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**DISCRIMINATORS OF INTEREST IN FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS  
AMONG AIR FORCE COUPLES**

*The University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

**PH.D. 1981**

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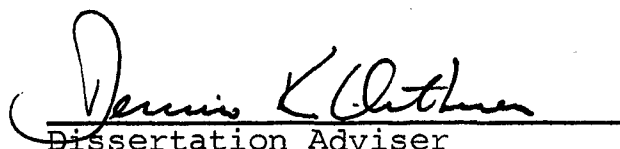
by

Richard J. Brown, III

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APPROVAL PAGE

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This study examined levels of interest toward participation in three family support programs by 331 randomly selected Air Force couples in the United States and Germany. The family support programs selected were couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education. The four variables investigated as to their relationship to interest in these programs were (1) interpersonal communication comfort, (2) social isolation, (3) parental satisfaction, and (4) marital quality. Family social standing and family life cycle were used as control variables. The data were collected through individual interviews of about one hour in length.

The predictive relationship of the four independent variables and the control variables to three levels of interest in the family support programs were determined by a set of six discriminant analyses. Each program was analyzed separately for husbands and wives.

Results indicated that levels of interest among wives were most predictive by family social standing, family life cycle, parental satisfaction, and interpersonal communication comfort. Levels of interest among husbands were predictive by family social standing alone.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledging all who have significantly contributed to this study would be an impossible task, but special acknowledgment is extended to each member of my advisory committee. Dr. Dennis K. Orthner, Committee Chairman and dissertation adviser, has provided the example and direction necessary for contributing to the enrichment of Air Force families through research. Dr. Helen Canaday has stood as a constant reminder that programs which serve parents and children should always strive to be the best. Dr. Rebecca Smith has always been there when spirits were dragging, and with warmth and wit has brought a sense of fun and excitement to the study of families. Dr. E. M. Rallings has supported this study through his special ability always to expect the best while accepting the person.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Family life in the United States is changing. Like many areas of American society, the shapes and cycles of American family life are becoming more diverse and complex. Stress comes from many directions, both from within the family and from external factors outside of the family. Families in the United States are experiencing stress resulting from inadequate family finances, less definable social values, changing definitions of male and female roles, increasing uncertainty about parental responsibilities, geographic mobility and a growing lack of support from the extended family (McCubbin & Boss, 1980).

The average American family is not composed of the mythical two children and a father and a mother. These families do exist in our society but alongside them are many single-parent families, especially mothers and children, and in growing numbers, fathers and children. Also, rapidly increasing in numbers are the step-families of various combinations of natural and step-children and natural and step-parents (Visher & Visher, 1979).

There is widespread recognition that marriage and the nuclear family are beset by various problems. This recognition is met in some quarters with fear and hopelessness.

Indeed, some have made dire predictions of the demise of the family as we know it (Cooper, 1971). Others are more optimistic and believe that families can be strengthened to defend themselves against the harmful effects of stress (McCubbin, 1979). McCubbin points out that the fact that families have strong internal resources with which to deal with stress has been documented in classic studies dealing with earlier stressful times for families. He points to some of the studies of coping strategies used by families during Depression years and World War II. Others note that today we have greater knowledge than ever to assist couples and families to strengthen their marriages and families (Mace & Mace, 1974; Otto, 1976), so that even though these are stressful times for families, there is help available to make them better able to cope with it.

#### Family Support Programs

For a number of years, individual and marital counseling services have been available to those families and individuals experiencing serious problems. Only a small segment of the population uses or needs this degree of intervention. There is a large proportion of the population with problems not so severe as to precipitate the kind of crisis situation which would impel them into therapy but which cause them to function at less than optimal level and experience difficulty making adjustments necessary in their day-to-day lives.

These people, often referred to as the "sub-clinical" population, do not lack in dedication and commitment to each other and to their families but need help in learning to function at a more desirable level both so that they derive more satisfaction from their lives together and so that they are better able to deal with stress that so many families are experiencing (Otto, 1976).

Even couples and families that function very well can benefit from new experiences and supportive programs to enhance and enrich their present existence (Mace & Mace, 1974; Otto, 1976). In the past several years a number of programs have appeared which are designed to offer support to families which are basically healthy and functional but may be experiencing some stress. These various marriage and family support programs can be of help to families in developing support systems and relational skills needed for dealing with the stresses they encounter.

The thrust of the support and enrichment programs is preventive and growth enhancing. These programs are aimed at teaching, equipping, and strengthening families so that they have the necessary skills and resources to function in a productive way in their day-to-day lives which inevitably involve a considerable amount of stress. These programs are varied in their format, but all share similar goals in offering support and skills to enable families to grow in their abilities to cope with stress and build preventive

strategies for continued functioning and the enhancement of their present appreciation for each other. Three such areas in which programs have been developed will be examined in some detail. These areas are relational or couple communication skills programs, marriage enrichment, and parent education. An overview of these programs will be given here with a fuller history and description of research to follow.

Two of the most widely used programs aimed at teaching communication skills are the Couple Communication Program (Miller, Nunnally, & Wackman, 1975, 1979) and the Relationship Enhancement Program (Guerney, 1977). Couple Communication usually involves groups of five to seven couples meeting for three-hour sessions, on a weekly basis, for four weeks with a trained instructor. The skills taught are awareness of self and others, and communication skills to help keep the couple's interaction flexible and viable. The program is structured involving experiential learning exercises, reading, small-group discussion, lectures, and repeated skill practices in the group with group feedback (Hof & Miller, 1981).

The Relationship Enhancement Program is a short-term educational model structured so that specific skills and concepts involving direct expressions of feelings and empathic listening are taught through the use of didactic methods as well as experiential modeling methods. Practice of these skills takes place during the sessions. The program

may take place on a weekend or in weekly sessions spread over several weeks (Hof & Miller, 1981).

Programs focusing on enhancing marital relationships take many forms. Hof and Miller (1981) note that they are aware of more than 50 formats. Some programs are highly structured and purely educational in intent, with little actual group participation, while others involve the group of couples in setting the agenda and sharing their own marital experience with other couples in the group. All models hold in common the belief that marriage relationships may be enriched and strengthened through the couple's working together and receiving support from other couples as they do so.

Parent education programs, also, are varied. Most involve making parents aware of some of the broad principles of child development, attempting to give them some skills in communication and discipline, and raising their self-esteem as parents. The programs may be pre-planned with the majority of the input coming from the leader; or the agenda may come out of the concerns of the particular parents present, with group discussion being the main mode of operation. Some groups, such as the behavior modification groups, may focus on specific ways of changing specific behaviors of children, while others may focus on changing attitudes of parents toward their children. While marriage enrichment and communication programs generally involve both husband and wife, parent

education may involve participation by both parents or by either mother or father, most commonly the mother (Croake & Glover, 1977).

### Family Concerns in the Military

The military services, being a part of American society, are not immune to the changes taking place in families in this society. Once the bastion of single men, the military services now reflect the diversity of family and living patterns found in American society as a whole (Carr, Orthner, & Brown, 1980). At present, more than half of the total forces of the Army, Navy, and Air Force are military members with families, and the trend is for the number of military members with families to increase (Carr et al., 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; Orthner & Nelson, 1980).

Many of these families no longer reflect the more recent traditional model of military husband and non-working civilian wife and children. Instead, the military services reflect the contemporary civilian trends in marriage, divorce, remarriage, single parenthood, voluntary childlessness, and dual career working patterns (Carr et al., 1980; Finlayson, 1976; Orthner, 1980; Williams, 1976).

Military families appear to be experiencing the same kinds of strains as families in the civilian population (Orthner, 1980). In addition, some of the stresses are amplified in the military. For instance, geographic mobility is having a strong impact upon families in and out of the

military, but the impact is stronger in the military. The military as well as many civilian business corporations expect families to relocate quite often. In the civilian population, families move on the average every five years. Military families move on the average every three years (Orthner, 1981). This means that families in civilian as well as military populations are often not in communities with extended-family members. This pattern appears to be having a severe impact upon the extended-family structure as well as the relationships within the nuclear family. McKain (1976) found isolation in the military to be directly related to the incidence of family problems and tensions.

There is also ample evidence, especially from the industrial sector, supporting the strong relationship between job satisfaction and satisfaction with quality of life in general (Moskos, 1976). Within the military community there is growing awareness of the strong relationship between job effectiveness and family satisfaction (Hunter, 1977; McCubbin, 1980; Stanton, 1976). There is now evidence that job performance and job satisfaction are directly influenced by the level of satisfaction the military member experiences in his or her family life (Orthner, 1980). It has also been found that the decision to stay in or get out of the military is strongly influenced by family concerns (Orthner, 1980).

As the recognition of the importance of family life has grown, various efforts toward family support have also grown (Orthner, 1980). As families, both civilian and military, are having to develop strategies to deal with these various demands and as the relationship between family satisfaction and job performance becomes clearer, it becomes increasingly important to explore ways in which families may be supported in their task. Helping families develop relational skills and new support systems are two approaches which appear to offer the kind of help most needed by military families experiencing stress.

#### Purpose of Research

Almost all of the research conducted in the area of marriage enrichment and couple communication has focused on outcomes of behavioral or attitudinal change related to participation in such groups (Hof & Miller, 1981). Because the movement itself is so new, research is limited, and a real gap in the relatively small amount of research is an attempt to determine the factors related to initial participation in or interest in participation in such groups (Smith, Shoffner, & Scott, 1979). Research in parent education also focuses on changes made as a result of experiencing the program (Gordon, 1970). Little is known about the likelihood of involvement in such programs beyond the fact that the parents are usually of middle- to upper-socioeconomic level and are parents of younger children (Croake & Glover, 1977).

With all the stresses impinging on the modern marriage and family, one could wonder why everyone would not take advantage of programs purported to help deal with these stresses. While the programs may not be accessible to everyone, there is certainly greater accessibility than attendance. Seriously dysfunctional couples are discouraged or in some cases not admitted to such groups (Mace & Mace, 1974; Miller, Nunnally, & Wackman, 1975), but this still leaves a large segment of the population composed of the "sub-clinical" families mentioned earlier and the better adjusted families and couples who could use the programs for further growth. The need to know why certain of these people do not show an interest in such programs or do not participate in such programs is evident. It is also important to know what elements may attract participation in the programs.

Hof and Miller (1981) point out the necessity for people within the movement to open up their programs for careful, empirical research. They also state the need for explicit, carefully developed and defined theoretical frameworks for various programs but they make no mention of the need to identify the factors whereby people are selected into such programs. Some people within the movement have speculated on the reasons for resistance to participation in marriage enrichment experiences. David and Vera Mace refer to what they call "the intermarital taboo" as the major source of resistance or restraint to participation in marital growth

experiences among couples in the United States. The "intermarital taboo" is seen by Mace and Mace as a cultural prohibition against the open discussion of our marital concerns and experiences with other couples. This taboo is in direct conflict with the values and goals of the marriage enrichment movement. The intermarital taboo is supported by three other phenomena. The first of these cited by Mace and Mace (1974) was identified by Clark Vincent as the "myth of naturalism." This myth says we marry people we are naturally supposed to be with and that there are natural forces at work to make our marriages successful; therefore, it is unnatural to become involved in marital growth experiences with other couples. Mace and Mace (1974) cite two other restraints supporting the intermarital taboo. These are "privatism," the tendency to keep our marital concerns to ourselves, and a type of cynicism about marriage which tends to make light of marital issues and prevents serious consideration of these concerns between partners and between couples. For many people marriage and family concerns are very personal and private, and there is a reluctance to share these concerns with others or indeed, even to admit to having any concerns by attendance in such a program (Mace & Mace, 1974). Herbert Otto (1976) lists four reasons why he believes people may resist such programs. The first reason, which is akin to the Maces' idea, just stated, is the need he believes most people have in presenting a facade

of not having problems. They fear that this facade will be penetrated if they attend one of these programs. The second problem he sees is that many problems in marriage and family relationships are unresolved and this makes the relationship feel too fragile to subject to examination in a group setting. The fact that roles and institutions are in a transition stage may generate so much insecurity in some people that they do not feel secure enough to risk involving themselves in enrichment programs is a third reason people may not participate. The last reason Otto gives is that of conformity pressures. Many people do not wish to do anything different than their neighbors so if their neighbors are not attending such programs, they will be reluctant to be involved because they do not want to appear different. It is important to reiterate that these foregoing ideas are speculations and although both, in the case of Mace and Otto, are based on much clinical observation and discussion with others in the field, they have not been subjected to the rigors of research.

It would appear important to understand the factors related to interest in such programs for several reasons. It is difficult to make valid interpretations from the outcome studies available because we know too little about the kind of people who will be likely to involve themselves in such programs. A better understanding of the variables involved in interest and participation in the programs will be a helpful backdrop against which to interpret the

studies related to the changes brought about by such programs. There are numerous practical questions that could be answered from additional knowledge about interest in support programs. Questions of where to offer which programs for optimal participation, probable participation from various sectors, and a better understanding of the participants all need answers. All these programs appear to be beneficial, but in order to benefit from them people must first be recruited to participate in them and much more knowledge is needed about recruitment.

One can speculate about the variables involved in making choices about entering the various marital and family support programs. Perhaps fear or apprehension about group involvement or comfort or discomfort about talking in a group or with one's spouse may be a part of the decision. How much support is available from extended family and community may play a role in interest in the support program. Satisfaction with one's marital or parental role may also play a part. All of these variables may be related to interest in all the programs under consideration; or it may be that while some operate for some of the programs, others may operate for other programs. All of these variables need to be examined more closely.

The present study attempted to define these speculations in measurable ways and explored their relationship to interest in participation in various enrichment and

support programs. The purpose of this study, then, was to determine the factors most related to the likelihood of couples participating in family support programs. The setting for the study was the Air Force and the family support programs examined were couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education. The study results carry implications for the civilian population as well as military, though, because the needs of civilian families are very similar to the needs of military families (Orthner, 1980). Probably those factors which attract military families to these programs are very similar to factors attracting civilian families to these same programs.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### The Military Family

Since the present study focuses on the military family, a description of the military family and a summary of research taking place on the military family will be given. Among the major changes in the United States military over the last 50 years, one of the most important has been the demographic shifts in the personnel makeup of the armed forces (Goldman, 1976). The most important of these shifts has been the move from a predominantly single force to a predominantly married force (Carr et al., 1980). Historically, enlisted personnel have remained single and married personnel have come from the officer ranks (Goldman, 1976).

As recently as 1953, the marriage rate within the military was only 38% (Goldman, 1976). Due to the low percentage of married members, earlier research on military personnel focused almost exclusively upon single personnel (McCubbin, Dahl, & Hunter, 1976). As a result, the military family has been neglected as an object of empirical research until the 1970's (McCubbin et al., 1976; Moskos, 1976). It appears that this increase in investigative interest in the military family is due to an increase in the number of married military members and to a growing recognition among military

leaders that military effectiveness is related to family functioning (Carr et al., 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; McCubbin et al., 1976).

The growing recognition of the impact family life has on the job performance and retainability of the military member has led to increased consideration of family concerns in the development of military policy (McCubbin et al., 1978).

For the most part, the military community reflects the trends present in the larger society (Goldman, 1976). However, there are some areas of family change in which the military family has been found to differ from the general population. For instance, the divorce rate within the military is lower than in the general population (Williams, 1976). Also, military families move more frequently than civilian families and experience more frequent separations (Orthner, 1980).

As noted earlier, the military services have been experiencing an increase in the number of married members. When the three services are compared, the Air Force is found to have the highest percentage of married members (Carr et al., 1980; Orthner & Nelson, 1980). About 60% of all Air Force personnel are married and when one looks at the married vs single figures over a three-year period beginning in 1977, it is found that the percentage of married personnel in the Air Force is increasing (Carr et al., 1980).

Increases in the number of marrieds in the military is not the only major change in military families in recent years. Other important changes are in the patterns of military family life. The traditional pattern of families in the military has been a husband who is the military member with a civilian wife who is not employed full-time outside the home. At the end of 1978, almost 59% of Air Force men were married to civilian wives (Carr et al., 1980). In recent years, more and more wives of military members have become employed themselves, creating a new kind of pressure on military marriages, the pressure of wives who do not want to have their employment careers interrupted by the frequent moves associated with the military careers of their husbands (Carr et al., 1980).

One growing pattern among military marriages is that of both husband and wife being members of the military. At the present time, 4.5% of all Air Force personnel are married to persons who are also members of the military. Most of these marriages are between enlisted personnel (Carr et al., 1980).

A third form of marriage in the military is that of a military wife and civilian husband. At present, about 34% of the married women officers have civilian husbands and almost 23% of the married enlisted women have civilian husbands. However, this pattern is still very small, with all female members married to civilian husbands accounting for just under 1% of the total Air Force population (Carr et al., 1980).

These patterns of Air Force marriages are all likely to increase as military marriages in general increase. The probability is that the traditional pattern of civilian wife and military husband will increase less rapidly than the other patterns described above. In any event, it is clear that marriage and family patterns in the military will become increasingly diverse and more and more dominant over the previously dominant single military member. Clearly, the family patterns of the military community are changing (Carr et al., 1980).

#### Family Support Programs

With the stress families are experiencing in our society and with the emphasis on growth and development of potential that has grown out of the human potential movement, several family support programs have appeared. Some of these programs are relatively new, while others, in various forms, have been in existence for some time. Three rather broad support areas will be reviewed.

#### Couple Communication

One of the most highly developed and widely used programs of marital communication is entitled Couple Communication (CC) and was designed by Miller, Nunnally, and Wackman (1975). Originally entitled the Minnesota Couples Communication Program, CC is designed to intervene into intimate

dyadic processes through the implementation of a full range of specific communication skills or behaviors. These skills are built into conceptual frameworks or perspectives which serve to give the couple a basic understanding of effective communication and the skills to recognize and correct dysfunctional communication. Since the emphasis is upon learning specific communication skills, the program allows the partners to change their communication patterns in the directions they choose.

The Couple Communication program is a group of learning experiences consisting of five to seven couples who meet together for four three-hour sessions over a four-week period. The leadership is provided by instructors certified by Interpersonal Communications Programs, Inc. (the corporate name for the Couple Communication program). Couples are asked to read Talking Together (Miller, Nunnally, & Wackman, 1979), a book prepared for use during the training program. Reading, lectures, discussions, and exercises teach a variety of specific communication skills. The entire format is structured and designed toward the acquisition of these skills. All participatory aspects of the program are voluntary. A common framework is provided by the handbook and short lectures to help couples understand and choose effective communication patterns.

Another marital communication program, the Conjugal Relationship Program (CRP), was designed by Bernard

Guerney, Jr. (1964), and is designed to build upon the strengths that are already present in the relationship. The major emphasis of the program is to teach couples to reflect feelings. Rappaport (1971) and Collins (1971) conducted studies attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of CRP. Both studies, using pretest-posttest designs, indicated an increase in marital communication.

Since its beginning formulations, several evaluative studies have been conducted with the CC program. Campbell (1974) found the training to be significantly effective in increasing self-disclosure between married partners in their child-rearing years. Miller (1971) found CC training effective in increasing verbal work skills among engaged couples. Work skills are defined as the ability to express personal thoughts and feelings and to move to a mutual understanding of those thoughts and feelings.

Corrales (1974) found that open communication styles have a positive influence on marital satisfaction.

Dillon (1975) found that couples receiving CC training made significant positive changes in individual self-esteem and marital satisfaction. Wampler and Sprenkle (1980) found, in a pretest/posttest design, significant changes in the use of open-style communication and perceived quality of relationship among couples trained in CC. However, only the positive changes in perceived quality of the couples' relationships were still present at follow-up testing 4-6 months later.

Between 1975 and 1980, a number of additional studies have been done on Couple Communication. All of these studies have focused upon the effects of structured communication training, as specifically found in the CC program, upon various aspects of individual, relational, and marital functioning. None of these studies has examined any of the aspects of how or why CC participants choose to become involved in this program. One interesting note is that the Couple Communication Instructor Manual (Nunnally, Miller, & Wackman, 1980) describes the "market" for Couple Communication as consisting of couples in the 25-40 age range. Most, they say, learn about the groups from churches, friends, relatives, and CC instructors. Factors related to why the couples chose to participate are not given. This further points out the need to understand what factors may be related to "interest in" and the choice to participate in couple communication.

### Marriage Enrichment

A second form of family support to be examined in this study is entitled marriage enrichment. The marriage enrichment movement grew out of the personal growth or human potential movement of the 1950's and 60's (Otto, 1976).

There are a wide variety of forms to be found within the marriage enrichment category of family support programs. Almost without exception, they all employ aspects of group interaction, that is, groups of couples and couple or dyad interaction (Otto, 1976).

Without question, David Mace was one of the earliest and most important pioneers in the development of marriage enrichment as a distinct part of the family field. David and Vera Mace began leading marriage enrichment groups in 1961 (Otto, 1976).

In 1973, David and Vera Mace founded the Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment (ACME). ACME is an international organization designed to support marital enrichment through contact with other couples interested in marital growth and through growth-oriented experiences led by ACME certified couples. It is both a "support system" and a means of access to couple-oriented learning experiences (Mace & Mace, 1974).

In addition to the "Mace model" of marriage enrichment and other models and programs included under the ACME umbrella, the other major marriage enrichment model is the Marriage Encounter model. In this model there is very limited couple group interaction. In addition to content and personal experience presentations by a leader couple, the entire experience is centered around couple partners interacting around specific structured materials in privacy away from other couples or leaders (Hof & Miller, 1981). Recent studies have raised questions about recruiting techniques, the high degree of structure, and couple isolation in the marriage encounter model (DeYoung, 1979; Doherty, McCabe, & Ryder, 1978).

DeYoung (1979) and Doherty and associates (1978) describe their personal perceptions of recruitment for marriage encounter as relying heavily upon recommendation and strong encouragement, perceived by some as pressure from friends and relatives who have participated in marriage encounter. They also note a mystique surrounding the program involving secrecy as to what happens at an encounter, and the exclusivity or "in group" stance of those who had attended.

In the area of marriage enrichment generally, there has been an increasing amount of effort focused on research (Hof & Miller, 1981; Sell, Shoffner, Farris, & Hill, 1980; Smith, Shoffner, & Scott, 1979). Still it is clear that the quantity and quality of research in marriage enrichment is miniscule when compared with other areas in the family field (Hof & Miller, 1981).

The literature regarding family support programs is notable in its absence of research data on interest in these programs. While the number of studies in this area has definitely increased over the last few years (Sell, Shoffner, Farris, & Hill, 1980), the increasing research effort has focused on the effectiveness of the various programs and neglected examination of participation variables. Underlying assumptions about consumers of other marriage and family services, such as family life education and therapy, cannot be assumed to also fit consumers of marriage and family

enrichment (Smith, Shoffner, & Scott, 1979). This inadequacy in the literature leads to the necessity of developing hypotheses from theoretical inferences rather than identified gaps in the research literature.

As a field within family relations and as a new professional area, there is little question that marriage enrichment is here to stay. During 1979 two articles were published stressing the growing acceptance and potential importance of the marriage enrichment movement (Mace, 1979; Smith, Shoffner, & Scott, 1979).

However, if these potentialities are to reach full fruition, greater research emphasis and methodological care in studies are needed to build the kind of solid base of empirical understanding essential to the healthy development of any new field (Gurman & Kniskern, 1977).

In 1975, Mace wrote:

The concept of marriage enrichment needs clear definition, because the term is very loosely used. I see it as a new approach to the field of family service, particularly in two directions--an emphatic shift from the remedial approaches now widely used to a preventive approach; and the enlisting of married couples themselves, in considerable numbers, to cooperate with professionals in the task of improving marriages.

. . . . .  
In this field I can readily identify nine areas in which research could be very helpful. They are as follows:

- Obstacles to Participation
- Couple Group Process
- Retreat Patterns
- Leadership Patterns
- Effectiveness of Procedures
- Marital Growth and Potential
- Therapeutic Interaction Between Couples
- The Love-Anger Cycle
- The Preventive Approach

(Mace, 1975, pp. 171-173)

Most of the research questions set forth by Mace (1975) have not been spoken to at all in the literature. The first identified relates to participation and points to the recognition of the importance of this area, but the concern has not been met with any systematic investigation. By far, most of what has been done has been in the area of marital change and program outcome (Gurman & Kniskern, 1977). There has been a good bit of work in the overall area of group process with couples in group marital therapy, but nothing in couple group process as it is utilized in marriage enrichment. Again, there is material in the literature on obstacles to participation in marital therapy, but nothing on obstacles to participation in marriage enrichment experiences, which conceivably would not carry the same degree of threat as marriage counseling, but at this point we can make only subjective hypotheses related to why couples are willing or not willing to participate in marriage enrichment experiences.

#### Parent Education

Parent education is probably the oldest support program available to families. The first group meetings of parents in this country date back to 1815 in Portland, Maine (Croake & Glover, 1977). Croake and Glover (1977) describe these early meetings as "maternal associations" composed of several mothers meeting together to discuss child-rearing problems. Their concerns centered mostly on the religious and moral development of their children.

Federal support for parent education also has a long history. In 1909 the first White House Conference on Child Welfare was held and the Children's Bureau came into existence in 1912. The Smith-Lever Act, in 1914, provided 2,000 County Home Demonstration Agents and the Public Health Service began supporting health-oriented parent education programs in 1918 (Brim, 1965).

During the 1920's and early 1930's parent education interest continued to be high and universities such as Columbia, Minnesota, Cornell, and Iowa were now involved in training and research on parent education. From the late 1930's to the late 1940's there was a decline in professional involvement in parent education as questions of permanency of traditional family life were raised. From the late 1940's to the present, however, interest in parent education has remained high (Croake & Glover, 1977).

Today parent education is found in many forms and represents many philosophies. While some programs are unstructured discussion groups, others are highly structured with a set agenda (Coufal & Brock, 1979; Morrison, 1978). The most popular of the parent programs probably derives from three different theoretical bases. These are Thomas Gordon's Parent Effectiveness Training (1970), which has a communication base; behavior modification programs, of which the program developed by Becker (1971) is an example; and programs growing out of the work of Dreikurs and Soltz (1964) based on Adlerian personality theory.

Research on the use and effectiveness of parent education is becoming more sophisticated, but other research on other facets and questions about the programs is still limited. Croake and Glover (1977) report that the early studies carried out in the 1930's reported significant gains in parent knowledge. Later studies focused on changes in parent attitudes and still more recent studies have focused on changes in parent and child behaviors as a result of parent education (Croake & Glover, 1977; Dubanoski & Lanabe, 1980; Pinsker & Geoffroy, 1981). An example of a recent study is that of Pinsker and Geoffroy (1981). They conducted a study comparing parent effectiveness training and behavior modification parent training in which they found that the behavior modification training decreased deviant child behaviors and parents' perceptions of child behaviors, while the parent effectiveness training increased family cohesion, decreased family conflict and parental control. They concluded that their study did not convey the effectiveness of one technique over another, but rather that one technique was better at teaching some things while the other technique was better at teaching other things. It was their recommendation that parent educators decide what goals they wish to obtain and use the techniques best suited for reaching those goals.

While outcome studies are generally positive, there remains some question as to the effectiveness of parent

education among low-income families (Chilman, 1964). By far, most of the participants in parent education programs come from middle to upper socioeconomic levels (Croake & Glover, 1977). The variables of interest in attending parent education groups and effective recruitment of parents into such programs remain unexamined. While it is believed that such programs can be helpful in assisting parents in coping with the stress they encounter by becoming an external support (Bell, Johnson, McGillicuddy-Delisi, & Sigel, 1980), more knowledge is needed about how to best involve parents in the programs.

### Conceptual Framework

The literature cited above suggests that the effectiveness of family support programs is being researched rather thoroughly. There are, however, other issues that require clarification. One of these issues is interest in participation in the programs.

According to the symbolic interaction model, families can be viewed as systems of interacting roles and networks of communication. Behind these roles and networks are perceptions of the system in its entirety as well as its parts. These perceptions determine the members' satisfaction with their roles, their willingness to initiate and maintain communication, and their investment in the marital and parental relationship (Orthner, 1976).

Conceptually, this says that the meanings that relationships have to people will be related to their investment of time and energy in maintaining and enhancing their relationships. One such investment of time and energy would be participation in the various family support programs. When and to what degree this investment is expressed will depend on the potential meaning of that particular program as it relates to the perceived help or meaning the program has to the acting out of the particular role involved.

### Hypotheses

Several limitations are apparent in the literature. One of the major weaknesses in the literature to date is an absence of information and therefore a lack of understanding of the factors involved in motivating people to participate in family support programs. This is true of couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education. Suggestions have been made that certain factors may be important, but at this time there is no data available to support these contentions. The above framework and literature cited suggest that this issue is in need of exploration and clarification. That is the purpose of the present study.

The major hypothesis in this study is that level of interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education differs according to the level of interpersonal communication comfort, marital quality, social isolation, and parental satisfaction among married persons. This hypothesis is made up of four predictions.

Prediction I: Partners with higher general communication comfort will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, in marriage enrichment, and in parent education than will partners with low general communication comfort. This prediction is based upon the assumption that ease in interpersonal verbal interaction lessens the restraints and lowers the resistance to involvement in various group experiences with personal and relational growth as goals. The symbolic interaction framework supports this prediction on the basis that the lesser the degree of perceived role strain in performing a role, the greater will be the ease into that role (Burr, Leigh, Day, & Constantine, 1979).

Prediction II: Partners with high social isolation will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education than will partners with low social isolation. This prediction is based on the assumption that families who lack support from traditional sources will have increased tendencies to respond to programs and groups offering substitute forms of support. The absence of extended family closeness and the absence of closeness in other significant relationships is likely to increase involvement with interest in other reference groups (Burr et al., 1979).

Further evidence of the potential importance of family support groups is found in the literature. Unger and Powell (1980) indicate that families experiencing stress are likely

to seek support and help from informal networks before seeking help from formal organizations. This idea is supported in a study in Scotland by McKinlay (1973) in which he reports that underutilizers of health and welfare services relied heavily on readily available relatives and friends while utilizers tended to be independent of these influences.

Prediction III: Partners with low parental satisfaction will have significantly higher interest in parent education, couple communication, and marriage enrichment than will partners with high parental satisfaction. This prediction is based upon the belief that persons feeling inadequate as parents will be more likely to respond positively to opportunities to strengthen their confidence as parents and marital partners. From the symbolic interaction perspective, if parents perceive changes in society as threatening to or creating ambiguity in their parental role, they will seek support in clarifying or carrying out their parental role (Burr et al., 1979).

Prediction IV: Partners with high marital quality will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education than will partners with low marital quality. This prediction is based upon the belief that couples experiencing comfort and satisfaction in their marital relationships are more likely to risk involvement in various family support programs. The concept of marital quality may be seen as subjectively perceived marital

satisfaction. Symbolic interaction contends that the subjective perceptions people make of situations and relationships help determine the effect these situations and relationships have for them (Burr et al., 1979). Persons perceiving their marital relationship as satisfying will be more likely to see as desirable activities which promise to enhance family relationships.

## CHAPTER III

## METHODOLOGY

Sample

The data used in this study came from a much larger study of married couples with at least one member in the United States Air Force. The data were collected from personal interviews with a probability sample of 330 couples at 16 Air Force bases in the United States and West Germany. The married men and women were randomly selected from each base from the total base personnel file. These random samples from each base were by the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center (AFMPE) in San Antonio, Texas. The sample was also stratified to insure that various geographic locations and Air Force command and mission differences were adequately represented. The random selection process was also designed to represent the three types of married couples in the Air Force. Those three married patterns are as follows: husband member of the Air Force and wife a civilian, wife a member of the Air Force and husband a civilian, and both husband and wife members of the military with at least one and possibly both in the Air Force.

The sample couples were all married and living together. Both husband and wife had to agree to participate in the study.

### Data Collection

The sample list of potential respondents received two letters, one from the Air Force office sponsoring the study and one from the persons conducting the study. The letters stressed the protection of each respondent's anonymity, the voluntary nature of participation in the study, the importance of the study, the purposes of the study, and detailed information on how they could participate in the study if they wished to do so.

A few days after the letters had been mailed, the potential respondents were telephoned by the interview team given their names. Each telephone call was to make personal contact, answer any questions, and again invite the couple to participate in the study. If one or both members of the couple was unwilling to participate, then they were thanked and dropped from the sample list. If both were willing to participate, they were scheduled for separate interviews with different members of a pair of interviewers functioning as an interview team. Each interview took about one hour, and was conducted in a private and neutral place with both husband and wife being asked not to discuss the interview with each other until they had both been interviewed.

Married partners were not interviewed by the same person in order to eliminate the possibility for interviewer bias if one person interviewed both partners of the same marriage.

The data for this study were selected from a larger body of data comprising a study of Air Force families. The instruments were designed to be administered by an interviewer in a one-to-one structured interview, with husbands and wives being interviewed separately.

At the conclusion of each interview, which was 50 minutes to an hour, the interview schedule was placed in a large envelope and sealed. The respondent was assured that no one in the Air Force would have access to the interview schedule with their personal answers.

The instruments were pretested and redesigned based upon the pretest feedback and evaluation. The instruments were designed to gather information on a number of items, including the respondent's background, job responsibilities and attitudes, various military factors, and extensive information about family relationships.

The interviewers were civilians and were hired so that they were functioning as professional members of the research team and not as volunteers. Each interviewer participated in a training workshop of about four hours. The importance of confidentiality was stressed and no person was selected to serve as an interviewer who was in a position to jeopardize or threaten the interests of the respondents.

All respondents received a thank-you letter with a brief summary of the findings at the end of the study.

### Research Measures

#### Measure of Interest in Couple Communication, Marriage Enrichment, and Parent Education

The specific items which were used as the measures for interest in each of the three support programs consisted of a one-item question for each of the programs. The specific item measuring interest in each particular program was part of a series of questions related to each of the family support programs examined in the study. These questions were introduced with the statement, "I would like to ask you several questions about services or programs which are sometimes available for marriages and families." The next question asked was, "Have you ever heard of anything like Couple Communication Training--such training is designed to teach couples more effective communication and problem-solving skills."

The introductory question for marriage enrichment was as follows: "Have you ever heard of anything like Marriage Enrichment and Marriage Encounter--these programs are designed to help couples gain additional skills by which they can strengthen their marriage."

The introductory question for parent education was given only to those respondents who had indicated they were parents. "Have you ever heard of anything like Parent Education or Effective Training--these programs are designed to help parents better understand and communicate more effectively with their children."

The respondents answered "yes" or "no" to each of the above questions. Following the above introductory question for each program, the respondents were asked the following questions about each of the programs: "Have you ever attended this type of program?" If the respondent answered "yes," the next question was asked, but if the respondent answered "no," the next question was skipped. The next question was, "Did you find it very helpful, somewhat helpful, or not helpful at all?"

The next two questions were asked only if the respondent had not attended the program in question. "Do you know anyone who has attended or used this type of program?" If the respondent answered "yes," then they were asked, "Did they find it very helpful, somewhat helpful, or not helpful?" The next question was asked of all respondents except those who answered "no" to the first question regarding whether or not they had heard of that program. "To your knowledge, has this program been offered on your base?" The final question which was asked of all respondents was, "If available on base in the future, how likely would you be to attend such a program (again)? Would you be: very likely, somewhat likely, not likely at all?"

This final question was used as the single-item measure of interest in couple communication, interest in marriage enrichment, and interest in parent education. The question had three possible answers; therefore, the data fell into

three categories and were kept separate by category. This meant each of the categories of answers could be used to construct a profile of those very likely, somewhat likely, and not likely at all to participate in each of the given family support programs. This part of the study was descriptive and simply told who was interested in attending couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education, and who was not interested in attending these programs.

This measure of interest in family support programs was constructed for use in this study and had no established reliability or validity beyond face validity (Anastasi, 1961).

The complete series of questions regarding family support programs, including the question of interest in participation, can be found in Appendix A.

#### Measure of Interpersonal Communication Comfort

The six items in this scale comprised a measure of potential communication apprehension in interpersonal situations which are not relational in nature.

The concept of communication apprehension is conceptualized in the literature as the level of comfort or discomfort with individual verbal communication. The individual or interpersonal measure of communication apprehension is concerned with reduced self-disclosure, reduced trust in others' communication, and reduced amounts of verbalness

(Powers & Hutchinson, 1979). A high apprehension score would indicate low comfort with interpersonal communication.

The most widely used instrument designed to measure general or interpersonal communication apprehension is the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA) (McCroskey, 1970). Powers and Hutchinson utilized this instrument in a study attempting to explore the relationship between general communication apprehension and marital communication apprehension. They were also attempting to design and validate a parallel scale to the PRCA which would measure communication apprehension within the marital relationship (1979). The six items of the measure of interpersonal communication comfort being utilized in this study were taken from the 20 items of the PRCA employed by Powers and Hutchinson (1979). The six items used were chosen because the factor loaded at .50 or above in the factor analysis of both instruments conducted by Powers and Hutchinson (1979).

The six items of the measure of interpersonal communication comfort, used in this study, can be found in Appendix B.

#### Measure of Parental Satisfaction

The measure for parental satisfaction is a one-item question:

In general, how satisfied are you with the relationship you have with your children? Do you feel: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or dissatisfied?

The parental satisfaction data was analyzed from the three categories formed by the three possible responses.

The parental satisfaction measure has been constructed for this study and has no established reliability or validity beyond face validity (Anastasi, 1961).

#### Measure of Social Isolation

The social isolation measure consisted of a 7-item scale constructed to assess the degree of felt or perceived closeness to family members, friends, neighbors, and work associates. The items as found in the interview schedule are reproduced here in Appendix C.

Each respondent received a sum score for the seven items. Low scores represented low isolation, and high scores represented high isolation.

The parental satisfaction measure has been constructed for this study and has no established reliability or validity beyond face validity (Anastasi, 1961).

#### Measure of Marital Quality

The Marital Quality Scale (MQS) is a 27-item Likert-type scale based upon the Dyadic Adjustment Scale developed by Spanier (1976). The MQS was used in a study of sex-role preferences and marital quality with a sample of military couples by Bowen (1981).

The Marital Quality Scale has five subscales representing five distinctly different components constructed empirically through factor analysis. The subscales are the

affectional expression subscale, the marital leisure agreement subscale, the general marital consensus subscale, the marital satisfaction subscale, and the marital communication apprehension subscale (see Appendix D for a listing of the items of the MQS).

Following is a description of each of the subscales:

1. Affectional Expression (AE). These items are designed to reflect the degree of satisfaction each married partner has with the physical love and sexual experience within the marriage. This subscale also measures the level of perceived agreement between the partners concerning demonstrations of affection and sex relations.
2. Marital Leisure Agreement (MLA). This subscale measures the amount of agreement and disagreement between the married partners concerning friends, leisure interests, and the amount of time spent together.
3. General Marital Consensus (GMC). These items deal with the amount of agreement or disagreement that the couple experiences in a broad range of marital interest areas. These include handling family finances, philosophy of life, career decisions, and others.
4. Marital Satisfaction (MS). These items measure the couple's overall satisfaction with the quality of

marital interaction and several aspects of conflict resolution and marital dissolution.

5. Communication Apprehension (CA). The items of this subscale comprise a measure of potential communication discomfort or apprehension within the marital relationship. The items relate only to interactions between married partners.

The results of the factor analysis upon which the construction of the Marital Quality Scale subscales was based are of particular importance to this study since the sample population of the Bowen (1981) study is the same as that of this study. For that reason the MQS is being used in this study and the factor analysis data as derived by Bowen (1981) are included here. Table 1 lists the item communality with the MQS, the subscale affiliation of each item, and the factor loading for each subscale factor. The items are numbered to correspond to the MQS as listed in Appendix D (Bowen, 1981).

Measure of Family Social Standing:  
A Control Variable

This measure was composed entirely of the variable grade or military rank. Each couple in the sample had at least one military member. For those couples with military husband and civilian wife, the rank of the husband was used. If the couple was composed of an Air Force wife and civilian husband, the rank of the wife was used. Couples with both

Table 1

Scale Communalities, Subscale Affiliation, and Subscale Factor Loading  
of Marital Quality Scale Items

Variable Number	Communality	Subscale	Factor Loadings				
			General Marital Consensus Factor	Marital Satisfaction Factor	Communication Apprehension Factor	Affectional Expression Factor	Marital Leisure Agreement
1	.36	General Marital Consensus	.55	.12	.06	.10	.15
2	.54	Marital Leisure Agreement	.24	.09	.00	.11	.64
3	.44	Affectional Expression	.26	.16	.19	.52	.19
4	.33	Marital Leisure Agreement	.27	.20	.12	.12	.42
5	.73	Affectional Expression	.17	-.02	.21	.80	.11
6	.54	General Marital Consensus	.55	.18	.03	.24	.26
7	.28	General Marital Consensus	.40	.19	.00	.05	.25
8	.57	General Marital Consensus	.65	.19	.10	.11	.06
9	.53	Marital Leisure Agreement	.42	.18	.18	.28	.44
10	.47	General Marital Consensus	.58	.24	.14	.03	.14
11	.39	Marital Leisure Agreement	.30	.14	.10	.15	.50
12	.36	General Marital Consensus	.53	.13	.09	-.07	.15
13	.37	General Marital Consensus	.50	.05	.20	.24	.09
14	.41	Communication Apprehension	.03	.00	.40	.00	.02
15	.68	Communication Apprehension	.13	.07	.79	.13	.04
16	.72	Communication Apprehension	.04	-.01	.84	.04	.05
17	.45	Communication Apprehension	.13	.04	.61	.21	.02
18	.64	Communication Apprehension	.16	.21	.62	.25	.12
19	.39	Marital Satisfaction	.33	.42	.17	.16	.19
20	.26	Marital Satisfaction	.03	.49	-.02	-.08	.09
21	.56	Marital Satisfaction	.22	.60	.16	.19	.16
22	.50	Marital Satisfaction	.13	.40	.37	.24	.22
23	.52	Marital Satisfaction	.15	.65	.05	.11	.03
24	.42	Marital Satisfaction	.33	.53	.02	.11	.13
25	.53	Marital Satisfaction	.28	.65	.05	.11	.00
26	.54	Marital Satisfaction	.13	.49	.13	.31	.32
27	.54	Affectional Expression	.05	.37	.20	.59	.11

members of the Air Force used the grade of the higher ranking member as their measure of family social standing.

The military rank or grade for each couple was recoded into one of the following groupings (see Table 2 for grade structure):

- E1-E3, low-grade enlisted;
- E4-E6, mid-grade enlisted;
- E7-E9, high-grade enlisted;
- O1-O3, low-grade officer;
- O4-O5, mid-grade officer;
- O6 high-grade officer;
- O7-10 general officer.

Table 3 presents the numbers and percentages of the sample in regard to Family Social Standing.

The formal system of social stratification in the military is defined almost exclusively by military rank or grade. Dobrofsky (1977) cited the importance of military rank to the member with the following statement:

Military status (rank) defines the social structure and determines the identity and consciousness of military members and their families. One's occupational role of administrator, physician, or pilot is not as structurally salient as is one's rank of captain. Rank consciousness exists as a homogeneous military experience as it shapes all aspects of a member's life and, contrary to the wishes of some, his/her family's life. . . . (pp. 31-32)

Because the military rank of the military member in the family determines the social standing of the family within the military system, this study will use the grade of the military member as the measure of family social standing.

Table 2  
Rank Structure of the Air Force

Rank Code	Rank
E-1	Airman Basic
E-2	Airman
E-3	Airman 1st Class
E-4	Sergeant
E-5	Staff Sergeant
E-6	Technical Sergeant
E-7	Master Sergeant
E-8	Senior Master Sergeant
E-9	Chief Master Sergeant
01	2nd Lieutenant
02	1st Lieutenant
03	Captain
04	Major
05	Lieutenant Colonel
06	Colonel
07	Brigadier General
08	Major General
09	Lieutenant General
10	General

Table 3  
Family Social Standing

Grade Group	N	Percentage
E1-E3	30	9.1%
E4-E6	169	51.1%
E7-E9	45	13.6%
01-03	49	14.8%
04-05	29	8.8%
06	5	1.5%
07-10	0	

### Measure of Family Life Cycle: A Control Variable

The measure of family life cycle was constructed from the model developed by Duvall (1977) and utilized by Aldous (1978). The measure divides the life cycle of the family into five stages, based upon the ages of the children. For this study the age factor was modified to index age by the age of the youngest child (Orthner & Axelson, 1980).

Families, like individuals, go through phases of development resulting from changes among the family members and thereby creating a need for adjustment and adaptation among other family members. These phases or stages of family development have been found to reflect shifts in family needs and priorities (Spanier, Sauer, & Larzelere, 1979).

This stratification scheme is being utilized as a control for that reason. The measure divides the family life cycle into five phases. These stages and the sample frequencies for each stage can be seen in Table 4.

### Data Analysis

The relationship between husband and wife interest in the identified family support programs and general communication comfort, marital communication comfort, marital satisfaction, social isolation, and parental satisfaction was tested through the use of discriminant analysis.

The data for the dependent variables, (1) interest in couple communication, (2) marriage enrichment, and (3) parent

Table 4  
Family Life-Cycle Stages and Frequencies

Stage	Description	N	Percentage
1	Childless	74	22%
2	Youngest child less than 6 years of age	147	45%
3	Youngest child less than 12 but older than 5 years of age	70	21%
4	Youngest child less than 18 but older than 11 years of age	30	9%
5	Youngest child over 18 years of age	7	2%

education were distributed into three groups. These groups reflected the three responses to the question of likely participation in each of the three family support programs. The potential answers are very likely, somewhat likely, and not likely at all. These three groups are related to each other in that they are variant responses to the same question, but they are distinctly different answers and were treated as such. For this reason, discriminant analysis was used to examine the relationship between the ordinal data of the dependent variable and the data of the independent variables. Discriminant analysis gave a profile of the characteristics of the respondents by the three dependent variable groupings. Discriminant analysis also gave a better picture of the middle grouping, those who respond as "somewhat likely" to participate in each program. In terms of program development and promotion, the middle group is likely to be the most important. The "not likely at all" group is probably not going to be easily attracted to the family support programs. The "very likely" group will most probably respond favorably to any knowledge of the availability of such family support programs. It is the "somewhat likely" group that will be most influenced by the type and focus of programming and promotion of the available family support programs. For this reason it was desirable that the analysis explain as much of the variance in the "somewhat likely" group as possible. Discriminant analysis

most fully explains the variance in all three dependent variable groups, especially the "somewhat likely" group. Discriminant analysis is a predictive equation which shows which of the three groups of the dependent variables the respondents are likely to fall into, based upon the independent variable factors.

To determine the discriminating power of each independent variable in explaining the categories of interest in family support programs, the minimum Wilks' Lambda was used. The level of significance for accepting or rejecting the hypotheses was  $p < .05$ .

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

To test the discriminative relationship of social isolation, general communication comfort, parental satisfaction, and perceived marital quality with the three levels of interest in family support programs, a series of stepwise discriminant analyses was done.

Six discriminant analyses were made. Each of the three family support programs was analyzed separately for wives and for husbands. The data from husbands and wives were treated separately. The analysis of each program was not based upon married couple data, but rather all husbands or all wives at any one time.

Each analysis entered the two control variables of family social standing (grade) and family life cycle first, in that order. The four variables of social isolation, general communication comfort, parental satisfaction, and marital quality were entered stepwise or according to their discriminant contribution to the analysis. The .05 level of significance was used. The discriminant analysis also included frequencies on all variables and correlation coefficients between all variables.

### Interest in Couple Communication Among Wives

Among all wife respondents, 16% said they were very interested in couple communication, 33% were somewhat interested, and 48% were not interested at all (see Appendix E).

The overall percentage of group cases which could be correctly predicted or classified by discriminant analysis in regard to interest in couple communication among wives was 43% (Table 5). This is slightly higher than what could be expected to occur by chance alone (33.3%). The highest number of cases correctly classified was 56.4% for those indicating they were very likely to attend a CC group. The "somewhat likely" and "not likely" groups were 41% and 40%, only slightly better than chance.

Interpretation of the standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients reveals the strength of the discriminating variables (Table 6). The first canonical discriminant function was statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ). There were four contributing variables in the first function family social standing, family life cycle, interpersonal communication comfort, and parental satisfaction. The strongest discriminators in the function were parental satisfaction and family life cycle, followed by interpersonal communication comfort and family social standing (Table 6). An examination of the group means was used to determine the direction of the discriminant influence (Table 6).

Table 5

Percentage of Wives Correctly<sup>a</sup> and Incorrectly Identified  
According to Interest in Couple Communication

Group:	Likelihood of Attending CC	Group 0 %	Group 1 %	Group 2 %
0 (Very likely)		<u>56.4</u>	23.1	20.5
1 (Somewhat likely)		39.5	<u>40.7</u>	19.8
2 (Not likely at all)		25	35	<u>40</u>

Note: Percent of "grouped" cases correctly classified was 42.86%, and the percent probability of correct classification by chance was 33.3%.

<sup>a</sup>Percentage identified correctly is shown on the diagonal and is underlined. Other figures show percentages of incorrect classification or group overlapping.

Table 6  
 Characteristics of Wives' Degree of Interest  
 in Couple Communication

Variable	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
1. Parent satisfaction (0-2)* (-.702)***	Lower satisfaction (.381)**	(.279)	Higher satisfaction (.138)
2. Family life cycle (1-5) (+.579)	Younger children (2.38)	(2.32)	Older children (2.72)
3. Interpersonal communication comfort (0-3) (-.370)	Lower comfort (2.13)	(1.81)	Higher comfort (1.77)
4. Family social standing (1-6) (+.274)	Lower grade (2.23)	(2.65)	Higher grade (2.92)

\*Range of variable

\*\*Group means

\*\*\*Discriminant function coefficients

### Interest in Couple Communication Training Among Husbands

Of all married male respondents, 12% indicated they were very likely to attend a couple communication group. Those choosing "somewhat likely" represented 33% of the sample and the "not likely at all" group, 50% (Appendix E).

None of the variables used in the discriminant analysis were significant; therefore, it will not be discussed. The results of the analysis fit the basic pattern of the two remaining analyses of husbands' responses, and reference to this pattern will be discussed in Chapter V.

### Interest in Marriage Enrichment Among Wives

In examining marriage enrichment interest among all married female respondents, it was found that 21% indicated they would be "very likely" to attend a marriage enrichment group. Those who fall in the "somewhat likely" group comprised 33%, and the "not likely at all" group is 44% of the total sample (Appendix E). The first discriminant function was significant ( $p < .01$ ) for the following variables: family social standing, parental satisfaction, and interpersonal communication comfort.

The results of the predicted group membership were 43% accurate overall. That is, 43% of all the cases were correctly classified. The correct percentages for the three "level of interest" groups ranged from 45.8% to 41.1%, with Group 0 (high interest) receiving 41.1% correct placement,

Group 1 (moderate interest) receiving 45.8% correct placement, and 41.7% for Group 2 (no interest).

Group 1 was most accurately classified, but the range of percentages for the predictive accuracy of the three groups is only 4.7%, emphasizing the moderate degree of accuracy in predicting membership in any of the groups. Further, none of the classification percentages of the three groups is more than 12.5% above the 33.3% predictive accuracy which could be expected by chance alone (Table 7). It should be kept in mind, therefore, that although the discriminant capacity of this function was significant at the .01 level, it explains only a moderate amount of variance in the differences between the three levels of interest in marriage enrichment among married women, with slightly more accuracy in characterizing Group 1. Through interpretation of the standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients and the group means, it is revealed that the strongest discriminator was family social standing (.834), followed by parental satisfaction (-.498), and finally interpersonal communication comfort (-.237) (Table 8).

Wives who are likely to have strong interest in marriage enrichment are married to middle grade military members, have low parental satisfaction, and generally have found themselves comfortable communicating verbally with other persons and in groups. It is interesting to note that those wives not interested in marriage enrichment also report higher interpersonal communication comfort.

Table 7

Percentage of Wives Correctly<sup>a</sup> and Incorrectly Identified  
According to Interest in Marriage Enrichment

Interest Level Group	Group 0 %	Group 1 %	Group 2 %
0 (Very likely)	<u>41.1</u>	33.9	25.0
1 (Somewhat likely)	26.5	<u>45.8</u>	27.7
2 (Not likely)	25	33.3	<u>41.7</u>

Note: Percent of grouped cases correctly classified was 42.9%.  
Percent probability of correct classification would  
be 33.3%.

<sup>a</sup>Percentage identified correctly is shown on the diagonal  
and is underlined. Other figures show percentages of  
incorrect classification or group overlapping.

Table 8

Characteristics of Wives' Degree of Interest  
in Marriage Enrichment

Variable	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
1. Family social standing (1-6)* (+.834)***	(2.59)**	Lower grade (2.24)	Higher grade (3.05)
2. Parental satisfaction (0-2) (-.498)	Lower satisfaction (.33)	(.29)	Higher satisfaction (.15)
3. Interpersonal communication comfort (0-3) (-.237)	Higher comfort 1.78	Lower comfort (2.01)	(1.79)

\*Range of variable

\*\*Group means

\*\*\*Discriminant function coefficients

### Interest in Marriage Enrichment Among Husbands

Among all husband respondents, 16% indicated they would be very likely to participate in marriage enrichment programs, 31% chose "somewhat likely," and 51% indicated "not likely at all" (Appendix E).

The discriminant analysis of these responses was significant ( $p < .05$ ) in predicting group membership for husbands interested and not interested in marriage enrichment. The overall percentage of group cases which could be correctly classified was 24.5%, which is below the percentage expected by chance.

The husbands most accurately classified were those "very likely" to attend a marriage enrichment program. This group was predicted 75% accurately. The predictive level of the "somewhat likely to attend" group was 39%, and the predictive level of the "not likely to attend" group was 0%, which explains why the overall classification is so low. All predictive group membership percentages can be found in Table 9.

Function 1 of the barely significant discriminant analysis was composed entirely of family social standing, and that one variable accounted for all the variance explained.

Examination of the group means reveals that the measure of family social standing which is composed entirely of the military grade had a limited range, with little variation over the three groups (Table 10).

Table 9

Percentage of Husbands Correctly<sup>a</sup> and Incorrectly Identified  
According to Interest in Marriage Enrichment

Interest Level Group	Group 0 %	Group 1 %	Group 2 %
0 (Very likely)	75	25	0
1 (Somewhat likely)	60.6	39.4	0
2 (Not likely)	56.3	43.7	0

Note: Percent of grouped cases correctly classified was 24.5%.  
Percent probability of correct classification would  
be 33.3%.

Table 10

Characteristics of Husbands' Degree of Interest  
in Marriage Enrichment

Variable	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
Family social standing (1-6)* (1.00)***	Lower grade (2.31)**	Higher grade (2.86)	Higher grade (2.85)

\*Range of variable

\*\*Group means

\*\*\*Discriminant function coefficients

Only the variable of military grade was of any functional significance in discriminating between the three groupings of interest in marriage enrichment among husbands, and this predictive function was almost entirely in relation to Group 0. It can therefore be interpreted that there is a slight tendency for lower grade husbands to be more interested in attending marriage enrichment groups. Husbands who are very likely to attend marriage enrichment experiences are more likely to be of lower grade.

#### Interest in Parent Education Among Wives

Among all married female respondents, 25% indicated they would very likely attend a parent education program, 28% chose "somewhat likely," and 31% were not likely at all to attend (Appendix E).

The discriminant analysis of the above data was significant ( $p < .05$ ) for the first function. The predicted group membership was 45% correct for the combined groups. It can be seen from Table 11 that Groups 0 and 2 are most accurately predicted. The single group which could be most accurately discriminated was Group 0, at 50% accuracy.

The function or factor ingredients which were most successful in predicting Group 0 and Group 2 were family life cycle, parental satisfaction, and family social standing. Social isolation, interpersonal communication comfort, and marital quality also contributed, but to a lesser degree.

Table 11

Percentage of Wives Correctly<sup>a</sup> and Incorrectly Identified  
According to Interest in Parent Education

Interest Level Group	Group 0 %	Group 1 %	Group 2 %
0 (Very likely)	<u>50</u>	25	25
1 (Somewhat likely)	38.1	<u>38.1</u>	23.8
2 (Not likely)	36.2	17	<u>46.8</u>

Note: Percent of grouped cases correctly classified was 45%.  
Percent probability of correct classification would  
be 33.3%.

<sup>a</sup>Percentage identified correctly is shown on the diagonal  
and is underlined. Other figures show percentages of  
incorrect classification or group overlapping.

The strength of each of these discriminators can be seen in Table 12. Examination of the individual discriminator strength within the function and examination of the group means by discriminator, as seen in Table 12, reveals which variables are most descriptive of Groups 0 and 2, and the direction of their descriptive influence in the discriminative analysis.

Wives who are most likely to attend parent education programs have young children, are married to junior enlisted personnel and junior officers, and are experiencing low satisfaction as parents.

#### Interest in Parent Education Among Husbands

Looking at interest in parent education among all married male respondents, it was found that 11% indicated they were very likely to attend, 30% somewhat likely to attend, and 45% not at all likely to attend (Appendix E).

The discriminant analysis of this sample was significant at the .001 level for Function 1. This function or factor was 38% accurate in predicting overall group membership. It was most accurate in predicting Group 0, at 89%, and next most accurate in predicting membership for Group 2 at 50%. The accuracy in predicting membership in Group 1 was 0% (Table 13). The composition of this discriminant function follows the pattern of the functions found in the earlier two analyses of husbands' interest in family support programs.

Table 12

Characteristics of Wives' Degree of Interest  
in Parent Education

Variable	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
1. Family life cycle (1-5)* (-.644)***	Younger children (2.28)**	(2.55)	Older children (2.79)
2. Parental satisfaction (0-2) (+.629)	Lower satisfaction (.30)	(.29)	Higher satisfaction (.13)
3. Family social standing (1-6) (-.362)	Lower grade (2.38)	(2.69)	Higher grade (3.02)

\*Range of variable

\*\*Group means

\*\*\*Discriminant function coefficients

Table 13

Percentage of Husbands Correctly<sup>a</sup> and Incorrectly Identified  
According to Interest in Parent Education

Interest Level Group	Group 0 %	Group 1 %	Group 2 %
0 (Very likely)	<u>88.6</u>	0	11.4
1 (Somewhat likely)	64.2	<u>0</u>	35.8
2 (not likely)	50	0	<u>50</u>

Note: Percent of grouped cases correctly classified was 38%.  
Percent probability of correct classification would  
be 33.3%.

<sup>a</sup>Percentage identified correctly is shown on the diagonal  
and is underlined. Other figures show percentages of incor-  
rect classification or group overlapping.

Differences in husbands' interest in parent education programs were explained only by family social standing from among the six discriminant variables used in the analysis. Since grade or rank was the only variable in the family social standing measure, then military rank was the only effective predictor of husbands' interest in parent education programs (Table 14).

Husbands of lower grade have higher interest in parent education, and husbands of higher grade levels have lower interest in parent education and are not likely to attend.

Examination of the correlation coefficients for all variables reveals fairly strong similarity among the husbands who are interested in the three family support programs and slightly stronger similarity among the wives who are interested in the three family support programs. Husbands and wives are similar to each other within their interest in marriage enrichment and parent education (Table 15).

The findings demonstrated significant differences between levels of interest in all three family support programs for wives and two of the three programs for husbands ( $p < .05$ ). The differences in interest among wives were most meaningfully explained by parent satisfaction, family social standing, family life cycle, and interpersonal communication comfort. The differences in levels of interest among husbands were meaningfully explained only by family social standing. The variables social isolation and marital

Table 14

Characteristics of Husbands' Degree of Interest  
in Parent Education

Variable	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
Family social standing (1-6)* (1.00)***	Lower grade 2.19**	2.65	Higher grade 3.07

\*Range of variable

\*\*Group means

\*\*\*Discriminant function coefficients

Table 15  
Correlations by Sex and by Program

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<u>Correlations by Sex</u>			
	<u>Couple Communication</u>	<u>Marriage Enrichment</u>	<u>Parent Education</u>
<u>Husbands</u>			
Couple Communication	1.00	.50	.43
Marriage Enrichment	.50	1.00	.50
Parent Education	.43	.50	1.00
<u>Wives</u>			
Couple Communication	1.00	.59	.47
Marriage Enrichment	.59	1.00	.53
Parent Education	.47	.53	1.00
<u>Correlations by Program</u>			
<u>Couple Communication</u>	<u>Marriage Enrichment</u>	<u>Parent Education</u>	
Wives	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Husbands .23	Husbands .31	Husbands	.29

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Significance  $r \geq .30$

quality failed to make any meaningful contribution in the discrimination between levels of interest in any of the three family support programs among wives. The variables family life cycle, social isolation, parental satisfaction, interpersonal communication comfort, and marital quality failed to contribute at all to the discrimination of differences between levels of interest in the three family support programs among husbands.

The major hypothesis in this study that level of interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education differs according to the level of interpersonal communication comfort, marital quality, social isolation, and parental satisfaction among married persons is accepted in part. The findings regarding the specific predictions of the hypothesis will be discussed in relation to each prediction.

Prediction I: Partners with higher interpersonal communication comfort will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, in marriage enrichment, and in parent education than will partners with low interpersonal communication comfort. This prediction is rejected for all programs among wives and husbands. Higher interest in couple communication among wives was related to lower interpersonal communication comfort. Higher interpersonal communication comfort was found among wives who are very interested and

also not interested in marriage enrichment programs. Wives somewhat interested in marriage enrichment had lower interpersonal communication comfort. Interpersonal communication comfort was not a significant factor in wives' interest in parent education, and it was not a factor at all in level of interest in any of the programs among husbands.

Prediction II: Partners with high social isolation will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education than will partners with low social isolation. This prediction is rejected for all programs among husbands and wives. Social isolation was not a meaningful part of any of the discriminant functions related to levels of interest in family support programs among husbands and wives.

Prediction III: Partners with low parental satisfaction will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education than will partners with high parental satisfaction. This prediction of the hypothesis is accepted for all programs among wives and rejected for all programs among husbands. Wives with higher interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education reported significantly lower levels of parental satisfaction than wives who were less interested or not interested at all in each of the three family support programs. The relationship was inversely constant across all three programs among wives.

Parental satisfaction had no significant relationship to interest in family support programs among husbands.

Prediction IV: Partners with high marital quality will have significantly higher interest in couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education than will partners with low marital quality. This prediction of the hypothesis is rejected because marital quality did not contribute significantly to the discriminant description of any of the levels of interest groups for any of the three family support programs among husbands or wives.

The remaining discussion of the results of the discriminant analysis of the data will be divided into three main sections. Each of these sections will deal with one of the three family support programs and the discriminative influence of the independent variables and the control variables used in the analysis.

CHAPTER V  
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION,  
AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

An increasing number of support programs are now becoming available for married persons and families. Some things are known about the potential benefits and lack of benefits of participation in, or utilization of, these programs. However, very little is known about the factors related to individual and couple choice to participate or not participate in these programs. Using a random sample (probability sample) of 331 Air Force couples, this study attempted to examine levels of interest in participation in three family support programs: couple communication, marriage enrichment, and parent education. Four potential discriminators of interest in these programs were examined. Discriminant analysis was used to determine the predictive ability of the following variables: interpersonal communication comfort, social isolation, parental satisfaction, and marital quality. Two additional variables, family social standing and family life cycle, were used as controls in the analysis.

Each of the three family support programs was analyzed separately for husbands and for wives, making a total of six discriminant analyses. The control variables were entered

into each analysis first, with the remaining four variables being entered by stepwise procedure according to their discriminant ability. The results indicate that levels of interest among wives were most predictive by family social standing, family life cycle, parental satisfaction, and interpersonal communication comfort. Levels of interest among husbands were predictive by family social standing alone.

### Conclusions

Among the wives, parental satisfaction and family social standing were significant contributors to the discrimination between levels of interest in all three family support programs. Parental satisfaction was the most consistently strong discriminator among wives, followed closely by family social standing. Family life cycle contributed significantly to wives' interest in couple communication and wives' interest in parent education. Interpersonal communication comfort was a significant discriminator for wives' interest in couple communication and wives' interest in marriage enrichment.

Another perspective on the results of the study can be gained by examining the types of variables contributing significantly to wives' interest in or lack of interest in each of the programs. Interest in couple communication and parent education among wives was described best by two descriptive or demographic variables and two social or relational

variables. The descriptive variables were family life cycle and family social standing. Descriptive variables are most helpful in designing programs to reach targetted populations. The social variables were parental satisfaction and interpersonal communication comfort. The significant role of these variables is just as important as the descriptive variables, but not as easily identified in a potential target population. The levels of interest in marriage enrichment among wives were predicted by one descriptive variable, family social standing, and two relational variables, parental satisfaction and interpersonal communication comfort.

Among the husbands, significant differentiation between levels of interest in the three family support programs was found in marriage enrichment and parent education. Levels of interest in both programs were explained by the variable family social standing. As discussed earlier, family social standing is a descriptive variable and, therefore, can be useful in developing strategies for family support programming.

It was predicted that interpersonal communication comfort would have a positive relationship with interest in the family support programs. It was found that interpersonal communication comfort had no discriminative ability with interest levels among husbands. Among wives, interpersonal communication comfort was a significant discriminator with interest in couple communication and marriage enrichment.

However, the relationship was the opposite of that which had been predicted. It was found that wives with lower levels of interpersonal communication comfort were more interested in couple communication. However, wives very interested and wives not interested at all in marriage enrichment reported higher comfort than wives somewhat interested. Because of the absence of any predictable and significant pattern of relationship between interpersonal communication comfort and wives' interest in family support programs, the prediction cited earlier was rejected. It is possible that wives who are interested in couple communication are seeking help in becoming more skillful and comfortable in their relationships with others.

Social isolation never contributed significantly to any of the analyses with husbands or wives. Litwak and Szelenyi (1969) hypothesize that kinship, neighborhood and friendship groups serve differential needs and they believe that one group does not compensate for the other in its absence. However, with modern communication, these groups continue to exist and function even though there may be little or no face-to-face contact. Their research in the United States and Hungary substantiates their hypothesis. It may be that in the present study the social isolation variable as used was not structured in such a way as to account for isolation from all these groups or did not differentiate them in a meaningful way.

Low parental satisfaction was predicted to be related to high interest in all three programs. Among wives this relationship was found to be consistent and significant for all three family support programs. As was stated earlier, it appears that for wives, dissatisfaction with one's parental role is a strong motivator for involvement in experiences which hold forth the potential for growth in parental and marital relationships. This may be the case for wives but not for husbands because of their differential role as parents. Wives may be likely to spend more time with children and be the parent who is more aware of problems with children. They may also be the parent who experiences the most personal frustration or feelings of inadequacy because of increased responsibility.

Among husbands there was much less diversity of variables serving as discriminators between levels of interest in the three programs. Husbands remained highly stratified along family social standing or military grade. The program which received the greatest variance in levels of interest among husbands as determined by grade was parent education. It appears that Air Force husbands are more responsive to their responsibilities as parents than as husbands (Orthner, 1981). This is especially true of younger husbands, since the mean score of grade was lower for the very interested group in parent education than either of the two other programs.

### Discussion

This study represents the first known attempt to identify the characteristics of persons likely or not likely to participate in family support programs. In order to put the findings of this study in proper perspective for use in applied areas as well as related areas of research, certain limitations of the design should be recognized.

The measure, family social standing, was based completely on military grade. One of the limitations of this measure was the lack of distinction between the officer ranks and the enlisted ranks. The measure yielded a mean score across all grade levels, from Airman Basic to General. This prevented drawing any distinctions between enlisted personnel and commissioned personnel. The only interpretations to be drawn based upon the present measure were basically directional, toward higher grade or lower grade, and not interpretations concerning specific grade brackets. Construction of separate measures for enlisted and commissioned grades would allow for important distinctions between these strata of the military rank system.

A second concern about the measure family social standing, as measured by military grade has to do with the potential complexity of variables which may have been influencing the measure. Military grade is the major stratifier within a closed and highly stratified system. It is very likely that grade is a function of several social variables such as

status and traditionalism/nontraditionalism, as well as demographic variables such as age and length of military service. Extensions of this study utilizing grade should attempt to account for possible intervening variables.

The measure, family life cycle, as constructed in this study, did not adequately reflect the marital careers of the couples, especially couples with children over 20 years of age. The measure also failed to reflect the marital careers of childless couples and couples in second marriages.

Reconstruction of this measure could enable a better reflection of marital careers and more specific conclusions regarding ages of children. With the present measure it was possible only to determine directions, such as families with older children and families with younger children, and not determine findings related to specific age groups such as preschool and adolescence.

The social isolation measure used in this study failed to contribute significantly to any of the discriminant analyses. One possible explanation could be the construction of the measure. The data derived from the items in the measure reflect degrees of felt closeness to certain persons, such as family members, neighbors, friends, and work associates. The measure produced one general score representing all seven items in the scale.

Based upon the work of Litwak and Szelenyi (1969), the scale could be divided into the categories of kinship,

neighborhood, and friends for three measures of closeness. Such a reconstruction of this measure would better represent the groups affected by geographic mobility in the military.

The measure of marital quality failed to contribute significantly to any of the discriminant analyses. In one sense this was surprising, given the importance of marital quality as a primary variable in the family field. The measure was made up completely of items from the dyadic adjustment scale (Spanier, 1976). Burr et al. (1979) suggest that this scale as discussed by Lewis and Spanier (1979) probably measures marital satisfaction more than marital quality. This measure could be reexamined in that light. Further clarification of this question could be gained by utilizing the dyadic adjustment scales as separate items rather than as subscales for one measure, as was done in this study.

#### Implications for Plans and Programs

The importance of families to the environment and mission of the military has already been adequately stressed. No one who examines the makeup of today's military services could responsibly deny the critical importance of the military family in the effective functioning of the military organization. As a vital part of the mission support system, military families need the most comprehensive and effective strategy of service to families that is possible. Following are some specific ideas drawn from this study which may contribute toward the above goal:

1. Designs of programs and promotion of them should be geared to the needs and habitats of young couples. This is especially true of programs like parent education and couple communication. Such programs could be sponsored and advertised by the base day-care center.
2. Particular efforts should be made to communicate with the senior enlisted and senior officer military members. These are the marital partners who are least likely to be interested in attending any of the family support programs, but according to additional data they represent the families which most need the help of these programs (Orthner, 1980).

#### Implications for Further Research

The three family support programs examined in this study are all relatively young and they have only a few years of scrutiny through research. The review of the literature regarding these programs has pointed up the great lack of study regarding the reasons people choose or fail to choose to participate in programs of this nature. Perhaps this study can be something of a beginning. Several suggestions for improving this investigation as well as some suggestions for additional study are listed below:

1. Further analysis of the present data using couples instead of separate husband and wife analyses would be important in identifying some of the dynamics

between married partners. This would be especially helpful with couple communication and marriage enrichment, where both partners are expected to participate together.

2. Related to interest in parent education, additional analysis should identify the primary care giver in each couple so that parental satisfaction can be examined in the light of who spends more time with the children.
3. Further research related to interpersonal communication comfort is needed to clarify exactly what is being measured and how it relates to the different programs. Why did this measure change directions with different programs?

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## APPENDIX A

## Family Support Programs

I would like to ask you several questions about services or programs which are sometimes available for marriages and families.

(Ask each set of questions for each type of program.)

- a. Have you ever heard of anything like:

Couple Communication Training - Such training is designed to teach couples more effective communication and problem-solving skills.

Marriage Enrichment and Marriage Encounter - These programs are designed to help couples gain additional skills by which they can strengthen their marriage.

(For Parents Only) Parent Education or Effective Training - These programs are designed to help parents better understand and communicate more effectively with their children.

- b. Have you ever (attended/used) such a program or service? Yes

- c. Did you find it very helpful, somewhat helpful or not helpful at all?

Very Helpful  
Somewhat Helpful  
Not Helpful  
Not Sure

- d. Do you know anyone who has attended or used such a program or service?
- Yes  
No

- e. Did they find it very helpful, somewhat helpful or not helpful?
- |                  |
|------------------|
| Very Helpful     |
| Somewhat Helpful |
| Not Helpful      |
| Not Sure         |

- f. To your knowledge, has this (service/program) been offered on your base?

Yes

No

Don't

Know

- g. If available on base in the future, how likely would you be to attend such a program (again)? Would you be:

Very Likely

Somewhat Likely

Not Likely At All

## APPENDIX B

## Interpersonal Communication Comfort Scale

Now I am going to read you a series of statements. As before, select the response from the card that best represents your degree of agreement or disagreement to each of these statements as they apply to you. Do you strongly agree, agree, have mixed feelings, disagree, or strongly disagree that:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous.	0	1	2	3	4	8
b. I look forward to expressing my opinion at meetings.	0	1	2	3	4	8
c. I am tense and nervous when participating in group discussions.	0	1	2	3	4	8
d. I feel that I am more fluent when talking to people than most other people are.	0	1	2	3	4	8
e. Conversing with people who hold positions of authority causes me to be fearful and tense.	0	1	2	3	4	8
f. I feel relaxed and comfortable when speaking.	0	1	2	3	4	8

## APPENDIX C

## Social Isolation Scale

In general, would you say you feel very close, somewhat close, or not close at all to the following people:

	Very Close	Somewhat Close	Not Close	Not Appropriate
a. Neighbors	1	2	3	4
b. Work Associates	1	2	3	4
c. Parents	1	2	3	4
d. Parents In-Law	1	2	3	4
e. Friends	1	2	3	4
f. Brothers and Sisters	1	2	3	4
g. Other Relatives	1	2	3	4

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# APPENDIX E

## Frequencies and Percentages of Interest in Family Support Programs

	Very Likely		Somewhat Likely		Not Likely		Missing Cases	
	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Marriage Enrichment	52 15.7%	70 21.1%	102 30.8%	108 32.6%	168 50.8%	145 43.8%	9 2.7%	8 2.4%
Couple Communication	40 12.1%	53 16.0%	108 32.6%	109 32.9%	166 50.2%	160 48.3%	17 5.1%	9 2.7%
Parent Education	35 10.6%	82 24.8%	98 29.6%	91 27.5%	149 45%	103 31.1%	49 14.8%	55 16.6%