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TEENAGE MARITAL UNITS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

by

Isabelle Reedy Powell

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
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Approved by

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The teenage population is predicted to increase in absolute numbers with the number of teenage marriages increasing proportionately. Teenage marriages are over-represented among couples seeking divorce. In order to assist the young family to establish a successful marital unit, it is important that family life professionals have more information about the life situations and characteristics of young couples.

Data for the present study were obtained during teenage couples' enrollment in the Teenage Parents Research Project, University of North Carolina, Greensboro. The study included demographic characteristics; measures of personal identity, marital role expectations and attitudes toward parenthood; problems associated with the establishment phase of marriage; and both subjective and objective evaluations of the experiences by the subjects and by the writer. Data were obtained on 48 marital units (except that 41 couples were subjects for the attitude measures).

The range in age for the teenage wives was 15 to 18 years and for husbands, 16 to 24 years. Older wives chose husbands closer to their own age and husbands who had higher educational levels than did the younger wives. The highest concentration of both husbands and wives was in the lower two of five social class positions. There was a trend for

first and only children to marry first and only children. Parental Family Units were relatively stable and reflected a generational pattern of early marriage. Ninety per cent of the teenage wives were pregnant at the time of marriage.

More wives than husbands obtained positive scores on the Dymond Q-Sort (personal-identity) although there was no significant difference between the means. Scores on the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory indicated that husbands were more traditional than their wives but not significantly so. However (t-test) analysis indicated a significant difference in the Personal Characteristics and Employment and Support categories. Significant differences between wives' and husbands' scores were found in eight of the 23 sub-scales of the Parental Attitude Research Instrument: Encouraging Verbalization; Fear of Harming the Baby; Marital Conflict; Equalitarianism; Comradeship and Sharing; Seclusion of the Mother; Suppression of Sexuality; and Acceleration of Development.

A significant association between scores of husbands and wives was found on the Dunn Inventory in the categories of Homemaking and Education. Four significant relationships between the scores of husbands and wives on the PARI sub-scales were: Fear of Harming the Baby; Marital Conflict; Strictness; and Suppression of Sexuality.

All of the teenage couples experienced financial difficulties. Two-thirds of the couples lived with in-laws or other relatives. Many wives voiced disappointment about the

unwillingness of their husbands to discuss problems of sexual relationships. Expectant parenthood for the young mothers was seen as a fulfilling experience whereas the husbands appeared to have little access to the role of expectant father.

Evaluations by the subjects showed a desire to complete their education, and a preference for participation in a special program, rather than in a regular school program. Participation in the care of infants in the nursery made them more confident in neonatal care. In spite of many problems within the program, the writer believed that the project provided a major contribution to the life situations of the teenage wives.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Married teenagers represent a small but conspicuous segment of the total teenage population. Census data indicate that 25 per cent of the female population aged 14 to 19 were married in 1969. LaBarre reported that by age group in 1968, approximately one of four eighteen-year-olds, one of eight seventeen-year-olds and one of 16 sixteen-year-olds of the female population was married. Although data indicate a decline in the rate of teen marriages, because of the increase in population of this age group, the absolute number of teenage marriages is increasing. In 1960, 33.8 per cent of married females between ages 14 and 19 numbered 957,000. In 1969, 25 per cent of married females represented a group of 987,000 (Current Population Report). It is predicted that this trend will continue (de Lissovoy and Hitchcock, 1964; Burchinal, 1965; and Labarre, 1968).

Teenage marriages are over-represented among the marrieds seeking divorce (Monohan, 1959; Burchinal, 1965; de Lissovoy and Hitchcock, 1964; LaBarre, 1968). Carter and Plateris (1963) showed that 45 per cent of the females and 16 per cent of the males among the 1960 divorces had been

married before reaching 20 years of age. By contrast, the proportion of all marriages contracted in 1960 before age 20 was about 13 per cent for males and 37 per cent for females. Data in 1950 showed that the divorce rates were highest in the youngest ages and decreased steadily with age. Carter and Plateris (1963) stated that "there is no reason to believe that this general relation has changed since 1950 (p. xii)."

The Teenage Parents Research Project at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro was inaugurated in 1969 to help Teenage Marital Units toward a successful establishment of their families. The program was designed to assist the total family unit. It included planned instruction and activities for both husband and wife, a high school completion program for the wives prior to and after delivery, and a nursery for the infant where the young mothers assumed as nursery assistants, partial responsibility for care of the babies. At the time the program was implemented, little was known about the Teenage Marital Unit or the kinds of help it required to succeed.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to explore characteristics of the Teenage Marital Unit, to become familiar with the problems associated with these marriages, and to evaluate subjectively one type of supportive direction and



assistance that might be offered them. The collection of the following information was seen as being important to this effort:

1. Demographic data concerning both husband and wife;
2. Analysis of qualitative measures concerning the individual development, marital roles, and attitudes toward parenthood, of both husband and wife;
3. Enumeration of the problems confronting the Teenage Marital Unit in their efforts to complete the developmental tasks of the establishment phase of marriage which included parenthood; and
4. Evaluation of the program by the researcher and the young mothers who participated in the project.

#### Rationale for Interest in the Present Study

For those who value the family as a basic unit in maintaining a healthy society, there is cause for concern in the increasing number of teenage marriages and the accompanying data which indicate an over-representation among the divorced of those who married in their teen years. Professionals may respond to this rate of instability in two ways: (1) educate the young people to avoid those social interactions which are known to lead to early marriage; and/or

(2) offer supportive direction and assistance to those who do marry to help them attain their goal of marital success. Little attention has been given the second alternative.

Early marriage in the United States is not seen as a social asset. Adolescence is prolonged in our culture and the law, policies, and sentiments encourage a lengthening of dependence and preparation for adulthood as well as a delay in marriage. Contradictory to this fact is the cultural acceptance of marriage as the immediate rites de passage into adulthood. At marriage the status as a husband and wife is interpreted automatically as the attainment of adulthood. With adulthood comes the accompanying demand for the individual's independence and the young couple is expected to "go it alone." Many times opportunities available to adolescents who choose to marry early become inaccessible, or as in the case of education, are denied when the young woman is pregnant. On the one hand these early-marrieds are asked to measure up to adulthood while on the other hand both personal and societal circumstances prevent them from pursuing the qualifications for the adult role available to unmarried adolescents.

At the same time, when these married teenagers are left to flounder as they prove their right to adulthood, LaBarre (1968) suggests that the young wife and husband face simultaneously three of the most critical crises of their lifetime: (1) they are left to establish their adult

identities at a time when they may have to redirect their goals and aspirations for adulthood; (2) they are expected to make necessary adjustments from being children of their own parents to the dyadic relationship of husband and wife; and (3) when the young woman is pregnant, the couple is left alone to cope with their concerns and fears of the physical changes taking place within the wife's body as well as their apprehensions of impending parenthood (LaBarre, 1968). This critical period, coupled with the negative attitude toward early marriage, leaves limited hope of success.

Yet not all young marriages are doomed to failure. If 50 per cent of teenage marriages end in divorce, then 50 per cent also survive. It may be reasonable to assume that those teenage couples who have succeeded in establishing their marriage may have received a greater amount of materially and emotionally supportive assistance. Were this assumption correct, special programs could be developed to provide or supplement such positive assistance for all Teenage Marital Units, and thereby increase the chances of success for many more of these young families. To provide such programs family life specialists and other professionals need detailed information concerning the individual characteristics of the unit and an enumeration of the kinds of problems they face as a unit. It was the intent of this research to broaden the base of knowledge about the Teenage Marital Unit and to report the findings to interested

professionals thereby furthering the possibility of promoting positive programs in behalf of the young couple.

#### Basic Assumptions

The basic assumptions made in relation to this study were the following:

1. A demographic study, an analysis of qualitative measures, and an enumeration of the problems confronting the Teenage Marital Unit, would yield useful and relevant data about these groups which could be reported to other professionals concerned with the assisting of the Teenage Marital Unit.

2. It is possible to develop a high school program to meet the special needs of the Teenage Marital Unit as well as to meet the academic requirements for high school completion.

3. The teenage married and pregnant girl and her husband can be studied by means of questionnaires, self-description measures, individual conferences and class discussions within the confines of a special high school program for the teenage wife.

4. Special areas of concern for the Teenage Marital Unit can be ascertained during discussions and written work in a class in Family Life Education.

5. The subjects and the researcher can evaluate the success of the program.

### Definitions

The following terms are defined according to their use in the present study:

Teenage Wife refers to a girl who was enrolled in one of the local high schools at Sophomore, Junior or Senior level, aged 18 or under, who was both married and pregnant and who chose to enter the Teenage Parents Research Project.

Teenage Husband refers to a man married to a girl who was admitted to the Teenage Parents Research Project and does not refer to his chronological age.

Teenage Marital Unit includes the husband, the pregnant wife and subsequently their child, enrolled as a unit in the Teenage Parents Research Project.

Parental Family Unit refers to those family units who have teenage daughters enrolled as teenage wives in the Teenage Parents Research Project or family units who have sons married to the teenage wives in the project.

Demographic Data are those characteristics concerning the subjects' background such as social class position, educational level, age at marriage, etc.

Qualitative Measures are the selected standardized instruments completed by the husband and the wife to gain insight into factors concerning their individual characteristics, their expectations of marital roles, and their attitudes toward parenthood.

### Limitations

The present study was conducted with 48 Teenage Marital Units who applied and were admitted to the Teenage Parents Research Project (Klemer and Powell, 1971) during seven consecutive and complete school semesters (1969-72). Forty-one of these couples completed like questionnaires and instruments and so became subjects for the analysis of qualitative characteristics of the couples. The husband and wife of the Teenage Marital Unit became subjects for the research at such time as the married girl transferred from the Greensboro City Schools or the Guilford County Schools as a result of her pregnancy and the prevailing policies concerning pregnancy and school attendance (Appendix A).

Certain limitations were associated with this selection process:

1. Only girls in the Greensboro City Schools and the Guilford County Schools had the opportunity to enroll.
2. The number of girls who could be accepted into the program depended on the number of cribs available in the nursery and whether or not there would be space in the nursery at the time of anticipated delivery.
3. When a shortage of vacancies occurred, those girls who were registered in local high schools at the senior level were given preference.

4. The girls who did apply for transferral to the Teenage Parents Research Project were those who were motivated to complete high school.
5. The husbands were willing for their wives to continue their high school careers.
6. Only those Teenage Marital Units were enrolled where the wife was pregnant or had recently delivered a child.
7. The self-selection process used in enrolling students obviously did not permit random sampling.
8. The results of this research may not be generalizable but rather are descriptive of those Teenage Marital Units who became subjects of the Teenage Parents Research Project.

## CHAPTER II

### PREVIOUS WORK IN THE FIELD

Concern over high school marriages has grown proportionately with their numbers in recent years. Research, however, has been severely limited. While studies have sought to establish the socio-economic and socio-psychological factors most likely to cause early marriage, little has been done to ascertain the dynamics of pregnancy and marriage for the teenage girl and her husband, or the problems which the Teenage Marital Unit encounters. Research relevant to the present study will be presented here in seven sections. Sections one and two, based largely on census data, present a review of the incidence of teenage marriage and the observed consequences of such marriages, respectively. Section three deals with those studies concerning the characteristics of young marriages and young spouses. Sections four and five present studies related to dynamic factors and stresses which appear to have an impact on early marriage. There is little research dealing with the education of the married and pregnant teenage girl, but a brief review of educational programs for the pregnant adolescent is presented in section six. The chapter concludes with a statement of intent concerning the research of



this study and its potential contribution to the general field of teenage marriages.

### Incidence of Teenage Marriage

Cavan and Beling (1958) noted that, since 1890 the average age of marriage had declined 3 years for men and 2 years for women. At the time of their study they reported that half of all married girls were married by the time they were 20 and a few before age 15. Half of all men were married by the age of 23. From 1890 to 1960 the median marital age for males dropped by 3.5, (26.1 to 22.7) and for females about 2 years (22.0 to 20.2). However, these authors' exploration into high school marriages in Illinois, revealed that the percentage of high school students who were married was small:

. . . in the sixty participating schools having one or more marriages during 1956-57 academic year, it was found that among girls 1.4 per cent of the sophomores, 1.8 per cent of the juniors and 4.1 per cent of the seniors were married. Among the boys 0.1 per cent of the sophomores, 2.0 per cent of the juniors, and 0.7 per cent of the seniors were married (p. 293).

De Lissovoy and Hitchcock, (1965), after analyzing questionnaire returns from 765 high schools in Pennsylvania, disclosed that:

. . . during the academic year 1961-62 there were 2,070 married students. The ratio of married to unmarried students was one out of 152, or .66 per cent of the student population . . . . Of the 395 married boys, 266 or 67 per cent were married in

their senior year . . . . Forty-four per cent of the girls were married in their senior year (p. 263).

In a review of census data, Burchinal (1965) reported that young marriage rates increased consistently for males and females from 1910 through 1950. They remained substantially unchanged during the decade from 1950 to 1960 and showed a decline in the ensuing years. Parke and Glicke (1967) analyzing the 1966 Current Population Survey, commented that 23 per cent of all women who at the time were 30 to 34 years old, had married before age 18 and that 15 per cent of those women who were 18 and 19 had married before age 18. Table 1 from the Current Population Reports showed similar data. The percentage of females who married at age 14 to 17 increased from 3.5 per cent to 5.9 per cent between the years 1940 to 1950. Similarly the percentage of females who married at ages 18 to 19 increased from 21.7 per cent to 31.6 per cent between the years 1940 to 1950. This represented a total increase of 12.3 per cent.

The percentage of females who married at ages 14 to 17 decreased from 5.9 per cent to 4.6 per cent between the years 1950 and 1960. The percentage of females who married at ages 18 to 19 decreased from 31.6 per cent to 29.2 per cent during the same period, a decrease of 3.7 per cent. The percentage of females married in the same age groups continued to decrease from 1950 to 1969, a decrease of 12.5 per cent.

Table 1  
 Married Teenagers in the United States  
 (14 to 17 and 18 to 19 years of age)

Year	Males				Females			
	Per cent		Numbers		Per cent		Numbers	
	14- 17	18- 19	14- 17	18- 19	14- 17	18- 19	14- 17	18- 19
1940	0.3	3.6	15,249	90,933	3.5	21.7	168,484	348,809
1950	0.2	7.3	11,000	144,000	5.9	31.6	246,000	697,000
1960	0.6	8.8	33,000	190,000	4.6	29.2	255,000	702,000
1969	0.5	7.9	43,000	260,000	2.7	22.3	207,000	780,000

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, Nos. 87, 105, 187, 198.

Burchinal (1965) concluded his review by stating:

. . . in summary, young marriage rates, contrary to widely circulated assertions, are not going up, up, up. Young marriage rates have remained stable or have declined slightly since 1950, and only a small proportion of high-school-age students are married (p. 244).

He continued by stressing the need for further information to explain the stability of the young marriage rates:

. . . because the general pattern of stability may hide marked increases for some subgroups and equally marked decreases for others (p. 245).

Parke and Glicke (1967) predicted that the rate would continue to go down for a while longer and then stabilize.

Norris (1971) however reported that 26.9 per cent of all girls between 14 and 19 years of age were married. This report indicates a slight increase since 1969 of almost 2 per cent.

However, while the rate of youthful marriages is decreasing, these unions are occurring in relatively large absolute numbers due to the increase in the segment of population involved. The 25.2 per cent of females aged 14 to 19 who had married in 1940 represented in absolute numbers 517,293 females. In contrast, the 25 per cent of females aged 14 to 19 who had married in 1969 represented 987,000 females (Table 1). Burchinal (1965) reported an increase from 1 per cent of males aged 15 to 18 who were married in 1910 to 2 per cent who were married in 1960. The number of married men in this age group increased ten-fold, from 19,026 in 1910, to 119,223 in 1960. Table 1 indicates a decrease of 1 per cent of males aged 14 to 19 from the year 1960 to 1969, yet this proportionate decrease resulted in a substantial increase (80,000) in absolute numbers. Burchinal (1965) and de Lissovoy and Hitchcock (1964) concluded that further increases in the frequencies of young marriage would occur largely because the population base of youth, aged 14 to 19, was expanding each year.

### Observed Consequences of Teenage Marriage

Statistics point to a much lower rate of stability and marital happiness for those men and women who marry during their teens as compared to those who marry at an older age. Two sets of data are generally used to determine the extent of the consequences of marriage. One set consists of data relative to divorce, desertion and separation rates, and the other includes qualitative evaluations of marriage by the marital unit itself. Both methods point to a greater instability and unhappiness among those who marry at an early age. De Lissovoy (1964) stated that:

. . . all of the available studies show that early marriages are a poor risk. Certainly the teenage mother is hardly equipped in education, wisdom or experience to raise children of her own (p. 35).

As early as 1926, Hart and Shields concluded that marriage, when either party was under 19 was 10 to 100 times as "risky" as when the bride was 24 and the groom 29. Locke (1957) compared a divorced and a "happily married" group of first marriages. Monohan (1959) commented on Lock's conclusions:

Although he [Locke] regarded his results on age-difference to be "inconclusive," he felt his information "strongly supports the hypothesis that early marriages are risky as compared with later marriages (p. 82)."

Monohan (1959) reported a study concerned with the age at marriage and its implication for divorce in Iowa. He concluded that youthful marriages in Iowa did appear to be

over-represented in divorce actions, and that marriages contracted during the teen years were of shorter duration. By age combinations, where both parties were 16 and under at marriage, the divorce ratio was about four times higher than the divorce ratio of all other age groups. In terms of average age at marriage, divorced couples had married about 1 year earlier than all couples getting married for the first time. He also noted that:

. . . within the first five years of marriage, divorces were less evident for those males married in the mid-twenties than for those who were married at younger ages; and, at the other end of the scale, the mid-twenties showed more marriages lasting 31 years or longer (p. 85).

In a study of census data, Burchinal (1965) reported that the combined divorce and separation rates were highest for youngest spouses and declined consistently for all groups from age 15 through 18.

Burchinal (1965) stated that:

. . . survival rates for Iowa marriages from 1953 to 1957 varied among the three status levels (divorce, legal separation, and separation) used, but survival rates were always lower in each status level for the marriages involving the brides nineteen or younger in comparison with brides who were twenty or older (p. 250).

Using 1960 census data, Parke and Glick (1968) reported that males who were married at 18 were separated or divorced 5 to 15 years later in 21 per cent of the cases. This figure was twice as high as that for men who married at 23 to 24 years.

The "negative affect" of marital unhappiness is closely related to the above. In an effort to better counsel teenagers toward the inadvisability of early marriage, Inselberg (1962) attempted to isolate the problems and satisfactions of marriage among two groups of married subjects. The experimental group consisted of 40 couples with one spouse under the age of 19 and 40 control couples married between the ages 21 and 26. All couples had been married between 3 months and 3 years. The experimental group received significantly lower ratings in an incomplete sentence blank on a marital satisfaction scale. Lack of sufficient income, fewer wives employed, possibly due to lower education attainment or more traditional views of wife-mother roles, the need to ask for parental assistance for a place to live (usually under the parental roof), inability to establish a working relationship with in-laws, the lack of support young wives received from their husbands in this area, and the inability of the young male to accept the need for settling down, were the kinds of problems facing the experimental group couples. Problems in sexual adjustment did not seem to be concentrated in either group. A large proportion of the experimental group expressed the wish that they had postponed marriage.

To test several hypotheses deduced from the general proposition that "there is a positive relationship between

mental health and marital integration," Eshleman (1965) studied 82 married couples of which the husband was 19 or under and the marriage had occurred at least 6 months prior to the time of the interview. Marital integration was defined as:

. . . the extent to which the husband and the wife get from one another the attitudes, services, and goods they have learned to need and to expect from marriage.

. . . this definition of marital integration assumes that the greater the extent of role fulfillment by each spouse, the greater the degree of marital integration.

Three measures of mental health and seven measures of marital integration were used. In conclusion he reported:

. . . the findings of the present study in no way suggests higher or lower levels of mental health or marital integration among married youths than among older persons, but rather that the health of a person is related to the health of his marriage. Other studies on divorce rates and marital adjustment have found a lower level of marital integration among young marriages. This can be hypothesized to result from possible sources of increased mental and marital strain for the adolescent, such as the changes which are occurring in physical growth and development, the trend toward an earlier age at first marriage, parenthood for many couples, a separation of the marital pair from the parental home, an assuming of adult responsibilities, and a minimum of employment opportunities (p. 262).

As a result of his findings, Eshleman suggested the education of persons for realistic expectations in marriage in order to increase possibilities for a higher degree of integration within their marriages.



Characteristics of Young Marriages  
and Young Spouses

In an attempt to answer the question "Who are the teenage parents?" LaBarre (1969) stated:

. . . very little is actually known about adolescent marriage and parenthood. A surprising lacuna exists in the research literature. Very few studies have been focused on the marital or parental experiences of teenagers . . . . This lack of research may be due to the fact that married teenagers are likely to be school dropouts and hence not readily available for research purposes . . . . What is lacking in this field are adequately large samplings to ascertain demographic factors in cross-sectional socioeconomic and family subcultural groups. Even more important, I believe, would be ongoing studies of the current life experiences of married adolescents, studies in depth of the developmental processes of marriage and parenthood for the young (p. 12).

Research supports the fact that youthful marriages predominantly include young females and their slightly older husbands. A report from the Guilford County Health Department in North Carolina showed that in the year 1966, 50 per cent of the brides were under 20 years of age at the time of marriage.

Burchinal (1965) reported that 25 per cent of the women under age 18 were married in 1960. In contrast, married males aged 17 to 18 involved only 2 to 5 per cent of the married male population. In an analysis of marriage incidence by sex in the high schools of Pennsylvania, de Lissovoy and Hitchcock (1965) found that 81 per cent of the married students were female while males accounted for only 19 per cent. In a study by Gladdin (1968) carried out

in Kentucky, less than 10 per cent of the student brides were married to males in high school. Moss and Gingles (1959) reported that teenage husbands were 5.4 years older on the average than their brides. Landis and Kidd (1956) noted that in 1954, 0.4 per cent of boys and 4.8 per cent of girls, aged 14 to 17 years in the United States were married.

Burchinal (1965) reported that the age difference between spouses was inversely related to the age of the bride. In a study of age difference he found that for fifteen-year-old brides, the average groom was 5.5 years older; for eighteen-year-old brides, the groom was 3.6 years older. The difference was 2.3 years at age 21 and fell to 1.6 years at age 28.

Glick (1957) showed that in first marriages, if measured from the age of the groom, age differences between mates increased as the groom's age increased and the reverse was true if measured from the age of the bride. In a study by Lowrie (1965) concerned with premarital pregnancy and associated factors, evidence indicated that:

. . . if the age of the groom is the base from which measurements are made, consistent relationships are found . . . age differences increase sharply with increase in age (p. 51).

Burchinal and Chancellor (1963) reported that as ages of the brides increased, the proportion of marriages involving occupationally-high-status grooms increased and the

proportion of marriages involving occupationally-low-status grooms decreased.

Burchinal and Chancellor (1958) in a study carried out in Iowa found that young marriages were not usually elopements but rather they reflected the characteristics of conventional weddings. About 73 per cent of all marriages involving brides who were under 19 years of age occurred in the county in which the bride lived and 92 per cent of the weddings were performed by clergymen.

Educational levels of young husbands and wives are generally lower than those for single persons of comparable ages. Analyzing 1950 census data, Burchinal (1965) reported that school dropout rates were particularly high among married persons aged 16 and 17 and where the husband was 18 or 19 years old he was even more likely to have been a high school dropout.

Estimates of school dropout rates for married girls ranged from 50 to 90 per cent and from 35 to 45 per cent for married boys. Few married students who dropped out were reported to re-enter school (Burchinal, 1960; de Lissovoy and Hitchcock, 1964). Of the 82 couples in Eshleman's study (1965) one-third of the 164 youths were high school dropouts, and several others were in the process of completing high school in spite of marriage.

Garner (1959) compared scholastic achievement of 27 matched pairs of married and unmarried high school students

in areas of attendance, subject, grade, achievement test scores, conduct grades and subject choices. Differences favoring unmarried students were highly significant for attendance and subject choices and slightly less significant for subject grades and achievement test scores.

Burchinal (1965) reported that students who married before they had graduated from high school generally had lower measured intelligence scores and had lower grades than unmarried students. Anderson and Latts (1965), however, stated that in Minnesota relatively few of the schools (9 per cent) saw the married student's academic achievement as significantly poorer than that of the single student. In a study of married students in Pennsylvania, de Lissovoy and Hitchcock (1965) reported that the married high school students tended to have slightly lower scores on measures of intelligence and achievement, but that these differences were not statistically significant.

Burchinal (1959) matched 60 pairs of married and unmarried girls and administered the Nye parental acceptance scale, the Landis-Stone parent authority scale, and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Approximately 39 per cent of the married girls were premaritally pregnant. Little support was found for the hypothesis relating to unsatisfactory parent-adolescent relationships and early marriage. The examination of the personality need scores, however, for the group of premaritally pregnant and the

group of nonpremaritally pregnant girls showed marked differences on the levels of heterosexuality needs. The data seemed to suggest that girls who were pregnant prior to marriage still had premarital heterosexuality interests while there was a reversal of this direction for those girls who were non-premaritally pregnant. The only other meaningful difference emerged from the analysis of personality needs in the data collected by means of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. The non-premaritally pregnant girls were less autonomous than the control girls. In general, however, the married and control girls did not vary significantly on the needs scores. The married girls had lower family socio-economic levels than a norm group of 357 girls who had also answered the questionnaire items. In a later report, Burchinal (1965) concluded that:

. . . young marriages disproportionately involve persons from lower- or working-class backgrounds (p. 249).

LaBarre (1968) noted a recurring pattern of similarities between 10 married, white, teenage girls who were patients in the public prenatal clinic at a university medical center. There was a family class pattern of youthful marriage and parenthood. Husbands and fathers of the girls belonged to the blue-collar class. Neither the girls nor their parents had expectations of higher education or preparation for a career. All families were characterized by types of deprivation and instability.

In a study by Moss and Gingles (1959) carried out in Nebraska, twice as many girls in the control group indicated definite college plans as did those in the experimental group who were married. The authors stated:

. . . differences between parents of the two groups on interest in college education was nearly as great and also in favor of the control group (p. 376).

Burchinal (1965) in an overview of previous research concerning early marriage, concluded that:

. . . a general index of many conditions that are negatively related to competency in marriage is the lower-status background of a predominant number of youths who marry before the age of 18. Competency in marriage and family relationships today requires a set of values, personality characteristics, and interpersonal skills associated with middle-class society. At the risk of overgeneralizing, data from numerous studies indicate that child-rearing and family relationship patterns of lower-status families are in direct contrast to those that research shows are associated with emotional health, school achievement, goal setting and attainment, social success, and reasonably competent interpersonal relationships (p. 252).

#### Dynamic Factors in Teenage Marriages

A phenomenon associated with the Teenage Marital Unit is the frequency of premarital pregnancy. According to Burchinal's overview (1965), it has been estimated that 30 to 90 per cent of the brides are premaritally pregnant as compared with the 20 per cent premaritally pregnant of the bride total. Moss (1961) estimated that one-third to one-half of all young wives were premaritally pregnant. Bartz and Nye (1970) stated that 87 per cent were pregnant when

both husband and wife were in high school at the time of marriage. Moss (1961) and Burchinal (1965) reported that many other couples become expectant parents in the early days of marriage. Anderson and Latts (1965) in a study of high school marriages in Minnesota, found that 69 per cent of the girls were pregnant at the time of marriage. In a study wherein 82 couples were interviewed no more than 6 months after marriage and where the husband was 19 or under, Eshleman (1965) found that approximately 43 per cent of the wives were pregnant prior to marriage and an additional 25 per cent were pregnant at the time of the interview. Lowrie (1965) concluded from his study that:

. . . of all the premarital pregnancies among the 1,850 brides in the total six-year sample, pregnancies are heavily concentrated among young brides. Thus, 70.9 per cent of the premaritally pregnant brides were 18 or younger; 95.3 per cent, 21 or younger. Percentages are almost as high among the early pregnant: 59.9 per cent among women 18 younger, 93.7 per cent among those 21 or younger. Very clearly, pregnancy, whether premarital or early, is largely a phenomenon characteristic of the young (p. 51).

A second dynamic factor of the Teenage Marital Unit related to placement of the teenage couple in the lower socio-economic stratum of society, as reported by Burchinal (1965). Bartz and Nye (1970) noted that the principal mechanism establishing the lower class placement, was the curtailment of formal education and the subsequent occupational placement in unskilled, semi-skilled and clerical occupations. Burchinal (1965) noted that, generally

speaking, the young wives found occupational placement more advantageous than did their husbands. However, when the wife was pregnant, she could not assist in adding to the family income.

Moss (1961) in comparing economic pressures of the teenage marriage with the college marriage, implied a third dynamic factor in the following statement:

. . . economic pressure (of the college marriage) does not have such long-range consequences since it is generally considered somewhat of a "camping experience," the results of which will lead the couple to a different pattern of life in the future. This prospect of change does not hold true for many of the teen-age marriages. Since the girls have married men with limited vocational opportunities and since family pressures may infringe upon possible vocational aspirations, these young couples do not have such a sense of a camping experience. If dissatisfaction is present, the possibilities for removing it are much less likely for the teenage marriages. Planning and managing to prepare for the future may well be swallowed up in the demands of daily living (p. 830).

LaBarre (1968) observed that the Young Marital Unit as a couple were facing simultaneously three of the most critical crises of their lifetime. The components of this triple crisis were: (1) they were left to establish their adult identities at a time when they had to redirect their goals and aspirations for adulthood; (2) they were expected to make necessary adjustments from being children of their own parents to the dyadic relationship of husband and wife; and (3) when the young woman was pregnant, the couple was left alone with their concerns and fears of the physical



changes taking place within the wife's body as well as with their apprehensions of impending parenthood.

### Stresses on Teenage Marriages

Moss (1961) cited four pressure areas in teenage marriages: (1) child-rearing pressures; (2) economic pressures; (3) leisure time pressures; and (4) social pressures.

He noted that:

. . . all of the research studies done on teenage marriage support the idea that these couples quickly move into family status . . . . This means that many young couples are moving into child-rearing pressures without the benefit of any extended period for marital adjustment and that many young girls are assuming motherhood roles with a limited range of education, background, and experience, and probably with only limited information concerning child-rearing (p. 830).

In agreement with Burchinal (1965), Moss cited economic pressure as well, stating:

. . . marriages were generally begun on a meager economic basis and frequently required parental support (p. 830).

Herrmann (1965) noted that the unemployment rate among teenagers was high, that jobs available were low paying, seasonal and irregular, and stated that although our society was affluent, teenagers could not afford marriage unaided. Burchinal (1965) reported that unemployment rates of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 were more than twice the average for workers of all ages. Two studies reported a mean annual income of approximately \$3,000 to \$3,600 for young couples (Burchinal, 1960; Iselberg, 1962).

Herrmann (1965) portrayed the teenage culture as a leisure-class-culture which looked to the possession of material goods to gain approval. Few teenagers, he noted, had been under any pressure to postpone gratification. This led them to use installment buying as a means of obtaining consumer goods. In a short period of time, many were hopelessly indebted to installment promoting merchants. Medical expenses related to the pregnancy added to the crisis. Home mortgages, because of the legal status of teenagers as minors, were not permitted. Few couples had savings. Among a group of couples studied by Herrmann (1965) the median worth of teenage marrieds was \$250 as compared with \$4,700, the net worth of all couples. An estimated 25 per cent of these early marrieds had a negative worth.

Moss (1961) identified a third pressure as leisure-time-pressure and stated that:

. . . among the teenage marriages, there is some evidence that the girls and men may be quite conditioned to separate sex worlds of leisure. If this is so, then these young people will be seeking a good part of their satisfaction in interaction with others of their own sex (p. 830).

The fourth pressure area identified by Moss (1961) was that of social pressure. School policies usually have reflected negative rather than positive approaches to both marriages and pregnancies. As a result, many married students, particularly the females, dropped out of school.

Community attitudes were also negative, accentuating further social pressure on the young couple.

Inselberg (1962) and Moss (1959) reported that in the early months of marital adjustment, the teenage couples did not see sexual relations as a problem of major importance. LaBarre (1968), however, reported that only one of the 10 girls in her study indicated a satisfaction in sexual relations. Others in the study believed that sexual compatibility would occur in time.

In Eshleman's study (1965), a relatively small proportion (16 per cent) of the young couples had lived with parents or relatives. Nearly as many (11 per cent), had owned or had been buying their home. The majority of couples (73 per cent) had rented an apartment. Thus, a total of 84 per cent were reported to be living alone. Inselberg (1962), Herrmann (1965), Burchinal (1965), and LaBarre (1968), however, reported facts contradictory to Eshleman's findings.

Inselberg (1962) reported that of the couples among whom the spouses were under 19 years of age and in high school at the time of marriage, many sought parental assistance:

. . . the most common form of parental assistance being the provision of a place to live. Sixty-six per cent of them lived with one or both sets of parents and an additional 10 per cent had lived with other relatives at one time or another during the period of married life covered by the study. Fifty-nine per cent did not set up an independent

household following marriage. Apart from providing residence, the parents gave monetary aid to 20 per cent of the teenage couples (p. 75).

Burchinal (1959) found that a minority of young couples maintained their own residences. Most of them had doubled up with relatives. Those not living with relatives, he found, did receive parental assistance including payment for rent, cash for food, car payments, and other bills. LaBarre (1968), reporting on a group of 10 girls, found most of them living in a furnished room or apartment and four of the couples were forced to return to parental homes during periods of financial need. Moss and Gingles (1959) also found that parents were a frequent resource for financial support.

Herrmann (1965) also identified as a stress area for the Teenage Marital Unit, the inability of the young couple to establish independent housing. He noted in his study that parents who contributed to the support of the young couple, expected continued affectional response, inclusion in some of the children's activities, personal services and attention, and a continuing role in decision-making.

Establishing a working relationship with in-laws was another area associated with stress for the teenage couples studied by Inselberg (1962). She reported that:

. . . responses of 50 per cent of them to the sentence stem "in-laws are," revealed either hostility or ambivalence as compared with 16 per cent of the control wives . . . . To aggravate matters, seven out of ten of the experimental wives who reported

conflicts with in-laws felt that they didn't get emotional support from their husbands. The husbands sided with their parents, and the reaction when wives disapproved of their in-laws was to be hurt or angry (p. 76).

W. LaBarre (1969) reported that the husband was under stress as a result of his wife's pregnancy. Young fathers, he found, were generally apprehensive and scared and found it difficult to face reality. The wife's pregnancy heightened his dependency at a time when she might have been too absorbed with her own condition to provide the "mothering" the young husband needed. He appeared to be envious of his wife's condition, and sometimes identified with her to the point of developing psychosomatic complaints. He seemed to have felt guilty for what he had done to his wife. The young husband, LaBarre concluded, developed symptoms of childishness at a time when maturity was essential.

#### Education for the Pregnant Adolescent

Studies by Howard (1968), Burchinal (1960), Sperry and Thompson (1957), Gladdin (1968), Stine and Sweeney (1964), Landis (1965), and Ivins (1960) indicated that school systems throughout the country have traditionally dealt with pregnancy and marriage by excluding from school those girls involved. Atkyns (1968) reported that the school had for a long time considered its chief function to be that of educating unmarried youth. The schools sensed a keen responsibility to uphold morals in the society of which

they were a part and for many the idea of helping a person in trouble was confused with condoning the behavior which caused it. In 1968, Strom cited a 1963 Bureau of Labor Statistics study which revealed that 22 per cent of high school dropouts had given pregnancy or marriage as their reason for leaving school. Further information from the same report revealed that these girls had been earning 40 dollars or less per week and also had been barred from public housing as well as having been deprived of other benefits. Howard (1968) noted that Cleveland, Ohio had launched a special program for these girls in 1961 and that in 1963 the Webster School for Girls had been established in the District of Columbia, providing pregnant girls with the opportunity to continue their junior and senior years of high school education until they could return to public school. Howard (1968) stated that since the establishment of the school more than 35 similar programs have been established patterned after the Webster School. In a later study Howard (1971) reported that 150 communities had set up interagency efforts to provide comprehensive services to school-age pregnant girls.

Although more than half of these programs have served married as well as unmarried girls (Howard, 1968), most of them were geared to meet the needs of the socio-economically disadvantaged girl who was to become the mother of an illegitimate child. They described their services as being

comprehensive in scope, providing necessary academic instruction for high school graduation as well as many of the following: health care, prenatal care, post-partum care, counseling, classes in personal and family living, pediatric care, welfare services, psychological-diagnostic evaluations, adoption placement, vocational training, homemaking, child care training, and family planning. In some programs, services were offered to the unmarried girl's parents and her siblings and to the putative father and his parents. Staff members included teachers, social workers, nurses, psychologists, doctors, counselors, aides, researchers, nutritionists and psychiatrists. According to Howard (1968), the staff members "least likely to be involved are the family life specialists." Of the 35 programs described by Howard, 21 included married girls, seven offered courses in personal and family life, and only four had a family life specialist on the staff.

#### Need for Further Research

Little attempt has been made to assist the launching of successful Teenage Marital Units. Evidence supports the possibility of an increase in the absolute number of participants of teenage marriage in the future. Data concerning teenage marriages of the past indicate deleterious consequences for those who marry early. There is a general consensus among researchers that dynamic factors and stress

areas associated with teenage marriage inhibit the chances for establishing a mutually satisfying relationship to a greater degree than for those who marry at a later age. At the same time, the individuals involved in teenage marriage are more likely to have less education and a lower level of competency in resolving crisis than are those who marry at a later age and have fewer marital pressures.

The Teenage Parents Research Project was designed to bridge this gap. A curriculum based on dynamic factors and stressful areas was designed to qualify for high school credit and was provided in a continuing high school education program. Husband and wife recreation was planned to relieve leisure time stress, and information considered essential to promoting satisfying family relationships was provided for both. Social activity within the school program was provided for the pregnant and married teenage girls with other girls in similar circumstances. A nursery was available for the infant where the young mother could be positively reinforced in her new mother role.

In developing the project a need was seen to study characteristics of the participants in an effort to meet their individual needs in a program designed to help them. In order to provide a more meaningful curriculum, further insight into their day-to-day problems was also necessary. Such data were seen as not only reinforcing to the Teenage Parents Research Project, but also initiating the



possibility of providing materials to be furnished to persons interested in establishing other programs to help the Teenage Marital Unit.

Previous research has indicated that economic pressure is seen as a difficult consequence of early marriage (Inselberg, 1962; Eshleman, 1965; LaBarre, 1968; Moss, 1961; Herrmann, 1965; Burchinal, 1965). Continuing educational programs that help the wife to develop vocational skills, along with supportive vocational direction for the husband, should minimize this pressure. There is a need to know whether the wives and husbands in the Teenage Marital Units are interested in the continuing education of the wife and in her attainment of a high school diploma, should such opportunities become available.

If such special educational programs were seen as desirable by the Teenage Marital Units, there would be a need to further augment the available research concerning the particular dynamic factors and stress areas suggested. Many researchers have indicated problems for the unit such as the development of workable in-law relationships, establishing an independent home, developing mutually satisfying leisure-time activities, alleviating the fears of birth and delivery and the subsequent apprehensions of parenthood, etc. LaBarre (1968) suggested the need for studying "current life experiences" of teenage marrieds and for an in-depth

study of the developmental processes of these young couples.

Burchinal (1965) stated that:

. . . attempts to alter high risks associated with young marriages require educational, counseling, social services, and related programs, including attempts to change values, role expectations, and behavioral patterns among lower-class families toward middle-class values and goals. To contribute even modestly to better preparation for marriage and adult living, programs will have to exceed anything that is currently envisioned (p. 252).

It was hoped that the present study would provide useful materials and guidelines needed to strengthen and encourage special education programs for the Teenage Marital Units of the future.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

The present research was an attempt to study in depth a number of Teenage Marital Units. The general purposes were :

- (1) to explore the possibility of similarities of demographic characteristics;
- (2) to identify qualitative aspects of individual development, marital roles and attitudes toward parenthood;
- (3) to enumerate the problems confronting Teenage Marital Units in their efforts to complete the developmental tasks associated with the establishment phase of marriage which include parenthood;
- (4) to report on the supportive direction and assistance that was offered.

#### Design of the Study

Individual characteristics concerning the couple were collected through an interview at the time the girl made application for enrollment in the Teenage Parents Research Project. The demographic data about the 48 couples (both husband and wife) included the following:

- (1) Age--the age attained by the subject on his (her) birthdate nearest to the date of application for entrance into the project.
- (2) Educational level--the last level completed by husband and wife at the time of the interview. (Those wives or husbands who were enrolled at the senior level in the local schools were recorded as having completed 11 years of school or "educational level 11").
- (3) Index of Social Class Position--that class resulting from use of Hollingshead's Index of Social Class Position in relation to the father in the Parental Family Unit. Hollingshead's Two-Factor-Index of Social Position score is based on the occupational pursuit and the years of school completed by the respondent's father. A subject was placed in one of five socio-economic classes on the basis of his score: Class I (upper)--11 to 17; Class II--18 to 31; Class III--32 to 47; Class IV--48 to 63; and Class V--64 to 77 (lower) (Hollingshead, 1965). The father in the family of origin was the referent point for the index whether the Parental Family Unit was intact, separated, divorced, or whether the father was deceased.

- (4) Parental Family Unit Background--the marital status of Parental Family Units of teenage husbands and teenage wives categorized as intact, separated, divorced, and deceased.
- (5) Parental Family Unit Mother's Age at Marriage--age at which the mother in the Parental Family Unit was first married.
- (6) Ordinal Position--the placement of the subject in his (her) Parental Family Unit in relation to his siblings.
- (7) Premarital or postmarital pregnancy (Revealed to the researcher by the teenage wife).

Forty-one couples completed the qualitative measures. This was accomplished when it was feasible for both husband and wife to complete them together under the supervision of the researcher. All were married less than 1 year and were expecting or had recently had an infant at the time the measures were completed. Qualitative measures used were:

- (1) Dymond's Q-Sort--a measure of self-description (Appendix B);
- (2) Dunn's Marital Role Expectations Inventory--a measure to indicate what both husband and wife had been taught to expect of marriage (Appendix C);

- (3) Parental Attitude Research Instrument--a measure concerned with attitudes toward parenthood and child-rearing (Appendix D).

Forty-eight wives participated in the Family Life Education class which met five periods per week for an 18 week semester. The researcher, who was also the teacher of the class, chose to use eight of Duvall's (1967) Developmental Tasks of the Establishment Phase of marriage as a frame of reference for the course of study. Each wife was asked to define "reality" for herself and her husband in terms of each developmental task at some point during the semester. This was accomplished through both oral and written assignments. Duvall's developmental tasks are:

- (1) establishing a home base to call their own
- (2) establishing mutually satisfactory systems for getting and spending money
- (3) establishing mutually acceptable patterns of who does what and who is accountable to whom
- (4) establishing a continuity of mutually satisfying sex relationships
- (5) establishing systems of intellectual and emotional communication
- (6) establishing workable relationships with relatives
- (7) establishing ways of interacting with friends, associates, and community organizations
- (8) facing the possibility of children and planning for their coming (p. 128).

Evaluations, written by the subjects, were considered routine at the conclusion of the young wives' participation in the Teenage Parents Research Project. The 48 young mothers were encouraged to share both positive and negative criticisms and to include suggestions for improving the program.

The evaluations made by the writer were both objective and subjective. The objective evaluations included: (1) a record of daily attendance; (2) a record of the dropout rate; and (3) the number of participants who attained their high school diploma as a result of their participation in the project; and (4) the infants and the complications of teenage pregnancy. Subjective evaluations included: (1) the nursery adjunct; (2) group problems; (3) separation and probable divorces; and (4) the extent to which the Teenage Marital Unit was helped as a result of their enrollment in the project.

### Subjects

The subjects were those teenage married and pregnant girls who enrolled in the Teenage Parents Research Project, their husbands, and the infants born to the unit. Previous to their enrollment they had been registered at sophomore, junior or senior levels at one or another of the local high schools in the city or county.

### The Teenage Parents Research Project

The Teenage Parents Research Project was a program of continuing high school education for the pregnant and married girl with special emphasis on family life education and child care. It provided a nursery for the infants where the teenage wives assumed partial responsibility for daily care of the infants of all the young mothers enrolled.

### Staff

The project was housed on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in a cottage originally designed as a Home Economics laboratory for high school students. Staff of the project consisted of the researcher, a second full time teacher certified by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to teach English and History, a part time teacher to teach Home Management, and a nursery supervisor to assist the young mothers in the nursery care procedures. The researcher's responsibility was to serve as head teacher and to teach Child Care and Family Life Education with emphasis on problems faced by the young wives during the time they were participants in the program.



## CHAPTER IV

## REPORT OF THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Subjects for this study included the teenage wives, their husbands and infants born to the marriage who were enrolled as a unit in the Teenage Parents Research Project during seven consecutive school semesters (1969-72). The teenage girl was accepted if, at the time she applied, she was pregnant and married and was enrolled at the sophomore, junior or senior level at a local high school. The final decision as to her acceptance into the program rested on whether or not there was space available in the nursery at the time the teenage wife anticipated delivery of her infant. The teenage wives and their infants then attended classes in the program for the remainder of the semester. Twenty completed their high school requirements in one semester. Eighteen remained for two semesters, six for three semesters, three for four semesters and one teenage wife chose to remain for five semesters.

The possibility of remaining in the program until the wife could attain her high school diploma and the limited availability of the crib space in the nursery imposed considerable limitations on the sample. Forty-eight couples participated in the study reported here. However, in regard

to the qualitative description of the couples, only 41 of the 48 couples satisfactorily completed the three measures essential to this portion of the study.

The first information to be presented is a demographic description of the 48 couples in the Teenage Parents Research Project (1969-72). The second section contains the report of the qualitative aspects of individual development, marital roles and attitudes toward parenthood. The third portion includes the enumeration of the problems confronting the Teenage Marital Units in their efforts to complete the developmental tasks associated with the establishment phase of marriage which included parenthood. The final information presented in this chapter includes extrapolations of the subject's evaluations and a brief evaluation by the researcher.

#### Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics used to describe the subjects included age, educational level, index of social class position, Parental Family Unit background, Parental Family Unit mother's age at marriage, ordinal position of the subjects in the Parental Family Unit of which they were a part, and whether or not conception took place prior to or after marriage.

The demographic characteristics are delineated in Frequency and/or Joint Frequency tables. The Joint Frequency

tables have been used to test for association between various attributes of the husbands and wives and their families. Data in these tables have been collapsed to the median so as not to have small N's in cells. The resulting information has been subjected to chi-square analysis.

### Age

The age recorded was that attained by the subject on his (her) birthdate nearest to the date of application for entrance into the project.

Table 2 describes the sample in terms of age. The ages of the wives on their birthdates nearest the date of application into the program ranged from 15 to 18 years. Of the 48 wives, three were 15 years of age, 12 were 16 years, 17 were 17 years and 16 were 18 years of age.

The ages of the husbands ranged from 16 to 24. One husband was 16 years of age, six were 17 years, nine were 18 years, 12 were 19 years, 10 were 20 years, four were 21 years, two were 22 years, three were 23 and one was 24 years of age.

As shown in Table 3 there was no significant relationship between the ages of the husbands and wives. All husbands were either older than their wives or equal in age, none being younger.

Table 2  
 Ages of Husbands and Wives Enrolled  
 in the Teenage Parents  
 Research Project

Age	Wives		Husbands	
	%	(N)	%	(N)
24			2	(1)
23			6	(3)
22			4	(2)
21			8	(4)
20			21	(10)
19			25	(12)
18	33	(16)	19	(9)
17	36	(17)	13	(6)
16	25	(12)	2	(1)
15	6	(3)	0	(0)
<b>Totals</b>	100	(48)	100	(48)

Table 3  
 Joint Frequency of Husband's  
 and Wife's Ages

		Ages of Husbands	
		younger (16-19)	older (20-24)
Ages of Wives	older (18)	9	7
	younger (15-17)	19	13

$$x^2 = < 1.0$$

Table 4 shows the relationship between differences in the couple's ages and the age of the wife. Older wives in this study were different from younger wives in that they chose husbands closer to their own age while younger wives married husbands who were either close to the wife's age or older than she. This is indicated at the .01 level of confidence.

Table 4  
 Joint Frequency of Age Difference Between  
 Husbands and Wives Enrolled in the  
 Teenage Parents Research Project

		Age Difference	
		Low	High
Age of Wife	High	15	1
	Low	16	14

$$x^2 = 7.8 \quad p < .01$$

In previous studies, Burchinal (1965), Glick (1957), and Lowrie (1965) reported that age difference between the spouses was inversely related to the age of the bride. Table 4 suggests that an actual correlation coefficient based on the age of the wife versus the age difference would be negative, as has been previously found. It qualifies the conclusion, however, in that the table is not symmetrical. Older girls do marry husbands near their age. Younger girls, however, instead of marrying primarily older husbands, may marry husbands either near their own age or not near.

#### Educational Level

Criteria for eligibility into the Teenage Parents Research Project required that the girl be enrolled at the sophomore, junior or senior level in a local high school. The educational level reported referred to the last level completed by the subjects. Therefore those registering as sophomores were recorded as having completed the ninth grade level. Three girls had completed this level only. Twenty subjects had completed the tenth grade and twenty-five had completed the eleventh grade. This is shown in Table 5. Sixteen of the husbands had dropped out of school at the ninth, tenth or eleventh grade levels. Twenty-four of the 48 had completed high school. The remaining eight were registered in local high schools at the time of this study. Of the forty-eight husbands, four had completed the ninth

Table 5  
Educational Levels of Forty-eight Couples  
in the Teenage Parents Research Project

Educational Level	Husbands		Droupout Husbands		Wives	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
12	50	(24)	0	(0)	0	(0)
11	23	(11)	10	(5)	52	(25)
10	19	(9)	17	(8)	42	(20)
9	8	(4)	6	(3)	6	(3)
Totals	100	(48)	33	(16)	100	(48)

grade, nine had completed the tenth grade, eleven had completed the eleventh grade, twenty-four had completed the twelfth grade and five of these twenty-four had enrolled at either a college or an institute of technology.

De Lissovoy and Hitchcock (1965) reported that of 395 married boys in 765 high schools in Pennsylvania, 67 per cent were married in their senior year and of the married girls, 44 per cent were married in their senior year. In the present study, of those husbands enrolled in high school, 75 per cent were in their senior year and 52 per cent of the wives were married in their senior year. Approximately 42 per cent were married in their eleventh year of school and 6 per cent married in their tenth year of school.

Gladdin (1968) reported that only 10 per cent of the student brides in Kentucky were married to males still in high school. Of the brides in the Teenage Parents Research Project, about 17 per cent were married to boys enrolled in high school. Fifty per cent of the husbands had completed high school and of these, approximately 10 per cent were enrolled in a post-high-school educational program. About 33.3 per cent of the husbands were high school dropouts. This dropout percentage is in line with Eshleman's (1965) study where one-third of the 82 husbands in the study were high school dropouts.

Table 6 is a Joint Frequency Table showing the association between the grade level of the wife and the educational status of the husbands who had either completed high school or had dropped out of high school. The association found here was significant at the .05 level of confidence. If the wife's educational level was higher, the husband most likely will have completed high school. If the wife's educational level was lower, the husband was more likely to be a high school dropout.

Burchinal (1968) reported that dropout rates among sixteen-year-old and seventeen-year old married persons had been high and that the rate of dropout husbands had become even higher when the husband was 18 or 19 years old at the time of marriage. Table 7 shows a direct association between the educational status of the husband and the age at



Table 6  
 Joint Frequency of the Wife's Grade  
 Level and the Educational Status  
 of the Husband

		Husbands	
		Completed High School	Dropped Out of School
Wife's Edu- cational Level	Level 11	17	5
	Level 9-10	7	11

$$x^2 = 6.1 \quad p < .05$$

Table 7  
 Teenage Husbands by Age and  
 Educational Status

Age	Husbands	
	High School Dropout	Completed High School
20-24	5	15
16-19	11	9

$$x^2 = 3.8 \quad p < .05$$

marriage. As the age of the husband increased he was more likely to have completed high school. This association, the reverse of that reported by Burchinal, was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

### Index of Social Position

Hollingshead's Two-Factor Index of Social Position (Hollingshead, 1965) was used to determine class levels. Class V represents the lowest range of social positions with each subsequent class level rising proportionately to the highest social position of Class I. Table 8 shows the distribution of husbands and wives within each social position.

Table 8  
Distribution of Husbands and Wives on  
Hollingshead Index of Social  
Position

Social Position Classes	Husbands		Wives	
	%	(N)	%	(N)
I (11-17)	0	(0)	4	(2)
II (18-31)	8	(4)	13	(6)
III (32-47)	21	(10)	25	(12)
IV (48-63)	44	(21)	44	(21)
V (64-77)	27	(13)	14	(7)
Totals	100	(48)	100	(48)

There was no association between the social positions of the husbands and wives in the Teenage Parents Research Project (Table 9). Had there been a greater representation in the upper social position, an association might have been found.

Table 9

Joint Frequency of Indices of Social Position for Subjects in the Teenage Parents Research Project

		Husbands	
		Upper Social Positions	Lower Social Positions
Wives	Lower Social Position	6	22
	Upper Social Position	8	12

$$x^2 = 1.9$$

Burchinal (1965) reported that young marriages disproportionately involve persons from the lower or working class backgrounds. LaBarre (1968) stated that husbands and fathers of the 10 married girls in her study belonged to the blue-collar-class of workers. The husbands and wives of this study, as indicated by Table 8 and 9, reflected a pattern similar to that discussed by LaBarre and Burchinal.

### Family Background

Family background was described as: intact, separated, divorced, and/or one or both parents deceased. Using these descriptions, Table 10 shows the family backgrounds of the teenage wives and their husbands who were subjects for the study. For three of the mothers in the Parental Family Unit, the present marriage was the second marriage. Of the Parental Family Units of the teenage wives 83.3 per cent were intact and 70.8 per cent of the husband's Parental Family Units were intact. LaBarre (1968) reported that all of the families of the 10 subjects in her study had suffered deprivation and instability. The majority of couples in the Teenage Parents Research Project apparently were members of relatively stable Parental Family Units.

Table 10

Joint Frequency of Family Backgrounds of Couples  
Enrolled in the Teenage Parents  
Research Project

		Husbands	
		Separated, Divorced or Deceased	Intact
Wives	Intact	9	27
	Separated Divorced or Deceased	5	7

$$x^2 = 1.2$$

Data presented in Table 10 also indicates that there was no association between the intactness of the wife's and husband's families. Wives with intact families more often married men from intact families, but the  $\chi^2$  did not approach significance.

Parental Family Unit: Mother's  
Age at Marriage

Table 11 describes the age at marriage of both the mother of the teenage wife and the mother of the teenage husband. LaBarre (1968) reported a generational pattern of early marriage among the teenage wives who were subjects of her study. Of the mothers of Parental Family Units represented in this research, 68.8 per cent of both husbands' and wives' mothers had been married at age 20 or under.

Table 12 shows a significant positive association between the age at which the wife's mother married and the age at which the husband's mother married. Teenage wives whose mother married young tended to marry boys whose mother had married young, and vice versa.

Ordinal Position of the Husbands and  
Wives in the Parental Family Units

Of the 96 husbands and wives, approximately 35 per cent were firstborns or only children. Table 13 shows an interesting trend towards a direct and positive association that first and only children tended to marry first and only children, and later children tended to marry later children.

Table 11  
 Parental Family Unit: Age at Marriage of Mothers  
 of Teenage Wives and Teenage Husbands

Age	Husbands' Mothers		Wives' Mothers	
	%	(N)	%	(N)
28	2	(1)	0	(0)
27	4	(2)	2	(1)
26	2	(1)	4	(2)
25	0	(0)	4	(2)
24	2	(1)	2	(1)
23	9	(4)	6	(3)
22	10	(5)	4	(2)
21	2	(1)	9	(4)
20	10	(5)	20	(10)
19	17	(8)	4	(2)
18	25	(12)	25	(12)
17	9	(4)	9	(4)
16	6	(3)	9	(4)
15	2	(1)	2	(1)
	100	(48)	100	(48)

Table 12  
 Joint Frequency of Ages at Marriage  
 of Mothers in the Parental  
 Family Unit

		Husbands' Ages 15-18	Mother's Ages 19-29
Wives' Ages	20-29	5	19
Mothers' Ages	15-19	15	9

$$x^2 = 8.6 \quad p < .01$$

Table 13  
 Ordinal Position in Parental Family Units  
 of Husbands and Wives Enrolled in the  
 Teenage Parents Research Project

		Husbands' Ordinal Position First or Only	Second or Later
Wives' Ordinal Position	Second or Later	8	19
	First or Only	12	9

$$x^2 = 3.7$$

The chi of 3.7 was .1 short of the 3.8 needed for .05 level of significance.

Premaritally or Postmaritally  
Pregnant

Five of the 48 couples were not anticipating a child on the date of their wedding. The remaining 90 per cent (43 of the 48 couples) of the wives were pregnant at the time the marriage occurred. Since marriage was required for eligibility into the program, this was higher than expected. Burchinal (1965), however, indicated that the estimates of percentages of teenage wives who were premaritally pregnant ranged from 30 to 90 per cent. Moss (1961) stated that between one-third and one-half of teenage wives were premaritally pregnant. Anderson and Latts (1965) found that 69 per cent of the teenage wives in their sample were pregnant at the time of marriage. Eshleman reported that 43 per cent of the young wives were pregnant prior to the marriage in his sample of 82 wives.

Bartz and Nye (1970) reported that 87 per cent of teenage wives were pregnant when both the husband and the wife were enrolled in school. In the present study when both husband and wife were enrolled in high school, all the couples were anticipating parenthood at the time of their marriage. It must be remembered that pregnancy or birth of a child was a prerequisite for entering the Teenage Parents Research Project.



### Summary and Discussion

The couples in the Teenage Parents Research Project reflected demographic characteristics generally similar to those of several other research studies concerned with Teenage Marital Units. While the age range of the teenage wives was 15 to 18 years, that of the husbands was 16 to 24 years. Older wives were more likely to choose husbands closer to their own age while younger wives tended to choose either younger or older husbands.

Obviously all the teenage wives were enrolled in a high school program at the time of marriage. Of the husbands, eight were enrolled in high school, 24 had completed high school and 16 had dropped out of high school. The data suggested that when the wife's education level was higher, the husband would most likely have completed high school. If the wife's educational level was lower, the husband was more likely to be a high school dropout. The greater number of both husbands and wives were married during their senior year in high school when both were enrolled in a high school program at the time of marriage. The 33.3 per cent dropout rate of husbands was similar to that of previous research (Eshleman, 1965). In opposition to Burchinal's report that eighteen- to nineteen-year-old husbands are more likely to be high school dropouts than are sixteen- to seventeen-year-old husbands, in the present study, data indicated that

there was a high association between the higher age at marriage and the possibility of the husbands' having completed his high school education.

The highest concentration of both husbands and wives in the indices of social class position were in the two lower of five social class positions. This was in agreement with other samples studied by Burchinal (1965) and LaBarre (1968). There was no indication that wives of one social class position chose husbands of a similar social class position.

In contrast to LaBarre's (1968) observation, the teenage wives and their husbands came from families with a high rate of stability. There did not appear to be an association between the wives from intact families showing preference for husbands from intact families and vice versa.

Data in the present study supported findings by LaBarre (1968) that young couples reflect a generational pattern of early marriage. Approximately 69 per cent of both the husbands' and wives' mothers had married at age 20 or under. Further findings indicated that there was a significant association between the wives whose mothers married early and their preference for husbands whose mothers had also married early. Further similarities between husbands and wives was indicated in a trend for first and only children to marry first and only children. Such

findings may be indicative of similar backgrounds and may suggest the possibility of similar personality attributes.

Ninety per cent of the teenage wives in this study were pregnant at the time of the marriage. This was in agreement with the highest estimates of premarital pregnancy among teenage wives reported by Burchinal (1965). All of the brides in this study were premaritally pregnant in those cases where both husband and wife were enrolled in high school at the time of the marriage.

#### Qualitative Aspects of the Teenage Marital Units

Curriculum for the Teenage Marital Units enrolled in the Teenage Parents Research Project was planned to relieve three crises which the young wife faced concurrently when she was both married and pregnant. These three crisis were first suggested by LaBarre (1968) and were referred to as the "triple crisis." They included: (1) the adjustments essential for the young wife to complete her adolescent tasks and establish a positive adult identity; (2) the adjustments required to attain a satisfactory marital relationship; and (3) the crisis of the first pregnancy and the accompanying apprehensions of parenthood.

In order to initiate dialogue and discussion pertaining to these crisis in classes in Family Life and in Child Care, three measures were administered shortly after entrance

into the project: (1) Dymond's Q-Sort (Appendix B) was selected as a means of determining the positiveness of the subjects' personal identity; (2) the Dunn Marital Role Expectations Inventory (Appendix C) was used to evaluate their expectations of marital roles; and (3) the Parental Attitude Research Instrument (Appendix D) was administered to gain insight into their attitudes toward parenthood prior to the parenthood phase of their lives or immediately after parenthood had occurred. Through the use of these instruments, certain qualitative aspects of the Teenage Marital Units could be described.

Forty-one of the 48 couples who participated in the study completed these three measures satisfactorily for purposes of the research. These were completed separately by husbands and wives during the same block of time and under the supervision of the researcher. The following presentation is a report of the findings resulting from the use of these three instruments.

#### Dymond's Q-Sort

Dymond's Q-Sort (Appendix B) is a collection of the 37 positive statements and 37 negative statements relating to personal identity which the subjects are asked to sort into nine piles. By forced choice, the subject must place those statements most descriptive of him at one end and those least descriptive of him at the other. Positive

statements used to describe himself and negative statements placed on piles that describe him least are counted to yield the subject's adjustment score. Scores ranging between 39 and 54 are considered "high" and those between 17 and 38 are considered "low" adjustment scores. Table 14 shows the husbands' and wives' scores in seven, 5-point intervals.

Table 14  
Husbands' and Wives' Scores on  
the Dymond Q-Sort  
N = 41

Score Interval	Husbands % (N)	Wives % (N)
51-56	0 (0)	0 (0)
45-50	2 (1)	0 (0)
39-44	46 (19)	61 (25)
33-38	25 (10)	30 (12)
27-32	17 (7)	7 (3)
21-26	5 (2)	2 (1)
15-20	5 (2)	0 (0)

$\bar{H}$  = 36.15    S.D. 6.83  
 $\bar{W}$  = 38.22    S.D. 4.45  
 $t$  = 1.79  
 $r$  = .19

More wives (61 per cent) than husbands (48 per cent) scored "high" on the Dymond instrument ( $\bar{H} = 36.15$ ;  $\bar{W} = 38.22$ ). The  $t$  value is at the 10 per cent confidence level and is suggestive of a significant difference between the two groups. A  $t$  value of 2.02 is needed for  $p < .05$ .

Martinson (1959) compared 32 matched pairs of married and single males who had married within a 4 year period following high school graduation. The  $t$  test comparisons of an "adjustment inventory" indicated that the young married men had a less favorable score than did the single men. The subscore difference on emotional adjustment reached the  $p < .02$  level of confidence. In a similar study where Martinson (1955) matched 59 pairs of single and married girls, the subjects' mean total score difference was also significant at the  $p < .02$  level of confidence. Martinson concluded that when variables (sex, age, intelligence, position in the family, nationality, father's occupation, community and amount of education) were controlled, persons who married early demonstrated greater feelings of ego-deficiency than did persons who remained single.

Both husbands and wives in the present study might also have had a similar tendency toward ego-deficiency. While the wives' mean was somewhat higher than the husbands' mean, there was no significant difference between them and the majority of both groups of scores hovered closely around the interval between "high" and "low" adjustment scores.

However, a vital endeavor of the Teenage Parents Research Project was to serve as a positive and supportive experience for those girls who married and became pregnant during their high school careers. If the program was seen as such, the young wives who were admitted should have profited in becoming more positive and more satisfied with their self-images at the time they entered. The combined support of both peers and a staff at the program may have accentuated the wife's positiveness and serendipitously heightened the ego-deficiency of the husbands who had little opportunity to participate, and who as a group, often failed to respond at the times that such opportunity was provided.

The husband-wife adjustment scores were correlated using the Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation to determine whether the marriage showed agreement between spouses' adjustment levels. The correlation between husband and wife scores (.19) was not significant. Thus, in general, there appeared to be no agreement between husband's and wife's personal adjustment.

#### Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory

Marital role expectations may be defined as attitudes a person has come to hold about how he himself or his spouse should behave within the framework of marriage. The Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory contains seven categories: (1) Authority; (2) Homemaking; (3) Care of Children;

(4) Personal Characteristics; (5) Social Participation; (6) Education; and (7) Employment and Support. A low score indicates a trend toward "traditionalism" while a higher score indicates a leaning toward a more "egalitarian" marriage. Total scores may range from 0 to 71.

Table 15 shows the range of scores and the percentages of husbands' and wives' scores within 9-point intervals. Using 35 as the midpoint between "traditional" and "egalitarian" scores, the majority of both husbands and wives showed an "egalitarian" trend.

Table 15  
Husbands' and Wives' Scores on the Dunn  
Marital Role Expectations Inventory  
N = 41

Score Interval	Husbands % (N)	Wives % (N)
62-71	7 (3)	2 (1)
52-61	32 (13)	54 (22)
42-51	45 (18)	30 (12)
32-41	7 (3)	9 (4)
22-31	7 (3)	4 (2)
12-21	2 (1)	0 (0)
0-11	0 (0)	0 (0)



Table 16 shows the mean scores, the standard deviations, and the  $t$  values of the means on each of the seven categories and the total of the seven categories. The wives' mean was higher (more "egalitarian") on the categories of: (1) Authority; (2) Care of Children; (3) Personal Characteristics; (4) Social Participation; (5) Employment and Support; and (6) Total Score. The husbands' mean was higher on the Homemaking and Education categories. However, in only two of the seven categories was there a significant difference between the means. The difference between the means in the Personal Characteristics category was significant ( $p < .05$ ). The difference between the means in the category Employment and Support was highly significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

As in all seven categories, that of Personal Characteristics included "traditional" and "egalitarian" statements. In response to the statements in the category, the young wife leaned toward "egalitarianism" and held that companionship, attractiveness, enjoyment of family, being affectionate and understanding were more important characteristics than being thrifty, a good cook and a good housekeeper or for her husband to be a respectable and good provider. The husband on the other hand chose the "traditional" view on role expectations and held that respectability and being a good provider were deserving traits and that the wife being thrifty, a good cook and

Table 16  
 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and  $t$  Values  
 on the Dunn Marital Role  
 Expectation Inventory  
 N = 41

Categories	Husbands		Wives		$t$ Values
	$\bar{H}$	S.D.	$\bar{W}$	S.D.	
Authority	7.12	1.86	7.43	1.88	<1.00
Homemaking	7.00	2.37	6.49	2.40	1.30
Care of Children	9.53	2.09	10.10	1.56	1.40
Personal Characteristics	5.63	2.12	6.71	1.21	2.74*
Social Partici- pation	6.82	2.61	6.98	1.74	<1.00
Education	7.41	2.42	7.17	2.27	<1.00
Employment and Support	4.34	1.28	5.41	1.28	3.96**
Total Score	47.88	10.34	50.54	8.02	1.30

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .001$

housekeeper should be in first place. This difference of views was significant ( $p < .05$ ).

In the category of Employment and Support the wife believed that she should have the right to combine motherhood and a career if she chose and thereby contribute to the family income. The husband again chose the more traditional stand and saw himself as the chief provider and his wife as one who should be dedicated to making a home and caring for

the children. The difference of views between the husbands and wives in this category was significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Blood (1969) stated that it is rare in American society that a combination is found where the husband is more egalitarian than the wife. The findings in this area therefore would have been anticipated. It was quite likely that as shown in the present study, the most significant difference would lie in the categories of Personal Characteristics and Employment and Support and to a lesser extent in other areas. However, in the category of Homemaking and Education the very urgency of the situation may have necessitated a reversal of the husbands' role expectations in order to cope with the reality of the situation.

Correlations were used to compute the relationship between the husband's marital role expectations and the wife's marital role expectations. Table 17 shows the correlation values. Significant correlations of  $p < .01$  were found in two of the seven categories, i.e. Homemaking and Education. The other categories did not show significant relationships between husband and wife scores.

Comparing this sample of 41 couples with a temporally and geographically similar sample studied by Anderson (1972) revealed an interesting contrast. Anderson, using the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory, found high correlations between role expectations of 52 matched

Table 17  
 Correlation Values of Husbands' and Wives' Scores on  
 the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory  
 N = 41

Categories	Correlations (r)*
Authority	.13
Homemaking	.44**
Care of Children	.03
Personal Characteristics	-.07
Social Participation	.13
Education	.44**
Employment and Support	.08
Total	.03

\* Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient

\*\*  $p < .01$

pairs of husbands and wives seeking marriage counseling and also those not seeking counseling. While there was some variation in correlations, there was no significant difference between the two groups. In four of the seven areas both groups showed significant agreement between the husband and the wife. In two of the remaining three, one group showed a significant correlation while the other showed a positive but non-significant correlation. Only in the case of Employment and Support did both groups show a non-significant correlation or lack of agreement.

The participants in this study responded in a somewhat different way. Evidence indicated that there was often a lack of agreement (no correlation) among the Teenage Marital Units studied. In only two of the seven categories, Education and Homemaking, did the couples in the present study agree significantly ( $p < .01$ ) about role expectations.

Little research is available which has included both husband's and wife's responses to role expectations. However Couch (1958), in studying 32 couples, found that the degree of consensus on role and accuracy of role-taking tended to increase with length of marriage. Blood (1969) stated that most couples experience an incompatibility of roles in early marriage and that couples realign their expectations and enactments sooner or later. This may mean that there is little agreement regarding role expectations in the early years of marriage (regardless of the age at which marriage occurs) and that congruency of expectations may be expected to increase with years of marriage.

Anderson's (1972) subjects had been married considerably longer than the couples who were subjects in the present study. The number of years the couples in Anderson's study had been married may have been more significant in the resulting high correlations than whether or not the couples were seeking counseling. The subjects in the research presented here were married less than a year and quite possibly

will reach a greater degree of consensus as the years of marriage increase.

At the time this measure was completed in the present study it was quite likely that few discrepancies between role expectations had been experienced. Possibly, in the areas of Education and Homemaking this had occurred and due to a practical urgency, the discrepancy in these categories had been resolved, thereby resulting in significant correlations ( $p < .01$ ).

#### Parental Attitude Research Instrument

The PARI measures 23 concepts on parent-child relationships. The instrument consists of 115 statements (23 5-item scales) which are cyclically arranged so that the first sub-scale concept includes items 1, 24, 47, 70 and 93; the second sub-scale concept includes items 2, 25, 48, 71, and 94; etc. Subjects are asked to respond to a Likert-type scale from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, to Strongly Disagree. There are no right or wrong answers.

Table 18 shows the means, the standard deviations and the  $t$  values of the husbands' and wives' scores on the 23 sub-scales (concepts) of the PARI instrument. The difference between the mean of the husbands' scores in the concept of Acceleration of Development was significant at the  $p < .001$  level, with the husband having the higher

Table 18  
 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and  $t$  Values  
 on Twenty-three Concepts of the Parental  
 Attitude Research Instrument  
 N = 41

Concepts (Sub-scales)	Husbands		Wives		$t$ Values
	$\bar{H}$	S.D.	$\bar{W}$	S.D.	
Encouraging Verbaliza- tion	15.00	2.27	16.51	2.27	3.04**
Fostering Dependency	11.41	2.98	11.00	2.52	< 1.00
Seclusion of the Mother	13.12	1.62	12.10	2.21	2.80**
Breaking the Will	11.98	2.23	11.34	2.12	1.53
Martyrdom	12.54	2.38	11.98	2.38	1.11
Fear of Harming the Baby	13.68	2.08	14.93	2.55	2.92**
Marital Conflict	14.49	1.86	15.29	2.35	2.14*
Strictness	12.95	2.30	12.90	2.55	< 1.00
Irritability	13.59	2.17	12.98	2.17	1.39
Excluding Outside Influences	12.00	2.52	12.20	2.57	< 1.00
Deification	13.24	2.43	13.85	2.28	1.33
Suppression of Aggression	11.24	2.81	11.78	1.97	1.14
Rejection of Home- making Role	12.66	2.03	12.17	2.64	< 1.00
Equalitarianism	14.76	2.20	15.68	1.74	2.07*
Approval of Activity	13.51	1.93	13.07	2.26	< 1.00

(table continued on next page)

Table 18 (continued)

Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and  $t$  Values  
on Twenty-three Concepts of the Parental  
Attitude Research Instrument  
N = 41

Concepts (Sub-scales)	Husbands		Wives		$t$ Values
	$\bar{H}$	S.D.	$\bar{W}$	S.D.	
Avoidance of Com- munication	11.73	2.20	10.88	2.45	1.96
Inconsiderateness of Husband	13.02	2.37	12.39	2.61	1.26
Suppression of Sexuality	10.41	2.48	9.22	1.62	3.23**
Ascendancy of the Mother	11.51	1.80	11.24	2.02	1.00
Intrusiveness	11.51	3.30	10.73	2.30	1.50
Comradeship and Sharing	15.88	2.06	16.98	1.85	2.37*
Acceleration of Development	13.88	1.82	11.92	2.62	3.77***
Dependency of the Mother	14.39	2.10	13.71	2.94	1.39

\* $p < .05$   
\*\* $p < .01$   
\*\*\* $p < .001$

mean. Means which differed at the  $p < .01$  level of significance and where the wives had the higher mean were:

(1) Encouraging Verbalization; and (2) Fear of Harming the Baby. Those which differed at the  $p < .01$  level of significance and where the husband had the higher mean were:



(1) Seclusion of the Mother; and (2) Suppression of Sexuality. In three sub-scales the mean differed significantly at the  $p < .05$  level: (1) Marital Conflict; (2) Equalitarianism; and (3) Comradeship and Sharing. In all three of these sub-scales the wives had the higher mean.

Quite understandably the young mothers were significantly different (.01) from their husbands in that they reflected a greater fear of harming the baby. They also saw themselves as being totally responsible in the event that an accident involving the baby might occur.

The teenage wives indicated that they would:

(1) encourage their child to disagree with the parents;  
(2) discuss fairness of family rules with the children;  
(3) allow the child to express his viewpoint and enter into family decision-making; and (4) hoped that the child would seek help from the parents if he was in trouble. The teenage husbands differed from their wives in this concept (Encouraging Verbality) at the .01 level.

The young wives differed from their husbands at the .05 level in that they accepted marital conflict in a more realistic and objective way. They considered some conflict as being inevitable and did not see it as being a threat to the marital relationship.

Parenthood as seen by the young mothers necessitated seeing the children as being more equal in decision making and other considerations. The young fathers were less

equalitarian in their views. The difference in the concept of Equalitarianism was at the  $p < .05$  level.

The husbands felt more strongly ( $p < .01$ ) than their wives that a woman's place was in the home as indicated by their responses to the concept "Seclusion of Mother." They differed too in that they believed that children should be shielded from hearing about sex, from seeing other children undress and that curiosity about sex indicated an abnormality. The difference between the means in the concept of Suppression of Sexuality was significant at the .01 level.

The greatest difference (.001) was in the concept of Acceleration and Development. The young husbands believed in earlier toilet training and earlier weaning as compared with their wives' responses in this concept.

Generally the differences between the means indicate a greater permissiveness among the mothers than among the fathers. While this may be seen as a cultural aspect rather than a significant difference between the husbands and wives in this sample it may also be a result of the positive and supportive atmosphere of the program. The instrument was administered early in the period of participation. Nevertheless, the affirmative acceptance by the staff and the subject enrollees was readily experienced by the new subject. The young mother's attitude toward herself and her condition of expectant motherhood became more positive almost at once.

The young wife's permissive attitude toward parent-child relationships may be a reflection of the program's positiveness. The husband, on the other hand, had little or no participation in the program prior to the time when the instrument was administered. Had he been more involved in the planning for and sharing of parenthood experiences he too may have responded in a more permissive and positive way. Kivett (1959), in a study of nursery school parents concluded that the husbands and wives in that study did not differ significantly on parental attitudes. The couples in the present study differed in eight of the 23 concepts (sub-scales), or in approximately one-third of the concepts.

Table 19 reflects the correlational analysis of the husband's and wife's scores on the 23 sub-scales of the PARI. A significant relationship of  $p < .01$  was found for husband's and wife's scores on the concepts of:

(1) Strictness; and (2) Suppression of Sexuality. At the  $p < .05$  level there was a significant relationship between scores on: (1) Fear of Harming the Baby; and (2) Marital Conflict. The following concepts were between the  $p < .10$  and  $p < .05$  levels of significance: (1) Seclusion of the Mother; (2) Breaking the Will; (3) Excluding Outside Influences; (4) Avoidance of Communication; and (5) Dependency of the Mother.

Table 19  
 Correlation Values of Husband and Wife  
 Responses to the Parental Attitude  
 Research Instrument  
 N = 41

Concepts (Subscales)	<u>r*</u>	Concepts (Sub-scales)	<u>r*</u>
Encouraging Verbaliza- tion	.01	Rejection of the Homemaking Role	.09
Fostering Dependency	.17	Equalitarianism	-.05
Seclusion of the Mother	.28	Approval of Activity	-.13
Breaking the Will	.25	Avoidance of Communication	.29
Martyrdom	.08	Inconsiderateness of the Husband	.16
Fear of Harming the Baby	.32**	Suppression of Sexuality	.39***
Marital Conflict	.36**	Ascendancy of the Mother	.10
Strictness	.40***		
Irritability	.16	Intrusiveness	.24
Excluding Outside Influence	.28	Comradeship and Sharing	-.15
Deification	.22	Acceleration of Development	-.09
Suppression of Aggression	.24	Dependency of the Mother	.25

\*Pearson Product--Moment Coefficient

\*\* p < .05

\*\*\* p < .01

While there are few reported studies with which to compare correlational values of husband and wife responses as the PARI, it may mean that a pattern similar to that reported previously to explain the correlational values on the Dunn Marital Role Expectations may be operating here also. Possibly the husbands and wives have discussed Strictness and Suppression of Sexuality (.01) in terms of their childhood experiences and have reached an agreement as to plans for the rearing of their child. Fear of Harming the Baby (.05) and Marital Conflict (.05) may also have been discussed. As the young marriage continues and they share the parenthood experience they may reach a consensus on other concepts on the PARI.

#### Summary and Discussion

While there was no significant difference on Dymond's Q-Sort between mean scores of husbands and wives approximately 61 per cent of the wives as compared to 48 per cent of the husbands attained a "high" adjustment score (positive identity). Throughout the study the researcher had observed that the young wives and mothers reflected a positive attitude to pregnancy and motherhood. Parenthood was seen as a rewarding achievement. This, coupled with the fact that the attainment of a high school diploma was made possible through a supportive program, possibly enabled them to view themselves as able to deal positively with their life situations.

The same reflection of positive attitude toward self was not apparent among the husbands, who in fact generally scored lower (less positively) than their wives on the measure. The young husbands were less at ease in discussions about pregnancy, birth and parenthood and indeed tended to avoid such discussions. Whereas the young wife was reinforced by her mother, her obstetrician, the project staff, and her peers in the program, the young husband's lack of positive identity may have been reinforced by the same individuals as a result of little opportunity for him to participate and also of unwillingness to participate when the opportunity was provided. It appeared to the researcher that many of the young husbands saw little access to a meaningful role of expectant parenthood.

The Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory total score means suggested that the wives of the present study were more "egalitarian" than their husbands. While the  $t$  was not significant at the .05 level the difference can be reported at the .10 level of confidence. In the category of Personal Characteristics the groups differed at the  $p < .05$  level, and in the category of Employment and Support the  $t$  value indicated a significant difference at the  $p < .001$  level. The teenage wives in both categories had the higher mean (more egalitarian). The young wife believed that companionship, attractiveness, enjoyment of family, being affectionate and understanding were more important than the

traditional wife's role of being a good cook, and a good housekeeper. The teenage wife believed too that she should have the right to combine a career and motherhood. In these categories the husband leaned toward "traditional" expectations for himself and his wife. Generally, husbands are seen as being more traditional than their wives (Blood, 1969). The young couples in the present study were no exception to that generalization.

The correlational scores on the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory suggested agreement with a trend reported by Couch (1958). Couch suggested that the degree of consensus on role expectations between husband and wife, tended to increase with the length of marriage. The Teenage Marital Units agreed significantly only in the two categories of Education and Homemaking. Because the wives in this study were motivated to continue high school and their husbands overtly supported them in this effort, there may in fact have been agreement between the husband and wife in the category of Education. In order to make possible the wife's attendance at school, the need to agree on sharing of homemaking responsibilities (Homemaking Category) might also have been resolved. The other categories of role expectations at this point in time might not have had the same degree of urgency. It is quite likely that as these marriages continue, other categories of expectations will

require discussion that will lead to consensus between husband and wife.

The group of wives in the present study differed significantly from their husbands in eight of the 23 sub-scales of the PARI. Those sub-scales in which there was a significant difference and where the wives mean score was higher were: (1) Encouraging Verbalization ( $p < .01$ ); (2) Fear of Harming the Baby ( $p < .01$ ); (3) Marital Conflict ( $p < .05$ ); (4) Equalitarianism ( $p < .05$ ) and (5) Comradeship and Sharing ( $p < .05$ ). Those sub-scales in which the difference in Scores was significant and where the husbands' mean scores were higher were: (1) Seclusion of the Mother ( $p < .01$ ); (2) Suppression of Sexuality ( $p < .01$ ); and (3) Acceleration of Development ( $p < .001$ ).

In the Fear of Harming the Baby sub-scale the wives registered considerably more concern than did the husbands. They were young mothers, inexperienced and felt a deep sense of responsibility for the care of their baby. In all other areas the young mother was more permissive than was the young father. This may have resulted from the association of the wife with the positive and supportive educational program. While the Teenage Marital Unit enrolled as a family unit, there was much less opportunity for the husband to participate. Too, the PARI was administered early in the period of participation when the husband had been involved only in a minimal way.



While there are few reported studies with which to compare the correlational values of the responses of husbands and wives on the PARI, a pattern similar to that of the correlational values on the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory may be operating here also. The concepts most real to the teenage husbands and wives possibly may be the very ones they have had a need to discuss, either as a result of their anticipation of imminent parenthood or as a result of sharing memories of their childhood experiences. As the responsibilities of parenthood become more realistic, it is possible that a closer relationship between other parental attitudes will also evolve.

The PARI does not offer the possibility to place respondents on a continuum as is possible with the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory scores. However, one could speculate that there might be a relationship between the husbands' more traditional scores on the Dunn Inventory and their more restrictive child-rearing attitudes on the PARI. Similarly, there may be a relationship between the wives' egalitarian scores on the Dunn Inventory and their more permissive attitudes on the PARI. It may be that the supportive program for the wives enhanced these qualitative aspects as well as the personal adjustment scores to the extent that greater discrepancy was reflected than ordinarily may exist between teenage husbands and wives. Or, one might further speculate that the more ego-deficient male is more

likely to be traditionally and restrictively oriented, and that, should the husband's self-image be enhanced, the discrepancy between the husband and wife scores on the other qualitative aspects might be minimized. Further study could yield information about whether the three qualitative aspects measured in this study are in fact related to each other.

#### Enumeration of the Problems

The Family Life Education Curriculum for the teenage wives was focused on the development of a workable pattern that would lead to the fulfillment of a marital commitment. The first unit covered those characteristics which make each marriage unique as well as those commonalities which may strengthen a marriage. The second unit included a discussion of emotional needs and the various patterns individuals had learned to use in seeking to meet emotional needs. The third unit reviewed briefly the eight stages of the family life cycle, i.e., (1) beginning families; (2) childbearing families; (3) families with preschool children; (4) families with school children; (5) families with teenagers; (6) families as launching centers; (7) families in the middle years; and (8) aging families (Duvall, 1967, p. 9).

Problems of marriage for the 48 wives were reviewed in unit four. The following Developmental Tasks associated with the Establishment Phase for beginning

families (Duvall, 1967) were used as a frame of reference to discuss marital problems.

- (1) establishing a home base to call their own
- (2) establishing mutually satisfactory systems for getting and spending money
- (3) establishing mutually acceptable patterns of who does what and who is accountable to whom
- (4) establishing a continuity of mutually satisfying sex relationships
- (5) establishing systems of intellectual and emotional communication
- (6) establishing workable relationships with relatives
- (7) establishing ways of interacting with friends, associates, and community organizations
- (8) facing the possibility of children and planning for their coming (p. 128).

In order to assist the teenage wives in the development of a workable pattern that would lead to the fulfillment of their marital commitments within the frame of reference aforementioned the researcher developed an approach based on an existential philosophy and behavior modification theory (Appendix E). The young wives were asked to "define reality" in terms of their feelings. This included a description of the problems involved in completing each of Duvall's (1965) eight developmental tasks in relation to their marriage.

The following accounts are extrapolations of the problems cited, either written or orally, by the 48

wives who were participants in the Family Life Education classes.

Establishing a Home Base to  
Call Their Own

Of 48 couples, 18 (37.5%) lived in a trailer, a small house or an apartment. Problems they reported included the following:

- (1) The rent absorbed too much of their income to make independent living very satisfactory.
- (2) The best they could afford was a "cheap apartment" which was "crawling with roaches."
- (3) The only "reasonable apartment" was in an unsafe neighborhood.
- (4) The apartment was not comfortable and was a "firetrap."

The remaining 30 couples (62.5% of the total) lived with a Parental Family Unit, other relatives or friends. Eighteen of these 30 couples lived with the wife's Parental Family Unit, five lived with the husband's Parental Family Unit, three rotated from one Parental Family Unit to the other in an arranged pattern, two lived with a grandmother and two couples lived with friends. Specific problems these couples reported in coping with this developmental task, in order of frequency, were:

- (1) They had a lack of privacy.

- (2) The husband depended too much on his parents (in-laws) and became irresponsible.
- (3) Conditions were too crowded and the infant had to share the same bedroom as the parents.
- (4) Sleeping hours, routines and habits of the Teenage Marital Unit and the Parental Family Unit differed and were incompatible.

Certain positive attitudes were reported by some couples who were not living independently, and these included:

- (1) . . . We really have no choice and must thank parents for being able to live with them and thereby limit our expenses . . . . Only this makes our future goal of independent living a reality (Teenage Wife).
- (2) . . . Living with in-laws is a hardship but we share this hardship. In saving money for the future and in sharing this hardship, we feel that we strengthen our marriage (Teenage Wife).

#### Establishing Mutually Satisfactory Systems for Getting and Spending Money

Of the 48 couples in this research, two were receiving welfare assistance during their enrollment in the project. In both cases the husband was incapacitated and welfare assistance became a necessity. The other 36 couples were able to sustain themselves with part time, full time (and in some cases both part time and full time) jobs and with varying amounts of assistance from the Parental Family Unit. Eight of the husbands were in the armed services

during the course of the study. Some husbands were employed in low-paying jobs: mill-hands, retail sales, food service, warehouse stock movers, gas station attendants. Better pay was obtained by those who had jobs related to construction, such as electrician, carpentry, gutter-smith, bricklaying, plumbing, etc.

Problems related to this developmental task focused largely on the lack of sufficient income. Those reported in order of frequency were:

- (1) Bills for maternity care seemed insurmountable.
- (2) There was no need to budget. All money was allocated for essentials before it was received.
- (3) The husband was less willing to do without than was the wife.
- (4) Learning to do without was a "rough" experience for both husband and wife.
- (5) Employment of the teenage wife was the only answer to getting ahead.
- (6) The wife had no allowance and felt pressured when she had personal needs.
- (7) There was little money available for recreation.
- (8) High pressure salespersons were difficult to cope with.
- (9) It was embarrassing to accept financial assistance from the Parental Family Unit.

Positive statements concerning these tasks included:

- (1) The husband was willing to assume full financial responsibility in order that the wife might complete her education.
- (2) Saving was difficult but the small bank balance gave great satisfaction to them.
- (3) There was much satisfaction in knowing that both of them were willing to sacrifice and save.
- (4) Facing mutual need for money made mutual understanding of money matters more important.

Establishing Mutually Acceptable  
Patterns of Who Does What and Who  
Is Accountable to Whom

Problems associated with role expectations as seen by the teenage wives, in order of frequency were:

- (1) The husband was irresponsible in "picking up after himself"; litter, consisting of clothes, cigarette ashes, magazines, bottles, glasses, etc. were left for the wife to clean up.
- (2) The wife saw the husband as the "head of the household," but frequently saw his material needs being met or regarded as essential while the wife's went unmet.
- (3) When the wife attended school, or when she was employed, she believed that her husband should have shared in the housekeeping chores.

- (4) Both husband and wife experienced conflict in choosing between a deep-seated feeling that the young mother should stay home with the baby and the objective necessity of her working in order to help with the family's expenses.
- (5) Wives frequently complained that their husbands expected them to prepare and serve meals and arrange home schedules in accordance with their husbands' TV-watching schedule.
- (6) Wives felt that the husbands emphasized the need for them to be good housekeepers and cook in preference to their being attractive and companionable, the latter qualities being ones valued by the wives.
- (7) Only two wives reported dissatisfaction with their husbands because of unwillingness to share the care of the baby.
- (8) Two teenage wives reported that their husbands felt that their high school education was not important and wished them to drop from the program.

Establishing a Continuity of Mutually Satisfying Sex Relationships

Problems related to sexual adjustment identified by the teenage wives in the order of frequency were:



- (1) More information concerning sex should have been available to them during their growing years.
- (2) When the young wife asked for affection almost always this implied sex to the husband and he "expects to jump right into bed."
- (3) The wives felt a greater need for affection and understanding rather than "just a physical experience." Some reported that husbands were not aware that women have the capacity for reaching orgasm. Some reported husbands who thought that the woman didn't "get anything out of it," and frequently "cut me off short."
- (4) The teenage wives reported that they were willing to read about and discuss sexual matters but their husbands were not. One wife asserted that her husband felt that it was "bad" and should not be discussed openly.
- (5) A number of the teenage wives felt exploited and reported that the husbands insisted on "having sex" even when the wife didn't feel up to it.

Establishing Systems of Intellectual  
and Emotional Communication

Approximately 25 per cent of the teenage wives enrolled in the Teenage Parents Research Project were physically abused by their husbands one or more times. Nevertheless, most of the wives expressed the feeling that

they were communicating adequately or were learning to communicate satisfactorily. Apparently, in their thinking the beatings were separated from communication which was interpreted by the teenage wives as "talking to someone." When asked to describe the problems involved in completing the task, only 10 reported dissatisfaction with communication.

Many young wives reported that their own Parental Family Unit conflicts had left an impression and that they were making a real effort to avoid the same patterns. "Gradually we are learning what to leave as it is and what to say something about." Problems they cited, in order of frequency included:

- (1) Most of the teenage wives felt that they were more difficult to get along with during their pregnancies: "I am more emotional now than before I was pregnant"; "I lose my temper"; "I take things the wrong way and won't talk about it"; "When I'm cranky I snap at him."
- (2) The wives reported that most of the time they were indirect in their approach to discussing a particular issue.
- (3) While not registering great dissatisfaction with communication, the majority admitted that they wished they were better able to talk to their husbands. Patterns of communication cited were:
  - (a) an attempt to discuss things calmly always

- ended up in an argument; (b) always arguing about "this 'n that" before really coming to the point; (c) the husband "pouts and clams up," or "sits in front of TV and won't listen" or "picks up and leaves the house," and "stays mad for days."
- (4) Several wives said, "When my husband is pressured at work he takes it out on me."
- (5) Many admitted difficulty on the part of both husband and wife in admitting a wrong and saying "I'm sorry."
- (6) Several wives reported that their husbands were so rarely at home that there was little opportunity to communicate. "He comes home from work, eats, and goes out with the boys, or watches television."

#### Establishing Workable Relationships with Relatives

Very few of the 48 wives stated that there was no friction between the Teenage Marital Unit and the Parental Family Units. Problems with relatives described by the young wives in order of frequency were:

- (1) The Parental Family Unit mothers in particular (and sometimes both parents in either of the Parental Family Units) were seen as a threat: "Parents want their children to be dependent on them"; "My husband's mother is too attached to

him"; "I want to take care of my husband myself"; "My husband is hurt when I ask my folks for advice or accept gifts from them"; "My husband will have to make a choice--me or his mother."

- (2) The Parental Family Unit was seen as refusing to accept the young couple as an independent family unit: "In-laws don't understand that we must make our own decisions"; "We are afraid of losing our identity as a couple"; "When parents enter into our arguments they make things worse." Nevertheless, many were well aware of the fact that their survival depended on continued parental support and, difficult as this was, realized that they were "duty-bound to respect the hand that feeds us."
- (3) Some young wives felt that their mother-in-laws had never accepted them. They felt that the husband's mother continually looked for qualities "that would remind her of herself." The mother-in-law "underlined" the fact that she only wanted "the best" for her son and the young wife felt that she never measured up to "the best." Fathers were criticized too for being over critical of the young husband who "has completely changed since we've been married."

- (4) The young wives were aware of criticisms on the part of their mothers-in-law concerning house-keeping, cooking, and childrearing. On the other hand, many young wives were especially critical of their in-laws' techniques in the same areas. Some were particularly reluctant to leave the baby with them for any length of time. Different values seemed to make for incompatibility.
- (5) Some young teenage mothers felt that the mother or mother-in-law with whom they lived tried to "take over" the mothering of the baby. The infant became confused as to whom he "belongs."
- (6) Some friction was reported between the teenage wife and sisters-in-law. Those sisters-in-law younger than the wife posed problems in caring for the baby or expected "maid service" from the teenage wife. Others who had sisters-in-law more nearly their own age felt jealousy directed toward them as though both were rivals for first place in the affection of the Parental Family Unit.
- (7) Most husbands refused to become involved in arguments between their own mothers and their young wives. The teenage wife felt that she should have had her husband's support in such situations.

- (8) Some Parental Family Units were jealous of the attention given their counterpart Family Units and competed for the affections of the teenage couples, thus causing further difficulty for the young couple.

Establishing Ways of Interacting  
with Friends, Associates and  
Community Organizations

The teenage wives expressed the belief that this developmental task had to be delayed for the time being. Their reasons for feeling this way were:

- (1) "A couple needs to be left alone for about a year."
- (2) With school and a part time job, irregular working hours, pregnancy and later a little one, few couples found time for outside activity; "My spare time is spent doing household chores."
- (3) Most of their friends were unmarried and many dropped the school crowd with whom they associated earlier. More time was needed to establish a "new crowd" or for more of the "old crowd" to choose marriage.
- (4) Time was required for visiting Parental Family Units.

- (5) Many reported that they were the "only young married couple in the neighborhood"; "Our community is really young kids and old people."

Facing the Possibility of Children  
and Planning for Their Coming

All 48 teenage wives reported satisfaction and fulfillment in the role of expectant parenthood and actual parenthood. They were extremely proud of the fact that they were pregnant and many, apparently for the first time, felt a real sense of personal worth. They felt more mature, more stable and happily content. Statements such as the following reflected these positive views:

- (1) "I am more appreciative of my mother and father than ever before."
- (2) "My next step is joining the establishment."
- (3) "I am less self-centered."
- (4) "I am more interested in world affairs and the kind of world my child will grow up in."
- (5) "I feel so different and am disappointed that people don't see me as being different."

All seemed to feel that their pregnancy was the most important experience of their young lives. Although some were "in a state of shock" when they discovered that they were pregnant, and many suffered hardship as a result of the pregnancy and early marriage, none seemed to regret the pregnancy and only two reported needing "a little time to

love the baby after its birth." Only one mother confessed that there were times when she questioned whether she should have had the baby after all.

Problems related to pregnancy consistently included:

- (1) The young wives reported that they were more emotional and "moody" than at any other time in their lives. They felt a great need to be accepted and loved and were less able to cope with little problems that prior to pregnancy would not have been considered "problems."
- (2) Many of the wives experienced morning sickness in varying degrees.
- (3) Swelling feet caused a great deal of discomfort.
- (4) While all were proud of their pregnancy and were anxious for physical characteristics to develop to make their pregnancy obvious, all were apprehensive about being attractive to their husbands as well as being self-conscious of their condition when in public. They were concerned about "stretch marks," "broken veins," and whether stomachs would ever be "flat" again.

Other problems enumerated in order of the frequency were:

- (1) They were frightened of labor and delivery.
- (2) Sleepiness was a frequent problem.
- (3) They dreaded the routine physical examinations.



- (4) Many had a problem with constipation.
- (5) For some it took a long time to get used to being uncomfortable most of the time.
- (6) Some worried about losing the baby and the possibility of abnormality in the infant.
- (7) Several reported a decrease in sexual desire and a lack of understanding of this decreased desire on the part of their husbands.

Problems concerned with parenthood cited by the young mothers included:

- (1) The young mother felt a continuous responsibility for another individual. There was no opportunity to "turn it off and on." This was not a complaint but a new experience requiring an adjustment. It meant the young mother had "little free time," was not able to sleep through the night, and had to assume responsibility for the infant throughout the night and day.
- (2) Many of the young mothers reported "baby blues" (a period of depression) following the birth of their baby.
- (3) Some mothers were anxious about handling the newborn infant and believed that they would never have been able to cope with the newborn if they had not had the experience of caring for infants

in the nursery which was part of the Teenage Parents Research Project.

- (4) It was difficult for the young mother to hear the baby's cries without going to comfort her infant.

Although a number of the wives were amazed and pleased at the amount of assistance they received from their husbands in caring for the newborn, the following problems were recognized:

- (1) It was more difficult for the husband to adjust to the baby's cries and the demands of a schedule than for the wife to do so.
- (2) Husbands sometimes felt "left out."

#### Summary and Discussion

About two-thirds of the couples in the Teenage Parent Research Project lived with relatives. This was similar to the pattern of living arrangements of teenage couples reported in studies by LaBarre (1968), Burchinal (1959), and Inselberg (1962). While none of the couples of the Teenage Parents Research Project saw this as an ideal living arrangement, many of them saw it as a temporary arrangement making independent living in the future more of a possibility. The statements of the group not living independently were more positive than those who lived independently and who experienced discouragement about the possibility of improving their living arrangements in the immediate future.

Without exception all of the Teenage Marital Units were lacking in income sufficient to meet all the expenses of the young family. However, this was not generally viewed as being critical. They were more than willing to "do without" until such time as the wife received her diploma to augment the family income. In many cases, doing without and the realization that after the wife's graduation the future would be improved, strengthened the Teenage Marital Unit. They were willing to delay gratification mentioned by Herrmann (1965) and most of them appeared to use restraint in making purchases.

The wives appeared to have less power in decision-making in relation to spending finances. Some couples had difficulty in accepting assistance from the parents without embarrassment.

Role expectations were seen as being rather routine in marital adjustment. The problems cited appeared to show a difference in which the young husbands and the young wives perceived their roles as being traditional. Few perceived the differences as being crucial to their marriage.

Inselberg (1962) and Moss (1959) reported that in the early months of marital adjustment, teenage couples did not see sexual relations as a problem. While teenage wives in the present study apparently did not view sexual relations as a major problem, many voiced disappointment and concern about the lack of mutual satisfaction during sexual

intercourse and the unwillingness on the part of the young husband to discuss feelings related to their disappointment. The subjects in LaBarre's (1968) study reflected that time was essential to establishing mutually satisfying sexual relationships.

Although physical abuse was reported by one-fourth of the group of young wives, most of the subjects of this study attempted to give the impression that they and their husbands understood each other well and could talk about "anything." They admitted, however, that they were prone to moodiness during pregnancy, and that they had much to learn in the art of communication. Nevertheless, this was not seen as a realistic threat to their marriage.

Inselberg (1962) reported that 50 per cent of the experimental subjects in her study revealed hostility and ambivalence toward their in-laws. Most of the teenage wives of this study admitted that in-law relationships could be improved. They saw in-laws as a threat to their marriage and felt that they (the young wives) had not been accepted into the family. The teenage wives differed from their mothers-in-law as to housekeeping and childrearing patterns and several feared that the infant might perceive the mother or mother-in-law of the Parental Family Unit as his "mother." As in Inselberg's (1962) study, young husbands in the present project apparently did not give their wives the

emotional support needed in order to work out a functional relationship with the husband's parents.

Becoming involved as a couple with friends and community interests was seen as premature by the subjects in the present study. Accepting the responsibilities of parenthood had necessitated the postponement of this developmental task, they believed, until their children reached school age.

Motherhood was viewed by the teenage wives as providing both satisfaction and fulfillment, surpassing anything experienced earlier in their young lives. They noted of course the discomforts of pregnancy, fears of labor and delivery, and moodiness during their months of expecting.

While the young mothers were extremely proud of their infants, they reported their first experience of being totally responsible for another as overwhelming and requiring an adjustment. Having assisted in the nursery at "school" made neonatal care less frightening, but hearing her baby cry and not permitting herself to pick him up, at home or at the nursery, required additional adjustment on the part of the young mother. Husbands found adjustment to the infant's demands more difficult than did the young wives and frequently the wives reported that their husbands felt "left out" as they mothered the infant.

### Evaluations by the Subjects

At the close of the subject's participation in the Teenage Parents Research Project the teenage wife was asked to evaluate the program's meaningfulness to her and to her family. The teenage wife and mother was encouraged to write her evaluation and to cite: (1) the advantages of the program; (2) the disadvantages of the program; and (3) her suggestions for improving the program.

#### The Advantages of the Teenage Parents Research Project

All of the 48 wives had anticipated graduating from high school prior to their pregnancy. Finding a way to complete high school during their pregnancy and having a nursery available for the baby at no cost was very important to them. One student put it this way:

. . . I feel that education not ignorance contributes to better parenthood in giving an individual the chance to better and fulfill themselves as a person. Perhaps many teenage mothers who found that they could not continue their education have resented their situation just enough to have them question their role as a mother later on. This, of course, could prove to be a hazardous situation. I'm so thankful that I didn't have to give up an education to become a mother and feel that the two go hand in hand. This program has enabled me to continue developing myself as an individual and I will be a better wife and parent because of it (Teenage Wife).

Beyond the possibility of attaining their high school diploma, the young wives saw many advantages in participating in a special program designed to meet their particular needs as well as to consider the added responsibility of

pregnancy, of infant care, and of being a "just married" wife. Some of their comments were:

. . . Before I came here I was about five months pregnant and I was scared to have the baby. I was ignorant of everything that was happening to me (Teenage Wife).

. . . At the Teenage Parents Research Project teachers taught us everything we needed to know about entering the hospital, the labor rooms, and all the hospital procedures pertaining to the delivery of my baby (Teenage Wife).

. . . The Child Care class helped me to go through my pregnancy more comfortably (Teenage Wife).

. . . The fast approaching responsibilities of motherhood frightened me . . . I had my doubts about my ability to care for the child. These fears were soon quieted through the class in child care offered by the program (Teenage Wife).

. . . We were taught all about care of an infant and we learned to accept the responsibility of a mother and a wife. My first-hand experience in the nursery has given me confidence in handling my little girl as well as the babies of the other girls (Teenage Wife).

. . . I personally feel the nursery benefits us greatly. When I came to the project I know nothing about caring for a baby. As I became acquainted with the nursery procedures everything became easier. I learned to care for, feed and change a baby. This has helped me prepare myself for my own child (Teenage Wife).

. . . The Teenage Parents Research Project has helped me in many ways. The Family Life and Child Care courses seemed to open my eyes to the life ahead of me. In these two classes I have learned the need to be a good wife to my husband as well as a good mother to my children. Family Life has shown me how to get along with my husband, in-laws, parents and people in the community. It has shown me ways to manage and budget our money. It has helped me to build a philosophy of marriage (Teenage Wife).

. . . Of course they offer Family Life in any high school but here it is more unique. Here you can use yourself and your husband as an example and feel at ease. When there is a class of 25 or more and you are the only one married, you feel very much out of place (Teenage Wife).

. . . Another course that has helped me a lot is Children's Literature because we are learning to evaluate books and choose the best one for a child. We learn what makes a good book for children (Teenage Wife).

. . . Home Management has been especially helpful because we have learned about choosing appliances and how to use them. We have learned a lot about cooking and how to save by buying carefully (Teenage Wife).

Of special significance to the teenage wives was the opportunity to establish friendships with others who shared similar circumstances. Whereas they may have felt isolated and misunderstood by classmates and faculty in a regular school program, at the Teenage Parents Research Project they could be "one of the crowd."

. . . It has been a great comfort to know that we students are more or less all in the same shape . . . after getting married and having a child, I am different from my classmates of the past. We no longer have anything in common. Here at the project all of us share similar experiences. Our conversation is mainly about our pregnancy, our baby, our husband and our housekeeping. My former classmates wouldn't be interested. I couldn't see myself going back (Teenage Wife).

. . . We don't receive the embarrassing remarks or stares that tended to put a damper on my day and a strain on my nerves as I gradually became larger (Teenage Wife).

. . . The teachers understand our situation, so there isn't too much pressure on us when it comes to work. They all know our child comes first. They don't use pressure because they can count on us



bringing in our work. If we have any kind of problem we can always come to one of the teachers for advice. We know they will understand and help us with our problem no matter what it may be (Teenage Wife).

. . . At the school I attended previously, the teachers would not have taken into consideration that I did not always feel good, especially in the late months of my pregnancy. Here at the Teenage Parents Research Project they understand how a girl feels when she is pregnant--how her feet swell and hurt, how the climate affects her and how tired she can become during the day (Teenage Wife)

. . . My doctor says that there is nothing as tragic as a young mother-to-be who stays alone and shut off from the company of other young women at the very time when she should be learning in a healthy atmosphere how wonderful motherhood would be (Teenage Wife).

#### The Disadvantages of the Teenage Parents Research Project

The one disadvantage of the project was the continual pattern of conflict between one or more of the students. As several students said it:

. . . About the only thing wrong with the project is that the girls are too close together. Since we have this problem there are always hurt feelings and arguments (Teenage Wife).

. . . The school is a small one and therefore a lot of people's feelings may get hurt. When a person is hurt, many others suffer also (Teenage Wife).

Several teenage wives reported that conflict resulted between them and their husbands because they felt they were expected to prod their husbands to attend the classes for both husbands and wives arranged by the Teenage Parents Research Project. These wives questioned the value of the classes under these circumstances.

### Suggestions for Improving the Program

Suggestions for improvement largely reinforced the need for an expansion of the program. More space was needed for the infants as they started to toddle. More staff was seen as needed to relieve the heavy working schedules of the faculty as well as providing relief for the nursery supervisor. A work program was recommended where the student might be employed on a part time basis under an arrangement that would enable her to receive high school credit for the time she was employed.

### Summary and Discussion

The Teenage Parents Research Project was seen by the subjects as a means to alleviate their present marital difficulties and to provide the possibilities of a more promising future. They were appreciative of having instruction relevant to their life situations and especially appreciative of the "free" nursery where they could find not only adequate care for their infants but also acquire basic skills related to the more proficient care of infants.

While many reported conflict within the group of students, only one written report described hostility to persons who attempted to "help" her.

Evaluation by the Researcher in the  
Teenage Parents Research Project

The evaluations by the researcher will be presented in two sections. The first section will include objective data concerning the teenage wives who were enrolled in the Teenage Parents Research Project with reference to the following: (1) attendance; (2) dropout rate; (3) high school diplomas received; and (4) the infants and the complications of teenage pregnancy. The second section will be a presentation of the researcher's subjective observations concerning: (1) the nursery adjunct; (2) group problems; (3) separation and probable divorces; and (4) the extent to which the Teenage Marital Unit was helped as a result of their enrollment in the project.

Objective Data Concerning  
the Teenage Wives

Attendance. One of the problems confronting the staff of the Teenage Parents Research Project was the high absenteeism during its 3 years of existence. On the recommendation of an obstetrician and a pediatrician serving as consultants, 3 weeks of time was allowed following the birth of the infant for both recuperation of the mother and for the infant to acquire a degree of resistance to the environment. At 3 weeks post partum, when the mother returned to the program, and for as long as the young wife continued to be on the roll, she was required to bring her infant with

her when she attended. The teenage mother was permitted to be tardy, to leave the program early, or to leave school and return later whenever she or her infant had personal matters to attend to such as doctor's appointments, interviews, family business, etc., which could not be attended to after the scheduled school hours. The period of 3 weeks post partum and the times when the young mother was excused for part of the day were not recorded as absences.

Not calculating the 3 week post partum period or the number of times the mothers and mothers-to-be required a part-of-the-day absence, the average daily attendance was 77 per cent. This meant that, on the average, the participants attended approximately 138 days of the total 180 day school year.

This record of attendance was considerably lower than the usual percentage of attendance (92-94%) in the local high schools. The percentage of absenteeism (23%) observed in the program was also substantially higher than the percentage of absenteeism (16.6%) which was recommended by the local schools as the highest absentee rate permissible in order to receive a passing grade.

The major reasons given to explain absences related to illness of the young wives themselves, their husbands, or their infant, and physical discomforts associated with pregnancy. Another mentioned frequently was "car trouble." The

young mothers were responsible for their transportation to and from the program. Some who had available transportation provided carpool service for other participants. When "car trouble" occurred it resulted not only in preventing the car owner from attending school but also in the absence of other wives and their babies who depended on the car owner for transportation. Other reasons for absenteeism included: appearance in court; car accident; pet died; moving; illness in the Parental Family Unit; and death in the family.

Dropout rate. Of 59 teenage wives admitted to the Teenage Parents Research Project between February 1969 and June 1972, 52 young wives remained with the project for at least one semester. Six for various reasons (pregnancy discomfort, overwhelming family problems and lack of support from the husband, and moving out of the geographic area) dropped out of the program within the first semester. One young mother whose attendance was spasmodic and whose erratic behavior presented a problem when she did attend was asked to leave the program.

Five additional wives completed one or more semesters but did not return to any school program afterward. The reasons these young wives gave for dropping out of school were: (1) the lack of transportation to and from school; (2) a desire to join their serviceman husband in preference to continuing their education; and (3) the inability to cope with both family and school responsibilities.

The total of 12 young mothers who dropped out of the high school program especially designed for them represented an approximate 20 per cent dropout rate. Two of these 12 were objects of group rejection.

High School Diplomas Received. During the seven semesters of the program's existence, 59 young wives were admitted. Forty of the participants graduated on schedule with their classmates at the local schools at which they were enrolled. Of the 40 who graduated, five teenage wives met all requirements for graduation one semester early and were able either to accept full time jobs during the second semester of the senior year or to move into an institution of higher education.

In addition to the 40 young wives who had graduated by June, 1972, seven more had completed their junior year in the Teenage Parents Research Project at the time it was discontinued.

The Infants and Complications of Teenage Pregnancy. Guttmacher (1956) has stated that from the obstetrical point of view, 17 years of age is the optimum age for a girl to deliver a baby. However, Howard (1971) reported that there are health risks for mothers and infants when the mother is in her teens. Most frequently mentioned complications are (1) high neonatal mortality; (2) premature labor and infants of low birth weight; (3) toxemia of pregnancy; (4) iron deficiency anemia; (5) fetal-pelvic disproportion; and

(6) prolonged labor. Siegal (1963) reported that while obstetrical complications were few in the teenage group of mothers, there were likely to be problems of toxemia, anemia and prematurity among them.

Of the 48 wives admitted to the program, three lost their (full-term) babies shortly after birth. One death was a result of spina bifida and an accompanying respiratory condition. The second death was a result of a prolapsed umbilical cord. The third infant with no known congenital defect, died as a result of a virus infection within two weeks of its birth.

Three infants were born with defects: (1) one required surgery to correct pyloric stenosis; (2) one survived spina bifida but suffered partial paralysis; and (3) one was severely retarded. Of the 48 infants, two (4 per cent) were born prematurely and three (6 per cent) other mothers who gave birth to full-term infants are known to have required medication to sustain their pregnancies.

Approximately 25 per cent of the young wives reported edema (one of the manifestations of toxemia) during their pregnancy. In reviewing previous research Siegal (1963) reported that the occurrence of toxemia in teenage pregnancies ranged from 4.3 to 23.5 per cent. Siegal further indicated this to be associated with inadequate or absent prenatal care. Since the teenage mothers in this study all were under the care of private obstetricians during most of

their pregnancy, the 25 per cent of cases of edema reported by the participants in this study was higher than would have been anticipated.

Under the supervision of private obstetricians, the young mothers did use supplementary nutritional tablet. Only one mother reported that she had anemia at the time of her delivery. Musson (1962) reported that when the mother was aged 14 and under, one-fourth of the mothers were moderately or severely anemic at the time of delivery.

No data were collected concerning the length of labor.

### Subjective Evaluations

The Nursery Adjunct. The young wives who participated in this study were required to return with their babies to the project 3 weeks post partum. Those young wives who completed their requirements for graduation prior to delivery obviously did not return. Of the 48 mothers, 32 (66.6%) continued in the program with their infants. Only two of the 32 were reluctant to bring their infant with them. A number of the young wives asked to return at an earlier date. They seemed eager to display their infants and ready to assume the daily routine of school responsibilities.

Returning to school with an infant was not an easy task. It involved bringing such supplies as would be needed



by the infant during the day as well as the mother's books and school supplies. In addition, the young mother had to arrive early enough to leave necessary instructions with the nursery supervisor as well as to feed the infant prior to the first class period if the infant had not been fed before leaving home. While some young mothers functioned more efficiently than others, during the course of the study the researcher heard few complaints of the dual responsibility of student-mother.

As reported earlier, all the mothers were appreciative of the opportunity to work in the nursery prior to the birth of their infant. Many had no experience in caring for the neonate. The nursery was seen as a worthwhile effort and an important adjunct to the program.

Nevertheless, the adjunct presented some very real problems for the young mothers. Their own babies' cries were easily identified within a short period of time. It was particularly difficult for the new mother to hear her baby crying and to concentrate on her school work, and many mothers had to master the strong desire to go to the nursery to soothe the crying infant.

Other problems arising from the nursery adjunct were related to intra-group feelings. Some of the problems reported by the mothers over and over again were: (1) new mothers were criticized for over-indulging their babies; (2) word was passed along to new enrollees that a particular

mother was a "fussy" mother, and newcomers to the program, feeling already inadequate in the handling of infants, were especially reluctant to minister to certain infants as a result of this "grapevine" advice; (3) some new mothers hesitated to leave necessary instructions for fear that they would be seen as "overprotective" mothers; and (4) many mothers reported that they were more concerned about how they were perceived by the group in the role of mother than they were concerned about the welfare of their infant; the infant, they believed, was in "good hands" but the impression they made as a mother was important in gaining an acceptable position within the group.

Despite these problems, which at times appeared almost overwhelming, all the mothers stated that if they were given a choice, they would prefer the nursery adjunct to placing their infant in a nursery not physically attached to the program.

Group Problems. An interesting observation made by the staff members was an apparent change of personality that took place between the time the young mother was delivered and the time when she returned to the project with her infant. During the period of pregnancy the young wife was a willing participant in the nursery and sought direction in the care of the infants. Following her delivery and return to school she tended no longer to take instructions but rather to give orders. At times her orders were

questionable, and sometimes they could not be followed. This frequently led to hostility on the part of the young mother and presented difficulties for the staff.

An additional problem noted by the staff was the group's need for scapegoating. Each semester, one or more students usually were targets of group rejection or persecution. At least seven of the 49 teenage wives suffered scapegoating for a period of time. Two of the seven dropped out of the program and did not return to another school.

Separation and Probable Divorces. At the close of the project six (12.5%) of the 48 couples were known to have separated and/or were in the process of seeking a divorce. Burchinal (1965) reported that a review of literature indicated that teenage marriages are likely to end in divorce two to four times as frequently as those who marry at a later age. The present ratio of divorce is one (20%) divorce to four (80%) intact marriages (Blood, 1969). Burchinal's (1965) conclusions would indicate two (40%) to five or four (80%) to five ratio. LaBarre (1968) has reported that 50 per cent of the teenage marriages end in divorce.

The Success of the Teenage Parents Research Project. The full and final evaluation of a project that attempts to strengthen Teenage Marital Units will have to be accomplished longitudinally. The central focus of the design was

to assist the Teenage Marital Unit in establishing a successful family.

Obviously the structure of the program necessitated greater concentration with the wives than with the husbands. This, admittedly, was a weakness. In fact, reinforcement of the wife's education may indeed have weakened the Teenage Marital Unit rather than have strengthened it. Should this study be repeated more effort should be made to ascertain problem areas most important to the husband and also provide more opportunity for husband involvement in the program.

At the time the project ended, the researcher felt confident that the project had made major contributions to the life situations of the teenage wives: (1) the project provided the teenage-married-pregnant students or the teenage-married-mother-students with a positive environment in which they could "withdraw for regrouping" and attain a stability not likely to have been attained had they not participated in the program; and (2) the program made it possible for the teenage mother and wife to visualize her marriage of the future as a functional rather than dysfunctional experience. In the view of the wives, at least, the Teenage Parents Research Project perhaps became something of the "camping experience" similar to that of the college student marriages noted by Moss (1961). Problems and discomfort were viewed as temporary, and the subjects were able to see

that with patience and endurance there was the possibility of a rewarding and fulfilling family experience.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The research for this study was intended to yield information about Teenage Marital Units which might be shared with interested professionals. Information to be collected included: (1) demographic characteristics of marital units; (2) a qualitative description of marital units; (3) an enumeration of problems which the young couples faced; and (4) objective and subjective evaluations by the subjects and by the writer of experience in the Teen Age Parents Research Project (one supportive program designed to meet the needs of married teenagers). Forty-eight couples served as subjects in all areas of the study except that measuring qualitative aspects of the marriages. Forty-one of the 48 completed satisfactorily the measures necessary to this part of the study. A summary and discussion is presented below for each of the four types of data collected for this research project.

#### Demographic Characteristics

The age range for the teenage wives was from 15 to 18 years. The husbands ranged in age from 16 to 24 years. No correlation between the ages of husband and wife was found.

However, older wives in this study chose to marry husbands closer to their own age while the younger wives married husbands either close to their own age or older than themselves.

The wives were enrolled in school at the sophomore, junior or senior levels. Fifty per cent of the husbands had completed high school and 33 per cent had dropped out of school prior to the marriage. The remaining 17 per cent were enrolled in high school during this study with 75 per cent of this group enrolled at the senior level.

There was a significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the grade in which the wife was enrolled and the educational status of her husband. In general, the higher the wife's education level, the more likely that the husband will have completed high school. The lower the wife's educational level, the more likely the husband will have been a high school dropout.

The husbands in this study were also more likely to have completed high school as their age increased. This association was significant at the .05 level.

While there was no association between the social class position of the husband and the social class position of the wife, the majority of the husbands (71 per cent) and of the wives (58 per cent) came from the lower social class position.

Most of the parental Family Units of the husbands (71 per cent) and of the wives (83 per cent) were intact during the study. These young couples, contrary to the findings of LaBarre (1968) came from relatively stable families.

In agreement with LaBarre's observation (1968), there did appear to be a generational pattern of early marriage among the subjects. Approximately 69 per cent of the mothers of both husbands and wives had married at age 20 or under. A significant and positive association at the .01 level was found between the age at which the wife's mother married and the age at which the husband's mother married.

Approximately 35 per cent of the husbands and wives were firstborns or only children. While no significant relationship was found there was a trend for first and only children to marry first and only children, and for later children to marry later children. This trend as well as the positive association between the age at which the mothers of the husband and wife married may indicate a tendency toward similar personality attributes.

In this sample, 90 per cent of the wives were pregnant at the time of marriage. Research by Burchinal (1965) indicated a range of estimates of premarital pregnancy from 30 to 90 per cent.

Several demographic similarities between husband and wife were worthy of note. The older wives chose husbands



more nearly their own age and more likely to have completed their high school education. Younger brides married husbands either near their own age or older who were either in school or were high school dropouts. For this latter group the marriage may be subject to insurmountable difficulties. Employment for either husband or wife would be limited and the possibility to visualize a brighter future may eventually erode to the realization that little can be done to improve their lot.

#### Qualitative Aspects of the Teenage Marital Units

Forty-one of the 48 Teenage Marital Units completed satisfactorily Dymond's Q-Sort (Appendix B), the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory (Appendix C), and the Parental Attitude Research Instrument (Appendix D). The following is a report of the results from the administration of these measures. Because of the lack of comparison data, the presentation is somewhat limited.

While there was no association between husband and wife adjustment scores as obtained through the completion of Dymond's Q-Sort, a larger proportion of wives than husbands earned positive adjustment scores. Further analysis indicated the suggestion of a difference between the group means (1.79 with 2.02 required to report  $p < .05$ ). The researcher observed the wives as being more positive in their role of wifehood and expectant motherhood than did the husbands

appear to be positive in their complementary roles. The wife, because of her pregnant condition received considerably more reinforcement in her newly adopted adult roles, than did her husband. For many wives, major goals included the attainment of a high school diploma, wifehood and motherhood. The achievement of these was already accomplished or was near at hand. While more study is needed to perceive the importance of being a husband and father to the teenage husband, the satisfaction of achievement and accomplishment among the wives was not observed to the same extent among the husbands.

Little agreement was found between husband and wife responses on role expectations in the sample. Only in two areas (Education and Homemaking) was there a significant relationship ( $p < .01$ ). It is quite likely that in these two areas there had been a need to discuss relevant issues and that as a result a consensus had been reached. All the wives were in the study because of their motivation to attain the high school diploma. The husbands agreed that this was a reasonable ambition, and the wife's diploma was seen as a means of attaining better employment and consequently alleviating financial pressure. At the same time to make the pursuit of her education a possibility, some sharing of the homemaking role quite possibly took place. Couch (1958) reported that the degree of consensus tended to increase with years of marriage. Quite likely, the Teenage

Marital Units in this sample will show a higher association of role expectations as the marriages continue and the need arises for consensus.

As a group, there was little difference between the means on the score total. However, in two categories, where the wives had the higher means, there was a significant difference. There was a significant difference at the  $p < .001$  level in the category of Employment and Support and at the  $p < .05$  level in the area of Personal Characteristics. In both these areas the wives were significantly more "egalitarian" than were their husbands.

Wives believed that they should have the choice of combining a career and motherhood while the husbands believed that the husbands should assume the major responsibility for providing for the family and the wife should remain at home to care for the family. The wife saw affection and understanding, companionship and attractiveness as being important to the marital relationship where the husband believed that being respectable, being a good provider, a good cook and a thrifty housewife were more important characteristics of a husband and wife respectively. The wives indicated the same trend of "egalitarianism" concerning personal characteristics in their discussions of roles related to the developmental tasks of the establishment phase of marriage.

The PARI is intended to measure the attitudes of parents rather than the attitudes of those looking forward to parenthood. It was chosen primarily to initiate discussion in classes and between husband and wife. There was a significant relationship ( $p < .01$ ) between attitudes of husband and wife on two of the 23 concepts (Strictness, and Suppression of Sexuality). Both of these areas quite likely were discussed prior to the measure in terms of their own personality development and that which they hoped for in their children. A significant relationship of  $p < .05$  was found in attitudes of husband and wife regarding Marital Conflict and Fear of Harming the Baby. These attitudes, possibly more than any of the others grew out of objective reality for the young couple. Although they had been married a relatively short period of time, they doubtless were mutually aware that some marital conflict was inevitable. During pregnancy and/or during the early infancy of their child, at which time the measure was completed, they had possibly shared their fears in relation to caring for the baby. It would appear that, as in the area of role expectations, as the marriage progresses and the couple has more experience with parenthood, a greater consensus will evolve as a result of the shared experience.

The t test analysis indicated that in eight of the 23 concepts of parent-child relationships, there was a significant difference between the group of husbands

and the group of wives. Where the wives had a higher mean there was a significant difference in the concepts of: (1) Encouraging Verbalization ( $p < .01$ ); (2) Fear of Harming the Baby ( $p < .01$ ); (3) Marital Conflict ( $p < .05$ ); (4) Equalitarian ( $p < .05$ ); and (5) Comradeship and Sharing ( $p < .05$ ). Where the husbands had a higher mean there was a significant difference in the concepts of: (1) Seclusion of the Mother ( $p < .01$ ); (2) Suppression of Sexuality ( $p < .01$ ); and (3) Acceleration of Development ( $p < .001$ ).

The teenage mothers were considerably more permissive than their husbands. They saw the importance of parent-child communication as shown by their responses to the concept Encouraging Verbalization. In the concept of Equalitarianism they indicated that they hoped their child would have a share in family decision making and that the child had "rights" just as the parents did. They also hoped that their children would enjoy the comradeship of the parents and share with them their special interest.

The teenage husbands, as previously indicated in the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory, believed that a woman's place was in the home. A "good" mother was one who found her interests in the home and felt little need for outside activities.

The young fathers also expressed a strictness in the area of sexuality. They were more opposed to giving their child information about sex than their wives. They felt too

that accelerating the development, that is early weaning and toilet training, were to the child's advantage.

In the area of Fear of Harming the Baby the mother indicated a greater fear than did her husband. This probably was to be expected since she was inexperienced and most likely sensed that the greater share of the responsibility for the care of the infant would be hers. The young wife also reflected a greater awareness of some marital conflict being necessary to the relationship and not necessarily a threat to the marriage.

Many of the differences may have resulted from the wives' participation in the program. While the instrument was administered early in the participation period the young wife "caught on" to the overall positiveness and supportiveness of the program. She was accepted as a potentially positive and supportive mother and she reflected the positiveness and supportiveness which she experienced. Her husband prior to the time when the instrument was administered had little time to share similar experiences.

There is also the possibility, however, that the more "traditional" view of marriage as shown by the husbands' responses on the Dunn Marital Role Expectation Inventory might be complemented by the more "restrictive" parent-child relationship as indicated on the father's responses on the PARI. It may be that generally the teenage wife tends to be an "egalitarian-marital-partner and a

permissive-parent" while her husband tends to be a "traditional-marital-partner and a restrictive-parent."

#### Enumeration of the Problem

The following is a summary of problems mentioned by the young wives in response to class assignments. They were expected to discuss orally or in written form the problems related to eight developmental tasks in the establishment phase of their marriage.

#### Establishing a Home Base to Call Their Own

About 62 per cent of the couples lived with relatives when they enrolled in the Teenage Parents Research Project. These couples accepted this arrangement with some difficulty but were optimistic about their hopes for the future. They felt that the sharing of this difficulty had a strengthening effect on their marriage. Those living independently were less optimistic. Their living arrangements were a "hand-to-mouth" kind of existence and the environment where they lived was generally unacceptable to them. They saw little possibility of improvement until after the wife's graduation and subsequent employment.

#### Establishing Mutually Satisfactory Systems for Getting and Spending Income

Lack of money was a handicap for every young couple. Nevertheless, they accepted this lack optimistically and

tried to view it as a "positive" handicap. The lack of financial resources made communication about the use of money more important. The husband supported the decision for the wife to continue her education and thereby assumed the responsibility for providing income. The lack of funds created a real bond between many of the couples in that it provided a "common enemy" which they could attack together. Doing without was difficult but it was not seen as detrimental to the relationship.

Establishing Mutually Acceptable Patterns  
of Who Does What and Who Is Accountable  
to Whom

The wives voiced some dissatisfaction with the marital roles played by their husbands. None of these, however, appeared to have a devastating effect on the marriage relationship. Most of the discussions seemed to be an airing of mutual complaints, a sharing of husband traits in a jocular and sometimes braggadocio manner. Husbands expectations appeared to be more traditional than wives' role expectations.

Establishing a Continuity of Mutually  
Satisfying Sex Relationships

While many felt that their pattern of sexual relationships was acceptable, there were some who also felt that the pattern could be improved. Some of the wives stated that neither they nor their husbands had received accurate



sex information in their earlier years. Husbands were reported as lacking an understanding of their wives' sexual needs and not being willing to discuss the problem. Previous research has indicated that teenage couples have relatively few problems concerned with sex (Inselberg, 1962; Moss, 1959). Open class discussions revealed that this was not necessarily true of the subjects of this study.

The husbands' responses to Suppression of Sexuality on the PARI were significantly different (.01) from their wives in that they held that children should not be given information about sex and that they indeed should be shielded from such experiences. This desire to withhold discussion of sex may indeed reflect an inadequacy of proper and appropriate knowledge about sex. It may be that more young wives have been exposed to appropriate sex knowledge than have husbands. Feeling less adequate and at the same time feeling a need to be the sexually aggressive male may result in a desire to suppress discussion rather than to be exposed as an inadequately informed male.

#### Establishing Systems of Intellectual and Emotional Communication

Even though 25 per cent of the wives were physically abused one or more times, few reported dissatisfaction with their communication process. Most of the teenage wives believed that they themselves were more difficult to cope with during their pregnancies. Many realized that while

communication was not a real problem, they had much to learn in communication skills.

#### Establishing Workable Relationships with Relatives

In-laws were generally seen as the source of trouble. Mothers of the husbands were seen as threats to the marriage. The couples resented having to be financially dependent and felt that this encroached on their right to be independent in decision-making. Assistance and suggestions for homemaking chores were seen as unacceptable and unhelpful and in some instances the young mother saw her own mother as well as her mother-in-law as a competitor for the affections of her child. The young husband remained somewhat aloof, accentuating the already incompatible and tenuous relationship between his mother and his wife.

#### Establishing Ways of Interacting with Friends, Associates and Community Organizations

The young wives felt that they had little time for friends and little need to become involved in the community in which they lived. Having recently been married they preferred to spend more time with their husbands. After the baby arrived, there was less opportunity to participate in social functions. They expressed the idea that this developmental task had to be postponed until their family was older.

### Facing the Possibility of Children and Planning for Their Coming

The young mothers appeared deeply satisfied with pregnancy and the role of motherhood. They were extremely proud of their babies and strived to be "good mothers" as they interpreted the role. Assuming "round-the-clock" responsibility was a new experience for them. While they expressed some apprehension both in listing the problems associated with parenthood as well as in the concept Fear of Harming the Baby on the PARI they endeavored to be "adequate" mothers. Some husbands found it more difficult to adjust to the baby's schedule than did their wives and occasionally the wives observed that the husbands felt "left out."

Generally it can be stated that the Teenage Marital Units in this study were optimistic about their future marital success, yet their optimism did not prevent them from viewing their marriage and the problems involved in a realistic fashion. Adjustments and difficulties were accepted as those common to marriage and not necessarily limited to teenage marriage. This general statement is supported by the young wives responses to the concept of Marital Conflict on the PARI as previously discussed.

### Evaluations by the Subjects

Evaluations by the participants were written routinely at the close of their participation in the project. All of the young wives had anticipated high school

graduation and were pleased with the opportunity to continue their education in spite of pregnancy and motherhood. The increased responsibilities of parenthood heightened their need for a high school diploma. They were eager to learn more about the physical aspects of pregnancy and delivery. All felt that they profited considerably by working in the nursery during pregnancy under the supervision of the nursery supervisor. Special courses such as Family Life, Child Care, Home Management, and Children's Literature were seen as being relevant.

Of particular significance was the opportunity to be with other young wives in the "same shape." They felt alienated at the schools where they were previously enrolled and found mutual understanding and sharing at the Teenage Parents Research Project.

The only disadvantage reported with a degree of consistency was a tendency toward intragroup conflict. This was explained by the subjects in numerous ways and admittedly hurt those wives who were involved.

#### Evaluation by the Researcher of the Teenage Parents Research

The researcher has attempted to make both objective and subjective evaluations of the effects of having the Teenage Parents Research Project available to teenage students.

### Objective Evaluations

One concern of the staff was the rate of absenteeism among the students. In general, local schools anticipate a percentage attendance of approximately 94 per cent, whereas the average attendance at the project was 77 per cent. This figure does not include the three weeks of time allowed following delivery of the infant or partial absences for doctors appointments, etc. Generally the staff felt that the excuses were legitimate; however, there were attendance patterns ranging from zero absence to a rate as high as 47 per cent absenteeism.

Approximately 20 per cent of the young wives who were admitted to the program dropped out of the program during the semester or at the semester end, and the remaining 80 per cent continued. Forty received their high school diplomas with their class, and the remaining seven completed their junior year by the end of the present study.

Of 48 mothers, three lost their babies shortly after birth and two gave birth to infants who suffered irreparable congenital defects. Approximately 25 per cent of the mothers experienced and reported edema during pregnancy. All of the mothers were under the care of private obstetricians.

### Subjective Evaluations

The nursery adjunct was seen as probably the most valuable experience offered in the project. Nevertheless, being in a class situation within hearing distance of their infants did pose a problem for many young mothers. Having their peers care for their child and feeling that they were being evaluated as mothers by their peers, made for an extremely difficult adjustment, particularly for the new mother. While the researcher believed that these feelings were never minimized (much less resolved) during this study, the possibility of changing the structure of participation in the nursery might well have been considered. For any group of teenage mothers the nursery experience is too valuable to suggest the dispensing of the nursery adjunct.

The continuing program of education especially designed for them and the free day care service for their babies, gave the young wives and husbands the support and assistance necessary to visualize their marriage as one that could be successful in an optimistic but realistic sense. Having access to an educational program designed to meet their needs, being in the midst of peers who shared similar circumstances, and being under the direction of staff who planned curriculum to allow for the inconveniences of pregnancy and early infant care, provided a positive climate to reinforce rather than negate their optimism. For the young couple, the program made possible a continuation of effort

in the direction of their goals and aspirations for establishing a successful family unit. Rather than delaying the process or imposing additional hurdles for the young couple, it was designed to enhance the possibility of the gratification of goals toward which they aspired. Whereas too often society imposes dysfunctional measures on those couples who marry early, the Teenage Parents Research Project made every effort to assist the couple in creating a functional family unit.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Several aspects of this research project as well as the increase in the teenage population, lead the researcher to believe that the number of teenage marriages is not likely to decrease. To be sure, contraceptives are more readily available and may become increasingly so. Ninety per cent of the teenage wives in the present study were premaritally pregnant. Nevertheless, the researcher rarely perceived any of them as promiscuous. It is much more likely that personality factors resulting from family background similarities as well as other dynamics played a real part in the decision to marry early. Further research is needed, of course, to substantiate this statement.

However, if teenage marriages do continue at the present rate, it is necessary to provide the unit with the possibility of making the marriage a functional operation. The

researcher believes that progress was made toward this goal in the Teenage Parents Research Project. How effective it has been can only be evaluated longitudinally. At a future date, a comparative study of couples who participated in the program and a matched group of couples who did not, would provide a more objective evaluation.

Of particular significance are the results of the statistical analysis of the qualitative aspects of the teenage husband and wife. Burchinal (1965) stated:

Competency in marriage and family relationships today requires a set of values, personality characteristics, and interpersonal skills associated with middle class society . . . child rearing and family relationship patterns of lower status families are in direct contrast to those that research shows are associated with emotional health, school achievement, goal-setting and attainment, social success, and reasonably competent interpersonal relations--all required for competent marital relationships (p. 252).

The teenage wives in this research project appeared to adopt readily the positive approach of the program. This was reflected in observations of their self-images, observations of the mothering of their infants, as well as in their scores resulting from the qualitative measures which they completed. The same positive qualities were not observed among the husbands nor were they reflected in the qualitative measures the latter completed. It appears that further research of a longitudinal nature is needed to ascertain: (1) whether or not this positivism of the wife was retained after she left the program; (2) whether greater consensus



indeed did occur after years of marriage; (3) to what extent the wife was successful in influencing her husband toward more positive attitudes; and (4) whether the husbands at a later date became more positive, more egalitarian, and more permissive in their child-rearing attitudes than they were at the beginning of the marriage. Any future program should perhaps concentrate greater effort on the husbands' participation in order to promote those characteristics necessary to competent marital relationships.

It appears too, that possibly there are two types of teenage couples; (1) those wives who are older, whose husbands are more nearly their own age and whose husbands have completed their high school education; and (2) those wives who are younger and whose husbands are more likely to be either in school or to be high school dropouts. Experience with this and with other research projects leads the researcher to predict that the first group is more likely to succeed than the latter. There is also the possibility that the husbands in the second group are less positive of their identity, possibly more traditionally oriented in their role expectations, and more restrictive in their child rearing attitudes. Should this be the case, it may indeed maximize the potential for failure in marriage. It may be that this latter group of couples will require much concentration of effort on the part of professionals and others in their "life space" to make a successful marital experience a

possibility for them. With their limited educational background and these kinds of personal characteristics, marital success may be too much to hope for without a great deal of help from the family specialists. (It is interesting to note that of the six couples in the study who were separated or seeking divorce at the time the research project ended four were of this second type. Two of the wives were in their sophomore year in high school and two were in their junior year. All four of the husbands were high school dropouts.) For the first group, marital success may be possible with limited assistance. For the latter group, the marriage may not necessarily fail as a result of marrying at an early age, but the failure may rather be a reflection of the lack of interpersonal skills required for making an effective and satisfying contribution in society as a whole. Should early marriage indeed be a reflection of past experiences, it is important that these marriages be assisted in order to break the cycle at this point to benefit a subsequent generation. Constructive assistance of this kind will rely heavily on experience coming from programs such as the one described in the present study.

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## APPENDIX A

POLICIES FOR SCHOOLS REGARDING  
PREGNANCIES AMONG STUDENTS\*

With the exception of the items dealing with dismissal and return to school, these policies do not pertain to pregnancies among married students.

1. Consider accuracy and source of information.
2. Do not discuss the information with the girl.
3. Refer name of the girl to the Public Health Nurse with oral explanation of problem.
4. The Public Health Nurse will be responsible for following through, and making contact with, the family of the girl, working with family toward obtaining examination of girl if so indicated.
5. Unless girl is ill or causing disturbances among other students, early diagnosis of pregnancy (within first three months) should not be considered urgent.
6. In most instances no interruption of regular school attendance is deemed necessary during diagnostic follow-up.
7. In case where parents or guardian are not cooperative with Public Health Nurse and school authorities, it is recommended that these agencies confer and work out a plan mutually agreeable to both with the welfare of the girl given prime consideration.
8. The nurse will keep in close touch with school authorities (principal, counselor) as to her progress in following through on reported cases. It is recommended that monthly reports be made to the principal and counselor.
9. For counseling purposes with the girl, the counselor or the dean of girls shall be designated as the contact person for the nurse. This is to protect the relationship between the classroom teacher and the student.

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\*Greensboro Public Schools, Greensboro, N. C.



10. The girl may remain in school no longer than the sixth month of pregnancy. The principal may use his discretion as to earlier dismissal if the girl is not well or if she presents problems to faculty or disturbances among the other students because of her condition.
11. The girl may be considered for re-admission to school three months after birth of the child. Re-admission may be made when, in the judgment of the principal, the student can earn credit for the full semester's work.

## APPENDIX B

## DYMOND'S Q-SORT

Place the following descriptive items on nine piles, placing the one on the first pile which describes you the best of all the other 73 items, two on the second pile which describes you, not as well as the item on the first pile, but better than those remaining. Continue in this fashion, placing seven items on the third pile, 12 items on the fourth pile, 30 items on the fifth pile, 12 items on the sixth pile, seven items on the seventh pile, two items on the eighth pile and one item--that item which describes you least of all 74 items--on the ninth pile.

1. I am likeable.
2. My personality is attractive to the opposite sex.
3. I am relaxed and nothing really bothers me.
4. I am a hard worker.
5. I feel emotionally mature.
6. I am intelligent.
7. I am self-reliant.
8. I am different from others.
9. I understand myself.
10. I am a good mixer.
11. I feel adequate.
12. I am satisfied with myself.
13. I am assertive.
14. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
15. I have initiative.
16. I am ambitious.
17. I have an attractive personality.
18. I am tolerant.

19. I am a rational person.
20. I am impulsive.
21. I am poised.
22. I am contented.
23. I can usually make up my mind and stick to it.
24. I am sexually attractive.
25. I am liked by most people who know me.
26. I am optimistic.
27. My hardest battles are with myself.
28. I can usually live comfortably with the people around me.
29. I express my emotions freely.
30. I usually like people.
31. Self-control is no problem to me.
32. I can accept most social values and standards.
33. I am a responsible person.
34. I have a warm emotional relationship with others.
35. I often kick myself for the things I do.
36. I am responsible for my troubles.
37. I make strong demands on myself.
38. I am no one. Nothing seems to be me.
39. I despise myself.
40. I shrink from facing a crisis or difficulty.
41. I just don't respect myself.
42. I am afraid of a full-fledged disagreement with a person.
43. I can't seem to make up my mind one way or another.

44. I am confused.
45. I am a failure.
46. I am afraid of sex.
47. I have a horror of failing in anything I want to accomplish.
48. I really am disturbed.
49. All you have to do is just insist with me and I give in.
50. I feel insecure within myself.
51. I have to protect myself with excuses, with rationalizing.
52. I feel hopeless.
53. I am unreliable.
54. I am worthless.
55. I dislike my own sexuality.
56. I have few values and standards of my own.
57. I put on a false front.
58. I often feel humiliated.
59. I doubt my sexual powers.
60. I have a feeling of hopelessness.
61. It is difficult to control my aggression.
62. I want to give up trying to cope with the world.
63. I tend to be on my guard with people who are somewhat more friendly than I have expected.
64. I usually feel driven.
65. I feel helpless.
66. My decisions are not my own.
67. I am a hostile person.

68. I am disorganized.
69. I feel apathetic.
70. I don't trust my emotions.
71. It is pretty tough to be me.
72. I have the feeling that I am just not facing things.
73. I try not to think about my problems.
74. I am shy.

APPENDIX C  
MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATION INVENTORY

(Form F\*)

Following are brief statements of marriage expectations for husbands and wives. As you read these statements think about what you expect from your own marriage and indicate your opinion of each statement in one of the following ways:

1. If you strongly agree with a statement draw a circle around the letters SA.
2. If you agree with a statement draw a circle around the letter A.
3. When you are undecided as to your opinion of a statement put a circle around U.
4. If you disagree with a statement draw a circle around the letter D.
5. If you strongly disagree with the statement draw a circle around the letters SD.

As you read begin each statement with the phrase, "In my marriage I expect . . ."

Key for marking items below. SA--Strongly Agree; A--Agree; U--Undecided; D--Disagree; SD--Strongly Disagree

IN MY MARRIAGE I EXPECT:

- |             |    |   |
|-------------|----|---|
| SA A U D SD | 1. | that if there is a difference of opinion, my husband will decide where to live. |
| SA A U D SD | 2. | that my opinion will carry as much weight as my husband's in money matters.     |
| SA A U D SD | 3. | my husband to help with the housework.  |
| SA A U D SD | 4. | that it would be undesirable for me to be better educated than my husband.      |

\*Form F is designed for the wife. Form M is a corresponding form for the husband. Each husband and wife are given these respective forms.

- SA A U D SD 5. that if we marry before going to college, my husband and I will do our best to go on to earn college degrees.
- SA A U D SD 6. to combine motherhood and a career if that proves possible.
- SA A U D SD 7. my husband to be the "boss" who says what is to be done and what is not to be done.
- SA A U D SD 8. that I will be as well informed as my husband concerning the family's financial status, and business affairs.
- SA A U D SD 9. my husband to leave the care of the children entirely up to me when they are babies.
- SA A U D SD 10. my husband to be as interested in spending time with the girls as with the boys in our family.
- SA A U D SD 11. that if I prefer a career to having children, we will have the right to make that choice.
- SA A U D SD 12. that for the most successful family living my husband and I will need more than a high school education.
- SA A U D SD 13. it will be more important for me to be a good cook and housekeeper than for me to be an attractive, interesting companion.
- SA A U D SD 14. that being married will not keep my husband from going on to college.
- SA A U D SD 15. that the family "schedule" such as when meals are served and when the television can be turned on will be determined by my husband's wishes and working hours.
- SA A U D SD 16. that my husband and I will share responsibility for work if both of us work outside the home.
- SA A U D SD 17. that keeping the yard, making repairs, and doing outside chores will be the responsibility of whoever has the time and wishes to do them.

- SA A U D SD 18. if my husband is a good worker, respectable and faithful to his family, other personal characteristics are of considerably less importance.
- SA A U D SD 19. it will be more important that as a wife I have a good family background than that I have a compatible personality and get along well with people.
- SA A U D SD 20. that almost all money matters will be decided by my husband.
- SA A U D SD 21. that my husband and I shall have equal privileges in such things as going out at night.
- SA A U D SD 22. that my husband's major responsibility to our children will be to make a good living, provide a home and make them mind.
- SA A U D SD 23. that since doing things like laundry, cleaning, and child care are "woman's work," my husband will feel no responsibility for them.
- SA A U D SD 24. weekends to be a period of rest for my husband, so he will not be expected to assist with cooking and housekeeping.
- SA A U D SD 25. that if my husband helps with the housework, I will help with outside chores such as keeping the yard, painting or repairing the house.
- SA A U D SD 26. that my husband and I will have equal voice in decisions affecting the family as a whole.
- SA A U D SD 27. that after marriage I will forget an education and make a home for my husband.
- SA A U D SD 28. that I will love and respect my husband regardless of the kind of work he does.
- SA A U D SD 29. to work outside the home if I enjoy working more than staying at home.
- SA A U D SD 30. that both my husband and I will concern ourselves with the social and emotional development of our children.



- SA A U D SD 31. it will be just as important for my husband to be congenial, love and enjoy his family as to earn a good living.
- SA A U D SD 32. that it will be equally as important that as a wife I am affectionate and understanding as that I am thrifty and skillful in housekeeping.
- SA A U D SD 33. that it will be my husband's responsibility and privilege to choose where we will go and what we will do when we go out.
- SA A U D SD 34. to manage my time so that I can show a genuine interest in what our children do.
- SA A U D SD 35. that I will let my husband tell me how to vote.
- SA A U D SD 36. that my husband and I will take an active interest together in what's going on in our community.
- SA A U D SD 37. that if I can cook, sew, keep house, and care for children any other kind of education for me is unnecessary.
- SA A U D SD 38. that having compatible personalities will be considerably less important to us than such characteristics as being religious, honest, and hard working.
- SA A U D SD 39. it will be only natural that my husband will be the one concerned about politics and what is going on in the world.
- SA A U D SD 40. to accept the fact that my husband will devote most of his time to getting ahead and becoming a success.
- SA A U D SD 41. that being married should cause little or no change in my husband's social or recreational activities.
- SA A U D SD 42. that I will generally prefer talking about something like clothes, places to go, and "women's interests" to talking about complicated international and economic affairs.

- SA A U D SD 43. that my activities outside the home will be largely confined to those associated with the church.
- SA A U D SD 44. to stay at home to care for my husband and children instead of using time attending club meetings, and entertainment outside the home.
- SA A U D SD 45. that an education is important for me whether or not I work outside the home.
- SA A U D SD 46. that I will keep myself informed and active in the work of the community.
- SA A U D SD 47. that since my husband must earn a living, he can't be expected to take time to "play" with the children.
- SA A U D SD 48. that it is my job rather than my husband's to set a good example and see that my family goes to church.
- SA A U D SD 49. it will be more important that my husband is ambitious and a good provider than that he is kind, understanding and gets along well with people.
- SA A U D SD 50. it will be equally as important to find time to enjoy our children as to do things like bathing, dressing, and feeding them.
- SA A U D SD 51. to fit my life to my husband's.
- SA A U D SD 52. that managing and planning for spending money will be a joint proposition between my husband and me.
- SA A U D SD 53. my husband to manage his time so that he will be able to share in the care of the children.
- SA A U D SD 54. that having guests in our home will not prevent my husband's lending a hand with serving meals or keeping the house orderly.
- SA A U D SD 55. that we will permit the children to share, according to their abilities, with the parents in making family decisions.
- SA A U D SD 56. my husband to help wash or dry dishes.

- SA A U D SD 57. my husband to be entirely responsible for earning the living for our family.
- SA A U D SD 58. that staying at home with the children will be my duty rather than my husband's.
- SA A U D SD 59. that an education for my husband will be as important in making him a more cultured person as in helping him earn a living.
- SA A U D SD 60. my husband to feel equally as responsible for the children after work and on holidays as I do.
- SA A U D SD 61. my husband to make most of the decisions concerning the children such as where they will go and what they may do.
- SA A U D SD 62. that it will be exclusively my duty to do the cooking and keeping the house in order.
- SA A U D SD 63. that my husband will forget about an education after he is married and support his wife.
- SA A U D SD 64. that my husband and I will share household tasks according to individual interests and abilities rather than according to "woman's work" and "man's work."
- SA A U D SD 65. as far as education is concerned, that it is unimportant for either my husband or me if both of us are ambitious and hard working.
- SA A U D SD 66. my husband to earn a good living if he expects love and respect from his family.
- SA A U D SD 67. whether or not I work will depend on what we as a couple think is best for our own happiness.
- SA A U D SD 68. that if I am not going to work outside the home, there is no reason for my getting a college education.
- SA A U D SD 69. as our children grow up the boys will be more my husband's responsibility while the girls will be mine.

SA A U D SD

that my husband and I will feel equally responsible for looking after the welfare of our children.

SA A U D SD 71.

that I will take full responsibility for care and training of our children so that my husband can devote his time to his work.

## APPENDIX D

## PARENTAL ATTITUDE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

(Inventory of Attitudes on Family Life and Children)

Read each of the statements below and then rate them as follows:

A	a	d	D
strongly agree	mildly agree	mildly disagree	strongly disagree

Indicate your opinion by drawing a circle around the "A" if you strongly agree, around the "a" if you mildly agree, around the "d" if you mildly disagree, and around the "D" if you strongly disagree.

There are no right or wrong answers, so answer according to your own opinion. It is very important to the study that all questions be answered. Many of the statements will seem alike but all are necessary to show slight differences of opinion.

- |   | Agree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------|
|   | A a   | d D      |
| 1. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better. | A a   | d D      |
| 2. A good mother should shelter her child from life's little difficulties.                            | A a   | d D      |
| 3. The home is the only thing that matters to a good mother.  | A a   | d D      |
| 4. Some children are just so bad they must be taught to fear adults for their own good.               | A a   | d D      |
| 5. Children should realize how much parents have to give up for them.                                 | A a   | d D      |
| 6. You must always keep tight hold of baby during his bath for in a careless moment he might slip.    | A a   | d D      |
| 7. People who think they can get along in marriage without arguments just don't know the facts.       | A a   | d D      |

- |  | Agree |   | Disagree |   |
|--|-------|---|----------|---|
|  | A     | a | d        | D |
| 8. A child will be grateful later on for strict training.  | A     | a | d        | D |
| 9. Children will get on any woman's nerves if she has to be with them all day.   | A     | a | d        | D |
| 10. It's best for the child if he never gets started wondering whether his mother's views are right.                             | A     | a | d        | D |
| 11. More parents should teach their children to have unquestioning loyalty to them.  | A     | a | d        | D |
| 12. A child should be taught to avoid fighting no matter what happens.   | A     | a | d        | D |
| 13. One of the worst things about taking care of a home is a woman feels that she can't get out.                                 | A     | a | d        | D |
| 14. Parents should adjust to the children some rather than always expecting the children to adjust to the parents.               | A     | a | d        | D |
| 15. There are so many things a child has to learn in life there is no excuse for him sitting around with time on his hands.      | A     | a | d        | D |
| 16. If you let children talk about their troubles they end up complaining even more.   | A     | a | d        | D |
| 17. Mothers would do their job better with the children if fathers were more kind.   | A     | a | d        | D |
| 18. A young child should be protected from hearing about sex.  | A     | a | d        | D |
| 19. If a mother doesn't go ahead and make rules for the home the children and husband will get into troubles they don't need to. | A     | a | d        | D |
| 20. A mother should make it her business to know everything her children are thinking.   | A     | a | d        | D |

	Agree		Disagree	
	A	a	d	D
21. Children would be happier and better behaved if parents would show an interest in their affairs.	A	a	d	D
22. Most children are toilet trained by 15 months of age.	A	a	d	D
23. There is nothing worse for a young mother than being alone while going through her first experience with a baby.	A	a	d	D
24. Children should be encouraged to tell their parents about it whenever they feel family rules are unreasonable.	A	a	d	D
25. A mother should do her best to avoid any disappointment for her child.	A	a	d	D
26. The women who want lots of parties seldom make good mothers.	A	a	d	D
27. It is frequently necessary to drive the mischief out of a child before he will behave.	A	a	d	D
28. A mother must expect to give up her own happiness for that of her child.	A	a	d	D
29. All young mothers are afraid of their awkwardness in handling and holding the baby.	A	a	d	D
30. Sometimes it's necessary for a wife to tell off her husband in order to get her rights.	A	a	d	D
31. Strict discipline develops a fine strong character.	A	a	d	D
32. Mothers very often feel that they can't stand their children a moment longer.	A	a	d	D
33. A parent should never be made to look wrong in a child's eyes.	A	a	d	D
34. The child should be taught to revere his parents above all other grown-ups.	A	a	d	D

		Agree		Disagree
		A	a	d D
35.	A child should be taught to always come to his parents or teachers rather than fight when he is in trouble.	A	a	d D
36.	Having to be with the children all the time gives a woman the feeling her wings have been clipped.	A	a	d D
37.	Parents must earn the respect of their children by the way they act.	A	a	d D
38.	Children who don't try hard for success will feel they have missed out on things later on.	A	a	d D
39.	Parents who start a child talking about his worries don't realize that sometimes it's better to just leave well enough alone.	A	a	d D
40.	Husbands could do their part if they were less selfish.	A	a	d D
41.	It is very important that young boys and girls not be allowed to see each other completely undressed.	A	a	d D
42.	Children and husbands do better when the mother is strong enough to settle most of the problems.	A	a	d D
43.	A child should never keep a secret from his parents.	A	a	d D
44.	Laughing at children's jokes and telling children jokes makes things go more smoothly.	A	a	d D
45.	The sooner a child learns to walk the better he's trained.	A	a	d D
46.	It isn't fair that a woman has to bear just about all the burden of raising children by herself.	A	a	d D
47.	A child has a right to his own point of view and ought to be allowed to express it.	A	a	d D



		Agree		Disagree	
		A	a	d	D
48.	A child should be protected from jobs which might be too tiring or hard for him.	A	a	d	D
49.	A woman has to choose between having a well run home and hobnobbing around with neighbors and friends.	A	a	d	D
50.	A wise parent will teach a child early just who is boss.	A	a	d	D
51.	Few women get the gratitude they deserve for all they have done for their children.	A	a	d	D
52.	Mothers never stop blaming themselves if their babies are injured in accidents.	A	a	d	D
53.	No matter how well a married couple love one another, there are always differences which cause irritation and lead to arguments.	A	a	d	D
54.	Children who are held to firm rules grow up to be the best adults.	A	a	d	D
55.	It's a rare mother who can be sweet and even tempered with her children all day.	A	a	d	D
56.	Children should never learn things outside the home which make them doubt their parents' ideas.	A	a	d	D
57.	A child soon learns that there is no greater wisdom than that of his parents.	A	a	d	D
58.	There is no good excuse for a child hitting another child.	A	a	d	D
59.	Most young mothers are bothered more by the feeling of being shut up in the home than by anything else.	A	a	d	D
60.	Children are too often asked to do all the compromising and adjustment and that is not fair.	A	a	d	D

	Agree		Disagree	
	A	a	d	D
61. Parents should teach their children that the way to get ahead is to keep busy and not waste time.	A	a	d	D
62. Children pester you with all their little upsets if you aren't careful from the first.	A	a	d	D
63. When a mother doesn't do a good job with children it's probably because the father doesn't do his part around the home.	A	a	d	D
64. Children who take part in sex play become sex criminals when they grow up.	A	a	d	D
65. A mother has to do the planning because she is the one who knows what's going on in the home.	A	a	d	D
66. An alert parent should try to learn all her child's thoughts.	A	a	d	D
67. Parents who are interested in hearing about their children's parties, dates and fun help them grow up right.	A	a	d	D
68. The earlier a child is weaned from its emotional ties to its parents the better it will handle its own problems.	A	a	d	D
69. A wise woman will do anything to avoid being by herself before and after a new baby.	A	a	d	D
70. A child's ideas should be seriously considered in making family decisions.	A	a	d	D
71. Parents should know better than to allow their children to be exposed to difficult situations.	A	a	d	D
72. Too many women forget that a mother's place is in the home.	A	a	d	D
73. Children need some of the natural meanness taken out of them.	A	a	d	D

		Agree		Disagree	
		A	a	d	D
74.	Children should be more considerate of their mothers since their mothers suffer so much for them.	A	a	d	D
75.	Most mothers are fearful that they may hurt their babies in handling them.	A	a	d	D
76.	There are some things which just can't be settled by a mild discussion.	A	a	d	D
77.	Most children should have more discipline than they get.	A	a	d	D
78.	Raising children is a nerve-wracking job.	A	a	d	D
79.	The child should not question the thinking of his parents.	A	a	d	D
80.	Parents deserve the highest esteem and regard of their children.	A	a	d	D
81.	Children should not be encouraged to box or wrestle because it often leads to trouble or injury.	A	a	d	D
82.	One of the bad things about raising children is that you aren't free enough of the time to do just as you like.	A	a	d	D
83.	As much as is reasonable a parent should try to treat a child as an equal.	A	a	d	D
84.	A child who is "on the go" all the time will most likely be happy.	A	a	d	D
85.	If a child has upset feelings it is best to leave him alone and not make it look serious.	A	a	d	D
86.	If mothers could get their wishes they would most often ask that their husbands be more understanding.	A	a	d	D
87.	Sex is one of the greatest problems to be contended with in children.	A	a	d	D

		Agree		Disagree
		A	a	d D
88.	The whole family does fine if the mother puts her shoulders to the wheel and takes charge of things.	A	a	d D
89.	A mother has a right to know everything going on in her child's life because her child is part of her.	A	a	d D
90.	If parents would have fun with their children, the children would be more apt to take their advice.	A	a	d D
91.	A mother should make an effort to get her child toilet trained at the earliest possible time.	A	a	d D
92.	Most women need more time than they are given to rest up in the home after going through childbirth.	A	a	d D
93.	When a child is in trouble he ought to know he won't be punished for talking about it with his parents.	A	a	d D
94.	Children should be kept away from all hard jobs which might be discouraging.	A	a	d D
95.	A good mother will find enough social life within the family.	A	a	d D
96.	It is sometimes necessary for the parents to break the child's will.	A	a	d D
97.	Mothers sacrifice almost all their own fun for their children.	A	a	d D
98.	A mother's greatest fear is that in a forgetful moment she might let something bad happen to the baby.	A	a	d D
99.	It's natural to have quarrels when two people who both have minds of their own get married.	A	a	d D
100.	Children are actually happier under strict training.	A	a	d D
101.	It's natural for a mother to "blow her top" when children are selfish and demanding.	A	a	d D

		Agree		Disagree	
		A	a	d	D
102.	There is nothing worse than letting a child hear criticisms of his mother.	A	a	d	D
103.	Loyalty to parents comes before anything else.	A	a	d	D
104.	Most parents prefer a quiet child to a "scrappy" one.	A	a	d	D
105.	A young mother feels "held down" because there are lots of things she wants to do while she is young.	A	a	d	D
106.	There is no reason parents should have their own way all the time, any more than that children should have their own way all the time.	A	a	d	D
107.	The sooner a child learns that a wasted minute is lost forever the better off he will be.	A	a	d	D
108.	The trouble with giving attention to children's problems is they usually just make up a lot of stories to keep you interested.	A	a	d	D
109.	Few men realize that a mother needs some fun in life too.	A	a	d	D
110.	There is usually something wrong with a child who asks a lot of questions about sex.	A	a	d	D
111.	A married woman knows that she will have to take the lead in family matters.	A	a	d	D
112.	It is a mother's duty to make sure she knows her child's innermost thoughts.	A	a	d	D
113.	When you do things together, children feel close to you and can talk easier.	A	a	d	D
114.	A child should be weaned away from the bottle or breast as soon as possible.	A	a	d	D
115.	Taking care of a small baby is something that no woman should be expected to do all by herself.	A	a	d	D

## SCORE SHEET

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

	Scale Score	PARI Sub-Test Title
1	_____	Encouraging Verbalization
2	_____	Fostering Dependency
3	_____	Seclusion of the Mother
4	_____	Breaking the Will
5	_____	Martyrdom
6	_____	Fear of Harming the Baby
7	_____	Marital Conflict
8	_____	Strictness
9	_____	Irritability
10	_____	Excluding Outside Influences
11	_____	Deification
12	_____	Suppression of Aggression
13	_____	Rejection of Homemaking Role
14	_____	Equalitarianism
15	_____	Approval of Activity
16	_____	Avoidance of Communication
17	_____	Inconsiderateness of Husband
18	_____	Suppression of Sexuality
19	_____	Ascendency of the Mother
20	_____	Intrusiveness
21	_____	Comradeship and Sharing
22	_____	Acceleration of Development
23	_____	Dependency of the Mother

Instructions: Enter the number 4, 3, 2, or 1 in each square according to whether the response was Strong Agreement, Mild Agreement, Mild Disagreement, or Strong Disagreement respectively. Thus, if the subject responded with Mild Disagreement to item #25, a 2 would be entered in the second cell of the second row. Total score is merely the sum of entries across row. Since items are arranged in a cyclical order by scales all items in a given row belong to the same scale. Hence, summing across gives the score for that scale.

## APPENDIX E

DEVELOPING A WORKABLE PATTERN TOWARD  
THE FULFILLMENT OF A COMMITMENT

Man is born with the potential of being an effective and mature adult. To develop this sense of being he must find a purpose for living, a meaning for his existence as he reaches adulthood. Meeting another's needs or others' needs is a justifiable purpose for life and does provide a meaning or a reason for being. One relationship and possibly the most common relationship to give meaning to existence is the relationship of marriage. Marriage is a relationship which can give meaning to life and be fulfilling to the extent that each person is willing to assume the responsibility for providing the opportunity to have his needs met and, at the same time, assume responsibility to respond properly as the opportunity is provided to meet the needs of another.

Such satisfaction in life is hardly possible among the animals other than humans. Unless man is legally restrained, he is free to determine his own behavior. Given this freedom he is also given the responsibility for behaving appropriately. Man is capable of accepting this responsibility because of his unique three-dimensional-approach for viewing a situation which requires a course of direction and action:

- (1) He can evaluate the consequences of his behavior in similar instances in his past;



- (2) He can project consequences of behavior into the future and use these predictions as a means of giving him direction;
- (3) He can plan his present behavior in terms of the consequences of the past and the predictions of the future.

With this potential man can bring these traits into a workable pattern and apply them to the reality of an immediate situation. When such a pattern is applied to a purpose for living, his commitment to life will be fulfilled.

Many men and women of today are absorbed in the attainment of happiness sometimes without knowing the definition of the word. Happiness might be defined as the state of mind or well-being which exists when one moves successfully toward a given goal. When one has a purpose for living, he has a goal in mind and he may be thinking in terms of a life commitment. Directing appropriate behavior each day toward the fulfillment of a life commitment brings with it personal satisfaction and happiness as the result. When behavior is inappropriate, unhappiness and lack of fulfillment prevail. While it is unlikely that the human exists who always elicits appropriate behavior there are those who develop this skill more adequately than others. Happiness in marriage is largely determined by the degree to which such skill is learned on the part of the individuals involved. The opportunities provided for certain responses on the part

of one and the awareness of the other to see the opportunity and direct appropriate behavior in response make for a reciprocal pattern of attaining fulfillment for one and the possibility of attaining fulfillment for the other. In the final analysis, it may be that marriage indeed is the one relationship most readily adaptable to making fulfillment of life a possibility for the majority of people.

In addition to the fact that the husband and wife are capable of developing a pattern of response to each other, they have a multitude of research available which can help them in understanding each other as well as themselves. They can profit through the experience of others who have been in similar circumstances. Much of the research concerning marriage has been concerned with problematic situations as opposed to facts concerning success of the same. Nevertheless, the negative consequences can be positively avoided. Such background information provides a launching point. Experience has always been an "expensive teacher." When the price has already been paid by another, there is no need to pay the price again. Part of good judgement involves not only our experience but also the recollection of as many similar experiences and consequences of those experiences as we can remember at a particular time. Because we are human, we can interweave these past experiences of others with our own experience and possibly avoid some of the mistakes made by others in the past.

With these facts in mind, we as humans can develop a workable pattern of response in order to have our needs met and at the same time respond to the needs of others. The following steps are essential:

(1) Determine reality

- a. In terms of the developmental task of marriage, describe the marital problems involved in order to complete the task as indicated by research and authoritative literature.
- b. In terms of your feelings, describe the problems involved in completing the developmental task in your marriage.

(2) Determine the reciprocal relationships and needs of each individual involved.

- a. What are your particular needs regarding the problems?
- b. What are the particular needs of the other?

(3) Determine your responsibility for action.

- a. How can you provide an opportunity for having your needs met in terms of the problems involved?
- b. Knowing the individuals involved in the problem, what behavior will they most likely elicit to show a need?
- c. How will you respond to the opportunity provided by others to have their needs met?

With a workable pattern such as this, the appreciation for man's three-dimensional-approach to determining response, the potential for developing skills to perfect both, man can indeed achieve realistic goals. Happiness for two, or working toward a goal of mutual satisfaction and success, should be a realistic goal for most married couples.