13
Adjustment with Spouse	9	3	8
Religion	9	4	5

Counseling. More of the wives than husbands of this group had sought premarital counseling, the percentages being 67.5 and 42.5 respectively. Twenty-seven and one-half per cent of the wives sought postmarital counseling and 15 per cent of the husbands. The premarital counseling with doctors was experienced alone. The premarital counseling with the minister was most often as a couple. The mothers more often than fathers of both husbands and wives were listed as having counseled their children concerning marriage. In 11 of the couples, neither the husband or wife had experienced any counseling.

Knowing the religious background of the couples in this study and having a knowledge of the conservative religious climate of the denominations represented in this "Bible Belt" setting it was the opinion of the writer

Table 15. The number of persons checking a desire for study in an area independently from or in common with spouse.

Area	: Number of : couples in which : both husband and : wife checked	: Number of : husbands checking : independently	: Number of : wives checking : independently
Health	3	9	5
Children	13	3	7
Friends and Relations	7	3	1
Leisure Time	1	7	5
Family Economics	8	4	5
Personal Adjustment	6	9	3
Adjustment with Spouse	2	5	6
Religion	12	5	7

that these couples had received the minimum of guidance through marital counseling. Although approximately half of the husbands and wives indicated they had had some counseling, in most cases it meant a premarital examination by a medical doctor and a session or two with the minister to plan the wedding. Four-fifths of the ministers participating in a study by David R. Mace (1952) had one interview only--mostly less than one hour to a couple. Professional counseling had not been experienced by any of the subjects of these ministers. Skidmore (1949) found that in his study 80 and 90 per cent of the wives and husbands respectively had had no professional counseling. Skidmore asked the question "If you had a serious problem would you consult a marriage counselor if one were available?" Only 42 per cent of the men and

58 per cent of the women answered in the affirmative.

Courses in Family Relations. Only five of the husbands had had a course in family relations. Two of these were in high school, the other three in college. Twenty of the wives had had such courses. Twelve of these were in high school, one in junior high, four were in church youth groups or camps and nine in college. Six of the wives had had courses from two sources. In 19 of the couples neither the husband or the wife had had any courses and in only four couples did both husband and wife have any such course. The mean number of checks in the second column of the schedule (problems existing at the present) for those couples in which both husband and wife had had courses was 8.1. The mean number of checks for those couples in which neither had had courses was 5.63.

The presentation of courses in family living for the subjects of this study was far from the optimum. While 56 of the 80 persons had had college work, only nine of them had courses in family life education in college. The churches had reached only four of these young people. Some of these young people might have shunned the opportunity to take a course in family living but their interest in reading in the field would cast doubt on this. If churches find they lack facilities or personnel for offering courses, they could concentrate, and in some instances do concentrate on reading material as an avenue of approach.

Reading. Reading was a more familiar form of help and information than either counseling or family relations courses. Sixty-two and one-half per cent or 25 couples listed both husband and wife as reading literature in the field of family life education. All but one of the wives indicated that they did reading in the field but only 25 of the 40 husbands listed reading.

Limitations of the Study

In presenting the findings of this study the writer recognized certain limitations. The inability of the interviewer to orient the couples positively to the task of checking objectively items of a subjective nature was one such limitation. Persons who have not had training in the field of family relations tend to hold a negative view of the need for adjustment in marriage that cannot be cancelled out by a mere explanation of terms.

Further limitations might have been the inability of the subjects to recognize their problems, or an unwillingness to check what they actually perceived, or a lack of understanding and inability to communicate on this subject. Willingness to check and ability to check objectively are personality traits and may have affected the checking of the questionnaire in two ways. First these two traits might have affected the relation between their checking and their actual experience. The writer recognized that the number of problems checked was not necessarily a clue to the extent of need for adjustment. For example, a person who checked a small number of items may have been in a poorer state of adjustment and more in need of help than a person who checked many. Second, the two traits could have affected the individual's perception of his need for adjustment. The need, as perceived by the individual was all the writer hoped to find from the study, indeed all it would ever be possible to find. Help in analyzing and clarifying an individual's need would be a function of family life education in its dealing with personality.

Care was taken to avoid the assumption that the indication of need for adjustment implied the lack of ability to adjust. The lack of time in which to achieve a satisfactory adjustment might have been the cause.

On the other hand, it was not assumed that a lack of checking indicated that a satisfactory adjustment had been made. An adjustment may have been made which was unsatisfactory to either or both members of a couple. No attempt was made to ascertain the degree of adjustment that had been attained by the subjects nor the satisfaction of the subjects with their adjustment, but the purpose was to find those areas in which adjustment was found necessary in the first two years of marriage and those areas in which the need for adjustment existed at the time of checking.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions drawn from this study are necessarily tentative because of the small size of the group studied. Keeping this in mind, the following conclusions are presented:

1. The wives in the group studied perceived more need for adjustment than did their husbands.
2. The couples of this study were most conscious of problems in the areas of Children, Family Economics, Personal Adjustment, and Adjustment with Spouse.
3. The couples perceived the least number of problems in the areas of Leisure Time and Friends and Relations.
4. Religion, although presenting comparatively few problems for these couples, was a field of study they wished to pursue.
5. A large majority of both husbands and wives of these married couples have not had the advantage of any organized course in education for family living.

6. Since the evidence of this study indicated little relationship between such background factors as age, education, experience in marital counseling or number of children, and the individuals' perceived need for adjustment, differences in the perception of such need may have to be attributed to differences in personality, and/or other unknown factors.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Development and refinement of a rating scale on which an individual could rate his happiness in marriage.
2. Repetition of the present study with random non-church groups.
3. Study of the relationship between the amount of adjustment a person feels marriage has required of him and his own degree of personal adjustment.

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APPENDIX

ADJUSTMENT SCHEDULE

Part I

INFORMATION SHEET

1. This sheet is being checked by Husband _____ Wife _____
2. Birth date. _____
Month Day Year
3. Date of Marriage. _____
Month Day Year
4. Occupation. _____
5. Were you employed at the time of your marriage? Yes _____ No _____
6. Did you continue working after marriage? Yes _____ No _____
7. Education (Please circle the last year completed)
- Elementary School 1-6, 7, 8
High School 1, 2, 3, 4
College 1, 2, 3, 4
Post Graduate 1, 2, 3, 4
Other training 1, 2, (Please state what) _____
8. Where did you grow up?
- (a) Rural farm
(b) Rural non-farm
(c) Small town (less than 2500)
(d) Small City (2500-25,000)
(e) Mid size City (25,000-100,000)
(f) Large City (100,000 and over)
9. What is (or was if he is deceased or retired) your father's occupation?

11. How long were you engaged (privately and publicly)?

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) 3 months or less | (d) 9 months - 1 year |
| (b) 3-6 months | (e) 1-2 years |
| (c) 6-9 months | (f) 2 years or more |

12. How long did you know each other before marriage?

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) 3 months or less | (d) 9 months - 1 year |
| (b) 3-6 months | (e) 1-2 years |
| (c) 6-9 months | (f) 2 years or more |

13. Was your first home (a) alone (b) with relatives?

14. Ages of your children Sons _____ Daughters _____
 _____ _____
 _____ _____
 _____ _____

15. In what church did you grow up? _____

16. Are you a member of a church now? Yes _____ No _____

What church? _____

17. Is your spouse a member of the same church? Yes _____ No _____

18. How often do you attend church?

- (a) Once a month
- (b) Twice a month
- (c) Four times a month
- (d) Seldom

19. How many places have you lived since your marriage? _____

20. Generally, why have these moves been made? _____

21. What counseling have you had? (Check all those you have experienced)

- (a) Counseling with a minister before marriage.
- (b) Counseling with a professional counselor before marriage.
- (c) Counseling with a doctor before marriage.
- (d) Counseling with a minister since marriage.
- (e) Counseling with a professional counselor since marriage.
- (f) Counseling with a doctor since marriage.

22. Did you receive the above counseling (a) alone _____ (b) with spouse _____

23. Did your parents counsel with you and help prepare you for marriage?

Mother Yes _____ No _____

Father Yes _____ No _____

24. Have they helped you since marriage to work out any difficulties?

Mother Yes _____ No _____

Father Yes _____ No _____

25. Did you have any Family Relations Courses?

(a) In Junior High School

(b) In High School

(c) In College

(d) In Church

(e) Other (Please state what) _____

26. Did you read literature in the field of Family Relations before marriage?

(a) Books

(b) Pamphlets

(c) Magazine articles

(d) None

27. Do you still read literature in this field?

(a) Books

(b) Pamphlets

(c) Magazine articles

(d) None

Part II

Please check the following items in those columns that apply to you.

Areas in which problems existed the first year or two of marriage.

Areas in which problems still persist.

Areas you would like to have included in a study group

I HEALTH

	:	:	:	:
1. Managing with short illnesses :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
2. Maintaining health of children:	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
3. Maintaining health of spouse :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
4. Maintaining own health :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
5. Overcoming the feeling of strain and nervous tension :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
6. Being over-tired :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
7. Other (Please state what) :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

II CHILDREN

	:	:	:	:
1. Understanding behavior and development of children :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
2. Knowing how to guide and discipline the children :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
3. Sharing the care of the children :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
4. Other (Please state what) :	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

Problems of
first years

Problems
persist

Would like
study group

III FRIENDS AND RELATIONS

	:	:	:	:
1. Maintaining good in-law relationships	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
2. Choosing mutual friends	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
3. Agreeing on relationships with: former friends of spouse	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
4. Other (Please state what)	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

IV LEISURE TIME

	:	:	:	:
1. Finding recreational activities that can be shared	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
2. Appreciating leisure time interests of spouse	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
3. Agreeing on amount of enter- taining to be done in the home	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
4. Agreeing on the kind of enter- taining to be done in the home	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
5. Agreeing on the amount of "going out" and staying home to be done	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
6. Other (Please state what)	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

V FAMILY ECONOMICS

	:	:	:	:
1. Deciding what should be purchased first	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
2. Deciding who shall hold the purse strings	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

Problems of
first years

Problems
persist

Would like
study group

FAMILY ECONOMICS (Con't)

3. Deciding whether or not to use credit	:	:	:	:
4. Deciding whether or not to save	:	:	:	:
5. Knowing how to manage better	:	:	:	:
6. Other (Please state what)	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

VI PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT

1. Ability not to worry over past happenings	:	:	:	:
2. Ability to "take it" (to face small frustrations)	:	:	:	:
3. Ability to satisfy the need for mental stimulation	:	:	:	:
4. Some ability to understand one's own weaknesses and strengths	:	:	:	:
5. Other (Please state what)	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

VII ADJUSTMENT WITH SPOUSE

1. Being able to talk freely with spouse	:	:	:	:
2. Being able to understand weak- nesses and strengths of spouse:	:	:	:	:
3. Being able to accept criticism: from spouse	:	:	:	:

Problems of
first years

Problems
persist

Would like
study group

ADJUSTMENT WITH SPOUSE (Con't)

4. Accepting personal habits and mannerisms of spouse	:	:	:	:
5. Being correctly informed regarding sex relations	:	:	:	:
6. Establishing satisfactory sex relations	:	:	:	:
7. Other (Please state what)	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

VIII RELIGION

1. Understanding spouse's inter- pretation of religious thought	:	:	:	:
2. Having clear cut understand- ing of your own faith	:	:	:	:
3. Knowing how to give children religious education	:	:	:	:
4. Agreeing where and when to send the children to church school	:	:	:	:
5. Agreeing on amount of finan- cial contribution to church	:	:	:	:
6. Other (Please state what)	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

Add any other experiences or
situations occurring in your
marriage and check as before

	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:

Table 16. Percentage¹ of possible checks actually checked by husbands and wives for each column of the questionnaire in each area.

Area	Problems during the first two years		Problems existing at present		Problems in which study is desired	
	Husbands : No. : Per cent	Wives : No. : Per cent	Husbands : No. : Per cent	Wives : No. : Per cent	Husbands : No. : Per cent	Wives : No. : Per cent
Health	23 9.4 37 15.4 19 7.8 40 16.6 19 7.8 11 4.4					
Children	19 15.8 28 23.2 15 12.4 27 22.4 29 24.0 35 29.0					
Friends and Relations	10 8.2 16 13.2 9 7.4 12 10.0 12 10.0 9 4.4					
Leisure Time	19 9.5 28 14.0 20 10.0 14 7.0 16 8.0 7 2.4					
Family Economics	31 15.4 37 18.4 23 11.4 29 15.0 19 9.4 15 7.4					
Personal Adjustment	18 11.2 34 21.2 16 10.0 35 21.8 20 12.4 16 10.0					
Adjustment with Spouse	39 16.2 67 27.8 15 6.2 24 10.0 13 3.4 20 8.2					
Religion	20 10.0 28 14.0 21 10.4 23 11.4 29 14.4 22 11.0					

¹ The weights for the different areas were obtained in the same manner as for Table 5.
See footnote 1 p. 16.

THE NEED FOR ADJUSTMENT IN SELECTED AREAS OF FAMILY LIVING
AS PERCEIVED BY A GROUP OF YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

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Education for family living is being offered in ever broadening circles of contact. A greater span of ages and both sexes are now being reached. The church has a unique relationship with families that places it in a strategic position for offering courses in family living to its constituency. The most direct approach would be to deal with the needs of families as the family members perceive them. The purpose of this study was to find what areas of family living presented problems of adjustment to a group of 40 young married couples.

The 40 couples participating in the study were members of a local church. A schedule was prepared which included an information sheet for gathering background data and an adjustment checklist on which the subjects were asked to check those single items from eight areas of family living that presented problems of adjustment in the first two years of marriage and at present, and to check those items they would like to have included in a course in family relations. The eight areas were Health, Children, Friends and Relations, Leisure Time, Family Economics, Personal Adjustment, Adjustment with Spouse, and Religion. The schedule was administered and completed in the interviewer's presence.

The background data revealed the group to be middle class, Protestant, predominantly rural in background, somewhat transient, and members of a college community. The majority of them had some college education and all of them were actively involved in their church.

The data from the adjustment schedule indicated that in general there was less perceived need for adjustment at present than during the first two years of marriage. The wives perceived more need for adjustment than did their husbands. The husbands' indication of desire for study was slightly greater than that of the wives.

Children, Personal Adjustment and Family Economics were areas in which the greatest need for adjustment was perceived. Religion replaced Family Economics among the top three ranking areas in the desire for study. Leisure Time and Friends and Relations were areas ranking low in perceived need for adjustment.

The evidence indicated little relationship between the background factors and the volume of checking in the adjustment schedule. This group of couples had experienced few periods of counseling, and fewer courses in family living. However, a majority of them did read literature in this field, especially magazines.