

INFORMATION TO USERS

This dissertation was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.
2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.
3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.
4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from "photographs" if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of "photographs" may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

University Microfilms

300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106
A Xerox Education Company

73-6163

WEEKS, Melvin O'Neal, 1937-
THE EFFECT OF HUSBAND-WIFE COMMUNICATION ON
MARITAL POWER IN DECISION-MAKING.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro,
Ph.D., 1973
Social Psychology

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

© 1972

MELVIN O'NEAL WEEKS

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THE EFFECT OF HUSBAND-WIFE COMMUNICATION
ON MARITAL POWER IN
DECISION-MAKING

by

Melvin O'Neal Weeks

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Greensboro
June, 1972

Approved by



Dissertation Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Dissertation
Adviser

Richard D. Hemen

Oral Examination
Committee Members

Helene Casaday

E. M. Rallings

Rebecca M. Smith

Conrad M. Deemer

June 23, 1972
Date of Examination

PLEASE NOTE:

Some pages may have
indistinct print.

Filmed as received.

University Microfilms, A Xerox Education Company

WEEKS, MELVIN O'NEAL. The Effect of Husband-Wife Communication on Marital Power in Decision-Making. (1972) Directed by: Dr. Richard H. Klemer. Pp. 91.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of husband-wife communication on marital power in decision-making. Forty married couples were selected from the parents of children enrolled in the School of Home Economics Nursery School program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The subjects were selected on the basis of their homogeneity of characteristics related to variables which had been reported by previous research to affect marital power. Couples were randomly assigned to an experimental and a control group. A Decision Power Index was used as a measure of each spouse's perceived power. A pretest and a posttest, both of which consisted of the same risk-taking decision, were administered to each spouse before and after a fifteen-minute period during which the experimental couples discussed the decision and the control couples listened to an unrelated musical tape and had no communication. Appropriate t tests were used to analyze the data. The significance level was set at the .05 critical value for a two-tailed test.

Hypothesis one, that the husbands and wives in the experimental group would make significantly greater progress toward consensus in the decision-making task than the husbands and wives in the control group, was rejected even

though the experimental couples made significant progress toward consensus and the control couples did not. The second hypothesis, that on the posttest the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the control group would be significantly larger than the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the experimental group, was also rejected. The third hypothesis predicted that the mean of the scores of the husbands on the pretest would show significantly greater risk-taking than the mean of the scores of the wives on the pretest. The data supported this hypothesis.

Fourthly, it was hypothesized that for the experimental group the posttest responses would be more in the direction of the pretest response of the spouse who was perceived by the husband as more powerful in the self-report of power. Hypothesis four was accepted. When the same test was applied to the spouse who was perceived as more powerful by the wife the data were non-supportive.

Hypothesis five, that since the risk-taking decision involved the husband's occupation the husbands in the experimental group would exercise greater influence than the wives on the decision, was also accepted. Furthermore, when hypotheses four and five were applied to the control group they were further supported by the data from the control group.

Hypotheses six and seven predicted that the spouse who talked more frequently (6) and the spouse who talked more total time (7) would exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse who talked less frequently (6) and the spouse who talked less total time (7). There was a tendency toward the predicted outcome for both hypotheses, but the difference was not statistically significant for either. Therefore, both were rejected.

The major conclusions were:

1. While husband-wife communication has a tendency to affect marital power in decision-making, the dynamics of marital power are such that they affect decision-making, especially for the less powerful spouse, even when there is no interspousal communication about a specific decision.

2. Husbands are more willing to take risks in decisions concerning their occupations and income than their wives who are more conservative with regard to such decisions.

3. Husbands' assessments of the marital power structure are more accurate than wives' assessments.

4. Both husbands and wives more often perceive husbands as more powerful.

5. Husbands are more powerful in decisions related to their occupations.

6. The spouse who talks more during husband-wife communication tends to have greater influence in decision making.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my profound appreciation to Dr. Richard H. Klemer, my adviser and Professor and Chairman, Child Development and Family Relations area, School of Home Economics, and to Dr. Helen Canaday, Professor of Home Economics, Dr. Eunice Deemer, Associate Professor of Home Economics, Dr. E. M. Rallings, Assistant Professor of Sociology, and Dr. Rebecca Smith, Assistant Professor of Home Economics, members of my committee, for the suggestions, support, and guidance which they gave to me during this study.

Dr. Carl Cochrane, Lecturer in Home Economics, gave indispensable assistance with the statistical design and data analyses for the study. For that contribution I am especially grateful.

I wish to express sincere thanks to the couples who participated in the study for their time, interest, and cooperation.

To my wife, Betty, who can surely identify with mothers in one-parent families after this experience, I express my deep appreciation for her sacrifices and unwavering support, for her patience and very valuable assistance in setting up appointments with the couples and in the clerical work. My thanks are also expressed

to Laura, Michael, and Brian, my three children, who have taken their paternal deprivation very well.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Problem Statement and Purpose of the Study	3
Definitions	4
Limitations of the Study	6
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	8
III. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	21
Theory of Resources	21
Theory of Resources in Cultural Context	23
Exchange Theory	26
Parsonian Theory	29
Balance Theory	31
IV. METHOD AND PROCEDURES	36
Subjects	36
Instruments	38
Procedure	42
Hypotheses	44
V. RESULTS	46
VI. DISCUSSION	59
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	71
REFERENCES	75
APPENDIX A FAMILY DATA SHEET	80
APPENDIX B DECISION POWER INDEX	83
APPENDIX C RISK-TAKING DECISION	87
APPENDIX D HUSBAND-WIFE RESPONSE TO PRETEST FORM	90

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. A Comparison of the Control and Experimental Groups on Six Variables	39
2. Spouse Perceived as More Powerful by Husband	51
3. Spouse Perceived as More Powerful by Wife	51

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Eight Configurations of Balance and Imbalance	32
2. Alternatives for Restoring Balance in a Decision-Making Situation	34
3. Diagram of the Less Powerful Spouse's Balance-Restoring Behavior from Pretest to Posttest	61

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The many changes in the family in recent years have been the subjects of much research and literature in the family field of study. Blood and Wolfe (1960) believed that no change had been discussed more often and that perhaps no change in the family had been more significant than the change in the marital power structure. There has been a shift from the one-sided male authoritarian structure to the sharing of marital power by husbands and wives. The importance of marital power is emphasized by the fact that it not only is affected by many aspects of the marital relationship, but it also affects most other aspects of the relationship. "The balance of power between husband and wife is a sensitive reflection of the roles they play in marriage--and, in turn, has many repercussions on other aspects of their relationship (Blood and Wolfe, 1960, p. 11)."

Another aspect which has been the focus of much family literature in recent years is family communication. One of the primary goals of communication is to persuade or influence others. Aristotle defined the study of communication as the search for all available means of persuasion. Since Aristotle the concept of communication

has gone through many definitions and conceptual changes. However, in recent years the behavioral communication theorist has returned to a definition of communication very close to that of Aristotle (Berlo, 1960).

Berlo believed that all use of language has a persuasive element in it. One cannot communicate at all without some attempt to persuade or influence, in one way or another.

What one person says or does in the presence of another person is a function of what the first thinks will produce in the second a frame of mind or attitude that will increase the probability that the second will do as the first wishes--e.g., that the behavior of the second will conform to the first's version of what the future ought to be like (Berlo, 1966, p. 36).

The Aristotlean definition of communication as the search for "all available means of persuasion" finds further support in Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson who went so far as to say that all forms of behavior are attempts to communicate, that the behavior of each family member is related to and dependent on the behavior of all other family members and, therefore, all behavior (as communication) influences others and is influenced by others.

In their book, Mirages of Marriage, Lederer and Jackson (1968), stated that marital communication is a constant exchange of messages between the husband and wife by speech, writing and the use of bodily and facial expressions, as well as by other methods. Everything which

one spouse does in relation to the other spouse is a form of communication. "There is no not communicating. Even silence is communication (p. 99)."

Campbell and Hepler (1966) began the general introduction to their book, Dimensions in Communication, by stating that

this book takes as one of its major premises the belief that all communication is persuasive. The importance of persuasion may vary among situations, but persuasion is always present to some degree (p. 1).

Problem Statement and Purpose of the Study

If communication is an attempt to persuade or influence, will husband-wife communication have a significant effect on their use of marital power in a decision-making situation? This study was an attempt to measure the relationship between husband-wife communication and the extent to which they influence each other's decision-making, as measured by their responses to a decision-making task before and after communication.

The primary purpose of the study was to relate these two family phenomena--communication and marital power--to ascertain if the use of the latter is effected by the former. A secondary purpose was to compare the perceived power of husbands and wives, as measured by a Decision-Power Index (Appendix B), with their actual power, as

measured by their influence on each other's response to a risk-taking decision (Appendix C).

Definitions

For the purposes stated in this study, the following definitions were used.

Marital power is the ability of one person in the marital dyad to influence or control the other person's choices and/or behavior. Influence is the degree to which formal or informal, overt or covert pressure which is exerted by one member of the dyad on the other is successful in imposing the former's viewpoint about a pending decision on the latter (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970). In this study one's power was measured by the extent to which he maintained his initial position on a decision and by the extent to which his spouse's initial position was changed to more closely approximate his initial position as a result of their discussion of the decision.

Perceived marital power refers to each spouse's perception of the extent to which he influences decision-making in his marriage. Each spouse's perception of his marital power was measured by a self-report response to a questionnaire designed to measure perceived marital power (see Appendix B). This instrument, which was adapted from a larger questionnaire by Blood (1967) and which was used

with his permission, will be discussed in more detail in the methodology section of this paper.

Actual marital power refers to the extent to which one spouse influences the decision of the other as objectively measured by a comparison of the pretest and posttest scores of couples' responses to a risk-taking decision (see Appendix C). The spouse who moved less in the direction of the other spouse than the other spouse moved in his direction was defined as having greater actual marital power than his spouse.

Husband-wife communication is the verbal and non-verbal behavior in which couples engage when they interact in response to a decision-making task. However, for this study, only the verbal behavior of the dyad was measured, and only the amount and frequency of verbal communication in which each spouse engaged was measured.

A risk-taking decision is a decision in which one takes a chance on losing something in order to increase his chances of gaining something better. The risk-taking decision to which the couples in this study were asked to make a response was a hypothetical situation in which they decided between a less attractive, but more secure job and a superior, more attractive, but less secure job for the husband (see Appendix C). Thus, a risk-taking decision "involves choosing between a more certain less attractive

alternative and a less certain more attractive alternative (Brown, 1965, p. 658)."

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations of which the reader should be aware. For one thing, there are so many variables related to marital power and decision-making that it would have been unrealistic to have attempted to measure all of them, especially using an experimental design and a limited number of subjects. Therefore, this study focused primarily on husband-wife communication as the independent variable, marital power as the dependent variable and decision-making as the measure of marital power. An attempt was made to control as many of the other variables affecting marital power as possible.

Another limitation of the study is the atypicalness of the population from which the sample was drawn. The population consisted of the parents of children enrolled in the School of Home Economics Nursery School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Many of these parents are in professional occupations, and most of them rank above the average population in the United States in level of education and income. It is obvious then that the possibilities for drawing inferences from the findings of this study are quite limited.

The decision-making problem used in this study involved a hypothetical decision regarding the husband's occupation and related economic implications. Therefore, no inference can be made that the spouse who emerged as more powerful in this study would also emerge as more powerful if some other type of decision were involved.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Due to the amount of research on marital power which has been conducted and reported in the literature, an exhaustive review of the literature would be impractical. The attempt has been rather to make the review of literature for this study representative of the research which has been done on marital power.

While an abundance of research studies of the marital power structure in the United States and abroad have been conducted in recent years, the majority of these have been based on the self-reports of wives, which means that they have actually dealt with the perception of the marital power structure held by only one member of the marital dyad. Attempts to justify this approach have been based on the assumptions that there is agreement between spouses' perceptions of the marital power structure and that there is agreement between spouses' perceptions of the marital power structure and their actual power structure (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970). Blood and Wolfe (1960) attempted to defend their use of the wife's report of marital power as a valid measuring by stating that while there are no doubt individual cases where the husband would give a different report of marital power from that of his

wife, these differences tend to "get lost in the shuffle when large numbers of cases are considered (p. 123)."

Contrary to the assumed agreement between marital power as perceived by husbands and wives, in those studies where both husbands and wives have been interviewed some significant discrepancies have been reported between husbands' and wives' perceptions of marital power (Brown and Rutter, 1966; Burchinal and Bauder, 1965; Heer, 1962; Safilios-Rothschild, 1969; Scanzoni, 1965; Wilkening and Morrison, 1963).

In comparing the perceived and actual power of married couples, Olson (1968) found no significant relationship between the measures of predicted (perceived) power and actual power. When there was incongruence between perceived and actual power, the husbands' predictions maximized their actual power and the wives' predictions minimized their actual power.

Turk and Bell (1972), in an attempt to test for the intrafamily reliability of a self-report of marital power, included Blood and Wolfe's (1960) eight items in their questionnaire. Their data showed that when the husbands and wives were treated as matched pairs the differences between their scores were significant at the .03 level. There was a tendency for each spouse in their study to under-report his own power and to overreport his spouse's power.

Heer (1963), in a study of husband and wife perceptions of the family power structure among 138 Catholic families in the metropolitan area of Boston, found that wives have more power than wives are likely to claim for themselves. He concluded that the husband's assessment of the power structure in any marriage is likely to be more accurate than that of his wife.

That marital power is a variable which is affected by many factors in the marital relationship is supported by a number of studies. In their study of 731 Detroit families, Blood and Wolfe (1960) found that the higher the husband's occupational prestige and level of income, the greater his marital power. Their findings also supported the hypothesis that the higher either spouse's educational level and age in relation to the other spouse, the greater his or her power is likely to be. Those wives who were employed outside the home exercised more marital power than did those wives who were not employed outside the home. Ninety percent of the couples Blood and Wolfe studied indicated that the husband always made the decisions concerning the husband's job, and four percent more indicated that the decision was made by the husband more than by the wife. These researchers also concluded that the longer the couple had been married, the more power the wife had and the less power the husband had. They found

that the husband's power increased from the honeymoon period to the period when the couple had young children and that the husband's power declined gradually through the subsequent stages of the family life cycle into the "post-parental" stage, after which his power decreased sharply at the husband's retirement from employment.

Hill (1965) used data collected as a part of the Minnesota Consumership Study of an intergenerational sample to study marital power across the family life cycle. He treated the data from the youngest of the three generations as representative of the early stages of the family life cycle, the data from the parent generation as representative of the middle stages and the grandparent generation's data as representative of the later stages of the family life cycle. Hill's data were gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews and direct observations of the couples. The data from the interviewers' reports indicated a decrease in husband dominance from the early stages and an increase in wife dominance into the last stage of the family life cycle. The observers' reports showed much less equalitarianism and significantly more wife-centered decision-making in all three generations than did the subjects' self-reports.

Michel (1967), in a cross-cultural comparison of the interaction in French and American families, found

that in both countries the husband's voice in marital decisions was positively correlated with his educational level and his occupational prestige. His findings also indicated that when the wife worked outside the home her power increased and her husband's decreased. Those wives who had achieved a greater educational level than their husbands had more decision-making power than those wives who had less education than their husbands. Based on her study of "Blue-Collar Marriages," Komarovsky reported the following:

The relative educational attainment of the spouses was found to affect their degrees of power. Of 36 husbands whose education is at least equal (or superior) to that of their wives, 21 enjoy superior power. But there are only 5 dominant men among the 18 husbands with less formal schooling than their wives (1962, p. 229).

Sirles (1970) found, in a study of the power structure in military families, that when the husband's income level increased, his power increased.

The findings of a study by Centers (1971) support the relationship between the husband's marital power and his educational level and occupational prestige. He also found that the husband's power decreased with the duration of the marriage, and his power was likely to be greater in the first marriage for both spouses than if either spouse had been married before.

Davis (1971) conducted a study of marital roles in decisions related to consumer purchases and reported that: (1) the longer a couple had been married, the more the wife's power tended to increase and the husband's to decrease; (2) wives who worked outside the home exercised significantly more power than those wives not employed outside the home; (3) the wife's power increased and the husband's decreased if she had the same or more education than he; (4) wives with children living at home had less influence on decisions than those wives with no children living at home; (5) wives who held companionship attitudes about marital roles were more likely to have more influence than wives who did not hold companionship attitudes.

In a study of the effects of the employment of married women on husband and wife roles, Kligler (1954) found that in her predominantly middle-class sample the working mothers had greater influence on family decisions regarding major purchases, loans, savings, and investments, than did the nonworking mothers. Lupri's study (1969) of authority patterns in West German families indicated that husbands whose wives were gainfully employed had much less power than those husbands whose wives were not gainfully employed. His data further showed that the husband's power decreased as his wife's contributions became equal in terms of educational level, income, organizational

membership and work participation. Perrella and Waldman (1966) also found that if the wife is a secondary income provider in her family, she is more likely to have increased latitude in her decision-making.

Hoffman (1960) reported that working mothers had more marital power than non-working mothers (significant at the .06 level), but that working mothers made fewer decisions regarding household tasks than non-working mothers while their husbands made significantly more decisions regarding household tasks.

According to Middleton and Putney (1960), their data showed that non-working wives were more likely to dominate marital decision-making than were working wives except in the areas of purchasing and living standards. In these two areas they discovered no significant difference between the dominance in decision-making of working and non-working wives.

From his study of the effects of age at marriage and spacing of children on marital power in a sample of Detroit marriages, Campbell (1968) reported the following: (1) Wives who married at an early age were characterized by less participation in social and child-oriented decision-making, especially if they married prior to age eighteen. This disadvantage continued from the birth of the first child to the birth of the fourth child. (2) The shorter

the time between marriage and the birth of the first child, the less power the wife had relative to her husband. (3) The wife's power inferiority tended to be greatest among women who were premaritally pregnant. (4) As family size increased, the balance of power between husbands and wives became more symmetrical with the wives making more social decisions and the husbands exercising more power on child-oriented decisions. (5) The wider the spacing between the first and the last birth, the greater the wife's economic and social power tended to be.

Safilios-Rothschild (1967) did a cross-cultural comparison of the marital power structure in Greece, France, and the United States. She reported that in Greece a husband's power is likely to be higher when the couple have no children and lower when children are born, whereas in France and the United States, the husband's power is likely to increase when children are born. In all three cultures the wife's employment, reportedly, is likely to increase her power and decrease the husband's power. In contrast to most of the studies in the United States which have dealt with the husband's educational, occupational, and salary levels, Safilios-Rothschild reported that in Greece the husband with a high educational level, skilled or professional occupation and high salary tends to have less rather than greater marital power.

Strodtbeck (1951) conducted one of the early marital power studies in which he found that Navaho wives and Mormon husbands tended to win in disagreements with their spouses and that Texan couples were more equalitarian in the distribution of disagreement outcomes. For this research he used the Revealed Differences Technique in which areas of disagreement are discovered through the use of a decision questionnaire and then couples are instructed to interact and reach a joint decision. From this research, Strodtbeck concluded that there are cultural differences which determine whether husband or wife makes most of the decisions, that in the dyadic relationship, including the husband-wife dyad, one or the other must be dominant, and that the spouse who talks most has the greatest influence in decision-making. After analyzing the couples' interaction over their revealed differences, Strodtbeck reported that among the 34 couples in his study the spouse who talked most won most of the decisions in 24 of the cases.

A similar finding regarding the relationship between the amount of verbal communication a spouse engaged in and the amount of influence he exerted on the decision-making process was reported by Smock (1971). He found that the spouse who communicated more (total time) and the spouse who communicated more frequently was likely to have more

relative marital power. However, the data from Kenkel's (1959) study of 25 married students with at least one child introduced another variable: one's score on the Traditional Family Ideology. The results of his research indicated that those wives who scored high on Traditional Authoritarian Submission (authoritarian husband-submissive wife) were more likely than others to do most of the talking but were less likely to have a high degree of influence on the marital decision-making.

In a later study by Kenkel (1961A), in which 50 married couples where the husband was a college student were asked to decide how to spend a gift of \$300, he reported that when the husband and wife talked equally, they were more likely to choose wife and/or household items and they were less likely to choose items for the husband and children. Whereas when the husband did more of the total talking than his wife, the couple chose more items for the husband and children.

Smith (1971) compared the effects of two different forms of communication, note passing and verbal communication, on marital power and decision-making. His subjects were 3-person families who were presented with family-related problems on which they were asked to reach a decision. One group communicated verbally and the other group passed notes. The communication and the power structure were more sharply differentiated in the verbal communication group.

In the note-passing group the volume of communication and the influence on the decision were more evenly distributed among all three family members. Also the perceived power structure of the families in the verbal discussion group corresponded more highly to the actual power structure than in the note-passing group.

The race and socio-economic status of the couple is another factor which affects marital power. However, there appears to be little consistency in the literature regarding the relationship between race and socio-economic status as the independent variables and marital power as the dependent variable, as the following sampling of research results and conclusions demonstrates: Working-class wives are more dominant in financial control than middle-class wives (Rainwater, Coleman, and Handel, 1959). The wife's degree of subordination is maximal in the lower class and minimal in the middle class, with upper-class wives falling between the two extremes (Davis, Gardner and Gardner, 1941). Hampe (1970) found no significant relationship between social class and the marital power of the husband. The working-class wife is more likely to have more influence on family decision-making than the middle-class wife (Heer, 1958).

Fortune (1964) reported no significant differences between decision-making by Negro and white mothers in comparable social classes, and no significant differences

were found in the decision-making of lower- and middle-class Negro mothers. After comparing the power structures of Negro and white families by socio-economic class, King (1964) concluded that the differences in power structure were not related in any consistent or significant way to the correlates of social class used in his study.

Thus, one is left with no consistent findings on which to base a conclusion about the relationship between race, social class and marital power.

Based on the above review of some of the literature related to marital power, the following variables appear to be among those significantly related to marital power, although the research findings are not always in agreement as to how these variables affect marital power: the husband's occupational prestige and income level, the relative educational level of both spouses, the socio-economic status of the couple, the wife's employment outside the home, the wife's age at marriage, the length of time between marriage and the birth of the first child, the length of time the couple have been married, the cultural background of the couple, the traditional-equalitarian ideological position of the couple, and the amount of communication each spouse engages in with the other. Husbands are more likely to have greater influence on decisions regarding their occupations, and they are

likely to be more accurate in their perception of marital power, although they tend to exaggerate their power while wives tend to underestimate their power.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The purpose of this chapter is to present a brief resume of several attempts to develop a theory of marital power and to provide a theoretical explanation of how marital power operates in the marital decision-making process.

The Theory of Resources

According to Broderick (1971), the "theory of spousal power in decision-making which dominated the decade (p. 141)" of the sixties was Blood and Wolfe's theory of resources which was outlined in their book, Husbands and Wives (1960). Blood and Wolfe acknowledged that, to some extent, the power structure of a marriage is influenced by the culturally prescribed authority pattern. However, they pointed out that "even in a tradition-bound society (p. 13)" there are variations in the marital power structures of different couples. Therefore, they concluded that such variations suggest that there are sources of marital power other than culturally prescribed authority patterns. They theorized that the balance of power in a marriage is determined primarily by the comparative resources which the husband and wife bring to that marriage.

The greater one's resources in relation to his spouse, the greater his power will be.

The sources of power in so intimate a relationship as marriage must be sought in the comparative resources which the husband and wife bring to the marriage. . . . A resource may be defined as anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter satisfy his needs or attain his goals. The balance of power will be on the side of that partner who contributes the greatest resources to the marriage (Blood and Wolfe, 1960, p. 12).

Marriage, according to Blood and Wolfe, is a relationship which is designed to meet certain basic needs of its participants. To the extent that both spouses contribute to each others' need satisfaction they develop a relationship of mutual respect which is expressed in mutual consultation. As one spouse contributes more than his share to the give-and-take of need satisfaction, a situation tends to develop in which this spouse has more than an equal voice in decision-making. This is not usually a conscious or deliberate process. Rather,

it is an automatic readjustment which occurs as the contributing partner discovers that he has a lot to offer to the marriage, while the receiving partner feels indebted for what has already been given and dependent upon what he hopes to receive in the future. . . . Hence, power accrues spontaneously to the partner who has the greatest resources at his disposal (Blood and Wolfe, 1960, p. 13).

A spouse's resources accrue not only from the competences which he brings to the marriage but also from his participation in the external social system. One's participation in the external system especially enhances

his resources, and hence his power, in relation to those decisions which govern transactions between the family and the external system. Therefore, having a child, for example, diminishes the wife's resources by diminishing her participation in the external system while, at the same time, making her more dependent on her husband's participation in the external system. The growth and ultimate launching of her children affords the wife greater freedom to participate in the external system, thus gradually restoring the power she lost when her small children tended to disengage her from the external system (Blood, 1963). Also, as the children grow up they become resources upon whom the wife can draw in marital decision-making, and they may provide companionship and emotional support which make the wife less dependent on her husband. Hence, the changing resources and power structure of the marriage across the family life cycle (Blood and Wolfe, 1960).

In summary, the power to make decisions stems primarily from the resources which the individual can provide to meet the needs of his marriage partner and to upgrade his decision-making skill. Because it is based on such tangible and relevant criteria, the balance of power may be said to be adapted to the interpersonal relationship of the two partners involved (Blood and Wolfe, 1960, p. 44).

The Theory of Resources in Cultural Context

As a result of a cross-cultural study which resulted in contradictory findings, Rodman (1967) elaborated Blood and

Wolfe's theory of resources into a "theory of resources in cultural context (p. 320)." Rodman's data from Greece and Yugoslavia indicated that as the husband's education, income, occupational prestige, and social position increased his traditional family authority decreased. The opposite was found to be the case in France and in the United States. In an attempt to explain these cross-cultural contradictions, Rodman found the theory of resources to be inadequate. Therefore, he theorized that the marital power structure in a given culture is determined "by the interaction of (1) the comparative resources of husband and wife and (2) the cultural or subcultural expectations about the distribution of marital power (p. 322)."

Rodman interpreted these variables (husband's education, income, occupational prestige, and social status) as being not only resource variables in the marital power structure but also as

positional values in the social structure. The different positions of which they are indicative may involve differing patterns of socialization and may, for example, represent a greater or lesser likelihood of learning sentiments favorable toward the equalitarian distribution of power (p. 321).

In other words, according to Rodman, in Greece and Yugoslavia the issue may not be so much the resources in a power struggle, but may be the learning of a new role. That is, the more education a husband had, the more willing he was likely to be to allow his wife more power,

in spite of a traditional patriarchal culture. The fact that these same resources (education, income, occupational prestige, and social status) tended to increase the American husband's marital power was explained by Rodman as possibly being due to the influence of several cultural factors: a cultural emphasis on equalitarianism, a high degree of flexibility concerning the distribution of marital power and the importance that education, occupation and income have in defining the husband's status.

Thus, Rodman concluded that simple resource theory is valid only in those cultures where the belief system will allow marital power to be distributed dynamically and that it is inadequate to explain marital power in those cultures where spousal power is assigned by strong traditional norms (Broderick, 1971). Marital decision-making behavior, he believed, is influenced by the interaction between resources and cultural definitions and norms; hence, the theory of resources in cultural context.

Rodman compared his theory of marital power to the sociological theory of situation, norms and behavior and to the psychological theory of S-O-R (stimulus-organism with prior experience-response). He saw all three theories as similar in their approaches to predicting behavior. All three have in common a stimulus or situation, an organism with prior experience which may include cultural or normative dispositions, and the subsequent

behavior which is influenced by the interaction of these factors with each other (Rodman, 1967, p. 324).

Exchange Theory

A third attempt at conceptualizing marital power into a theory was made by Heer (1963), who borrowed and adapted exchange theory. Heer's inspiration for theory building in this area was also what he perceived as the inadequacy of Blood and Wolfe's theory.

. . . Heer challenged the Blood and Wolfe conceptualization insisting that it took too little account of other factors such as external social control, internalized norms, relative involvement, and especially the availability of attractive alternatives to the marriage. Without entering into the details of the debate which ensued it is fair to say that out of it emerged a more complex model of pair decision-making which stretched the usual exchange model to include cultural pressures and beliefs as well as resources and alternative resources as constructs (Broderick, 1971, p. 149).

Briefly stated, what Heer's exchange theory added to Blood and Wolfe's resources theory was that the balance of power in marriage is influenced by the comparative value of the resources obtained within the marriage to the value of the resources obtainable in an exchange outside the marriage. This theory is an extension of resources theory in that the more one is contributing to his marital relationship, the more he is likely to be able to gain from an alternative relationship, consequently, the more power he

is likely to be able to exercise within his marital relationship (Rodman, 1967).

"(Exchange) theory explicitly states that each partner to the marriage conceives the possibility of separation, divorce and subsequent remarriage (Heer, 1963, p. 138)." Heer viewed his theory as being "congruent with Willard Waller's principle of least interest (p. 138)." According to Waller (1951), the spouse with the least interest in the marital relationship is the spouse who is most likely to exploit the other. The spouse with the least interest is the one for whom the difference between actual and potential return for resources contributed is the greatest.

Heer (1963) postulated that the woman who marries a successful husband and wants to keep him is less likely to contradict him on issues which are important to him because she does not want to run the risk of losing him since she knows that the alternative choices may not be so attractive. On the other hand, the woman who is married to an unsuccessful husband might wonder if she made a wise choice, and she may be more willing to risk threat to the relationship by insisting on her own way. Similarly the woman who is working outside the home has the security of her ability to support herself should her marriage break

up. Consequently, she would likely be more insistent on her way than the wife who is not employed outside the home.

Furthermore, Heer reasoned that the mother of young children has less power because her prospects, if she were to choose some alternative to her present marriage, may be very poor. After the children reach school age her prospects improve as she becomes more able to seek gainful employment. That the wife's power declines in the post-parental stage was explained by Heer as being due to the fact that during this stage the sex ratio is such that the probability of remarriage for a divorced woman is much lower than for a divorced man. Thus the wife becomes more willing to concede to the decisions of her husband. This theory also seeks to explain the historical rise in wives' power by the fact that wives now have greater opportunity for gainful employment and for remarriage. Therefore, they have the potential for more satisfying alternatives to an existing marriage than were available to them a hundred years ago.

In Heer's theory relative involvement is an important base of power in marriage. One's power is dependent on the relative involvement of each spouse in the given area of decision-making. Heer hypothesized (without any supporting data), that in most families decisions are often traded in a bargaining approach to decision-making.

In outlining his application of exchange theory to marital power in decision-making, Heer gave five possible bases of marital power: external social control, the prior internalization of norms, the discrepancy between actual return and expected return under an alternative to the existing marriage, the relative competence of the two spouses and the relative involvement of each spouse in the given area of decision-making.

Parsonian Theory

The Parsonian Theory of marital power was based on Parsons' designation of the husband's role as being primarily in the instrumental areas of the marriage and the wife's role as being primarily in the expressive areas. Parsons held that the husband-wife balance of power is divided along these instrumental-expressive lines. That is, the husband's position in the family tends to lead to superior power for the husband in the instrumental areas of activity, and the wife's position tends to lead to superior power for the wife in the expressive areas of activity (Rollins, 1963).

If the nuclear family constitutes a social system stable over time, it will differentiate roles so that instrumental leadership and expressive leadership of the system are discriminated--the male adult will play the role of the instrumental leader and the female adult will play the role of the expressive leader (Kotlar, 1962, 174).

Rollins (1963) found from his research that the predictions derived from the Parsonian theory were supported when he used the responses of the female subjects, but they were not supported by the responses of the male subjects. When the male and female responses were combined, there was weak overall support for Parsons' theory. Rollins reported that his was the second study in the area of family power to find the Parsonian theory difficult to confirm and articulate. The earlier study was one by Godfrey (1951).

The four theories discussed above appear to be the most notable attempts to deal specifically with marital power. Of the four discussed, when considered in the context of the preceding "Review of Literature," Rodman's theory of resources in cultural context seems to provide the most consistent and adequate explanation of the empirical findings and seems to find the most support from the research reported.

The remaining section of this chapter on theory deals not with the sources of marital power, but rather it represents an effort to conceptualize the process of decision-making and how marital power functions in that process. This has been done within the framework of Balance Theory which has been the focus of much interest among social psychologists.

Balance Theory

Balance theory, which grew out of Heider's work in the '40's and Newcomb's work in the '50's, is based on the proposition that

in any situation involving two persons and an object about which both have important attitudes there is a tendency toward symmetry in the triangular system. . . . The usefulness of the idea is in predicting the directions of adjustment in the case of asymmetrical or discrepant combinations (Broderick, 1971, p. 143).

In conceptualizing and diagramming his theory, Heider (1946) labeled the three sides of the triad with the symbols P, O and X. "P" represents some focal person; "O" represents some other person; and "X" represents some non-person object or issue. Heider referred to the relationship between P and O as "sentiment relations" and the relationship or attitude between P or O and X as "unit relations." Sentiment relations and unit relations may be dichotomized into positive ("like") or negative ("dislike") relations. Using this schema Heider came up with eight configurations of balance and imbalance (see Figure 1).

Heider's central proposition was that people prefer balance in their interpersonal relations, that one is motivated by an intrapersonal force or tension toward the attainment of balance. When a state of imbalance exists P experiences psychological stress or discomfort. He seeks to minimize the stress by maximizing balance, either by

Condition	Configuration	Description
Condition I (balance)	$+ \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ + \end{array} + \text{ or } - \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ + \end{array} -$	P likes O; P and O agree
Condition II (balance)	$- \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ - \end{array} + \text{ or } + \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ - \end{array} -$	P dislikes O; P and O disagree
Condition III (imbalance)	$- \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ + \end{array} + \text{ or } + \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ + \end{array} -$	P likes O; P and O disagree
Condition IV (imbalance)	$+ \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ - \end{array} + \text{ or } - \begin{array}{c} X \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ P \longrightarrow O \\ - \end{array} -$	P dislikes O; P and O agree

Figure 1

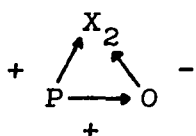
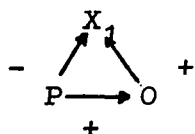
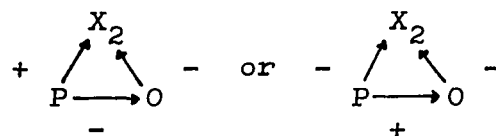
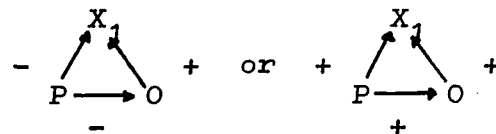
Eight Configurations of Balance and Imbalance
(Taylor, 1967, p. 263)

changing his attitude toward X or by changing his sentiments toward O (Taylor, 1967).

In applying balance theory to this study of marital power, P would represent the less powerful spouse in the marital dyad, O would represent the more powerful spouse in the dyad and X could represent either's initial expression of a choice or preference in a decision-making situation.

Therefore, the prediction may be made that if there is a positive sentiment between husband and wife and if they disagree over X, a state of imbalance will occur for the less powerful spouse and he will seek to relieve the tension created by the imbalance by changing his sentiments toward the more powerful spouse to a negative or by changing his attitude toward X (see Figure 2).

P, or the focal person, is viewed here as the less powerful spouse because the more powerful spouse is less likely to change his attitude toward X, and since the less powerful spouse is the one who is most often influenced to accept the viewpoint and choices of the more powerful spouse it may be assumed that the less powerful spouse is the one for whom the imbalanced situation creates the greatest psychological tension. The extent to which tension and the consequent motivation to change his attitude toward X is created for the less powerful spouse

State of ImbalanceAlternatives for Restoring Balance

P = less powerful spouse

O = more powerful spouse

X₁ = O's initial preference in a decision-making situation

X₂ = P's initial preference in a decision-making situation

Figure 2

Alternatives for Restoring Balance in a
Decision-Making Situation

will be determined by the strength of the sentiment relation and of the unit relation. The strength of the sentiment relation would be influenced by the relative resources of the two spouses (in Blood and Wolfe's terms) by the attractiveness of the extra-marital alternatives of the less powerful spouse (in Heer's terms) and by the cultural norms and expectations (in Rodman's terms).

This chapter provides a theoretical background and framework for this study of marital power. The theories discussed in the first part of the chapter, especially Rodman's theory of resources in cultural context, provide a theoretical explanation of the sources of marital power. Balance theory offers a theoretical basis and schema for explaining how marital power operates in the decision-making process. Therefore, taken together, the theory of resources in cultural context and balance theory provide the researcher with a relatively complete conceptual framework for studying marital power in decision making.

CHAPTER IV
METHOD AND PROCEDURES

For this study an experimental research design, using a control group and an experimental group, was employed in an effort to test the effect of husband-wife communication on marital power in decision-making.

Subjects

The subjects for the study were 40 couples who were selected from the parents of the two-, three-, and four-year-old children enrolled in the School of Home Economics Nursery School program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Subjects were chosen on the basis of family data which were reported by the subjects. (see Appendix A). A total of 76 couples returned the information requested on this form. This information was used to select as homogeneous a sample as possible on the following variables: number of times both spouses had been married, length of marriage, wife's age at marriage, age difference between husband and wife, length of time between marriage and the birth of the first child, difference in educational level of husband and wife, wife's outside-the-home employment status, husband's present income level, and the religious background of the couple.

The total sample had the following characteristics: no spouse had been previously married; all marriages were intact at the time of the study; mean length of marriage, 8.25 years; mean age of wives at marriage, 22.43 years; mean age difference between husbands and wives, 2.85 years (husbands older); mean length of time between marriage and birth of the first child, 2.79 years; husband's mean educational level, 4.88 years above high school; wife's mean educational level, 3.69 years above high school; mean difference in educational level of husbands and wives, 1.19 years in favor of the husbands; mean level of husbands' present annual income, \$14,450 (using the lower level of the ranges, see Appendix A); none of the wives were employed outside the home; both spouses had Protestant religious backgrounds for 32 of the couples, and there were 8 couples where both husband and wife were Jewish.

After the 40 couples had been selected, they were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group, with 20 couples in each group. The variable of the differences in the religious backgrounds of the Protestants and the Jews was controlled by randomly assigning 16 Protestant couples and 4 Jewish couples to each group. After the couples had been randomly assigned to the two groups the groups were compared. A t test was used to analyze the means of the two groups on each of the variables listed

above. There was no significant difference in the two groups on any of the variables (see Table 1).

Instruments

The Decision Power Index (see Appendix B) was designed to measure the relative decision-making power of husband and wife so that it can be expressed as a score. The subject was asked to indicate "who has the final say" with respect to twelve family decisions. Eight of these decisions were used specifically by Blood and Wolfe (1960) in their Decision Power Index and were regarded as samples of the types of relatively important decisions which a typical family makes--what job the husband should take, what car to get, whether or not to buy life insurance, where to go on vacations, what house or apartment to take, whether or not the wife should go to work or quit work, what doctor to have, and how much money to spend on food. Four additional items, adapted from the larger questionnaire (Blood and Wolfe, 1960), were added--where to go on a holiday outing, when sexual relations will occur, what T. V. program to watch in the evening, and whether and/or when the children will have music or dancing lessons.

Possible responses were weighted by Blood and Wolfe (1960), ranging from five (husband always) to one (wife always), and summed to obtain the Decision Power

TABLE 1

A Comparison of the Control and Experimental
Groups on Six Variables

	Length of Marriage	Years Husband Older Than Wife	Wife's Age at Marriage	Time from Marriage to Birth of First Child	Difference in Educational Level of Husband and Wife (in Favor of Husband)	Husband's Annual Income
Experimental Group Mean	7.98 Yrs.	2.97	22.27 Yrs.	2.62 Yrs.	1.15 Yrs.	\$14,500
Control Group Mean	8.53 Yrs.	2.72	22.59 Yrs.	2.96 Yrs.	1.23 Yrs.	\$14,400
<u>t</u>	.5971	.3131	.3438	.6271	.0986	.2182
<u>t</u> value at .05	2.0252	2.0252	2.0252	2.0252	2.0252	2.0252

Index. For the present study the scoring system was changed so that the responses were scored as follows: husband always, plus two; husband more than wife, plus one; husband and wife exactly the same, zero; wife more than husband, minus one; wife always, minus two. The scores were summed and interpreted so that a plus score indicated husband more powerful, a minus score indicated wife more powerful, and a score of zero represented a balance of power between the two spouses.

"The instrument has been used in a number of studies and has been found to differentiate between groups or to be correlated with other variables in a theoretically meaningful pattern (Straus, 1969, p. 41)."

The Risk-Taking Decision (see Appendix C) used in this study was devised by Wallach and Kogan (1959) and was first used by them to investigate individual differences in risk-taking. It was later used by J. A. Stoner in research for a dissertation submitted to the School of Industrial Management at M. I. T. (Brown, 1965). Stoner used the Risk-Taking Decision in small group research in which he had the subjects to respond to the decision as if they were advising someone else to make the decision. They responded privately first. Then they participated in group discussion and arrived at a group decision. Finally, they were asked to respond privately again.

Stoner's subjects were graduate students of industrial management. They first studied the problems, twelve problems in all (the one being used in the present study plus eleven others), and made individual decisions on each problem. Subsequently they were assembled in groups of six and instructed to discuss each problem and to arrive at a unanimous group decision. Twenty-three other subjects did not meet as groups but did study the problems a second time, after a lapse of a few weeks. Stoner put together thirteen groups and for twelve of these the predominant direction of shift on the problems between the means of the initial individual decisions and the later group decisions was toward greater risk. The twenty-three control subjects showed no systematic shift in either direction.

Stoner also asked his subjects to record their private judgments after the group decision had been made. . . . These private opinions, subsequent to discussion, were compared with the private opinions expressed in advance of discussion. About 45 per cent of the subjects did not change their private views; of the remainder, however, 39 per cent changed toward greater risk and only 16 per cent toward greater caution. Something in the group discussion appears to have influenced private opinions . . . in the direction of greater riskiness (Brown, 1965, p. 659).

In adapting the Risk-Taking Decision for use in this research, two changes were made: the decision was reworded so that rather than being put in the position of advisers the husbands and wives were asked to put themselves in the position of having to make the decision about the husband's occupation; also the number of possible responses was increased from 6 to 10. As devised by Wallach and Kogan the decision had the following possible responses: the chances are 1 in 10, 3 in 10, 5 in 10, 7 in 10, 9 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound and Mr. A

should not take the new job, no matter what the probabilities. The four additional responses, added for this research, were: 2 in 10, 4 in 10, 6 in 10, and 8 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound. The responses were assigned scores, ranging from a score of 1 for the response, "He should not take the new job no matter what the probabilities," to a score of 10 for the response, "The chances are 1 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound."

Procedure

The study was conducted in the homes of the subjects. Appointments were made with the couples and all the data were collected by the researcher. Each husband and wife was asked to make separate written responses to the Decision Power Index (see Appendix B). Then the couples were asked to respond to the pretest. This required each husband and each wife to make a separate written response to the risk-taking decision (see Appendix C) adapted from Wallach and Kogan (1959).

Each husband and each wife in the experimental group was given his own and his spouse's response to the pretest (see Appendix D). Then they were asked to discuss their decision for fifteen minutes. Their discussion was recorded on tape and later analyzed for the number of times and the total amount of time each spouse talked. One

couple would not agree for their discussion to be taped. At the end of the discussion period the couple was asked to again respond independently to the same risk-taking decision as was used in the pretest. This second response comprised the posttest.

Following the pretest each husband and each wife in the control group was asked to sit facing in opposite directions so that they could not see each other. The reason for asking them to face in opposite directions so that they could have no visual contact with each other was to prevent any non-verbal communication between the couple. From their study of the effects of visibility on interaction in a dyad, Argyle, Lalljee, and Cook (1968) reported that visibility serves the following functions in communication:

- (1) it provides feedback information concerning the other's direction of attention, whether or not he is still listening, about his emotional state and about his attitude to the speaker;
- (2) it assists in "synchronizing" or "meshing" the behavior of the two participants;
- (3) if one looks at the other a lot this indicates some intensity of involvement or concern of the former with the latter, which may be affiliative/sexual or dominative/competitive (pp. 5-6).

The couples in the control group were also asked not to communicate with each other verbally. Each spouse was informed of his own and his spouse's response to the pretest (see Appendix D). A musical tape recording, completely unrelated to the experiment, was played for

fifteen minutes. The tape was a collection of classical music played by a string orchestra. At the end of the fifteen-minute period the couple was again asked to respond independently to the same risk-taking decision as was used for the pretest. This second response comprised the posttest.

The instruments were color coded to distinguish the husband and wife forms and they were marked to distinguish the pretest from the posttest.

Hypotheses

1. The husbands and wives in the experimental group will make significantly greater progress toward consensus in the decision-making task than the husbands and wives in the control group.

2. On the posttest the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the control group will be significantly larger than the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the experimental group.

3. The mean of the scores of the husbands on the pretest will show significantly greater risk-taking than the mean of the scores of the wives on the pretest.

4. For the experimental group, the posttest responses will be more in the direction of the pretest

response of the spouse who is perceived by the husband as more powerful in the self-report of power.

5. Since the risk-taking decision in this study involves the husband's occupation the husbands in the experimental group will exercise greater influence than the wives on the decision.

6. The spouse in the experimental group who talks more frequently during the discussion will exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse in the experimental group who talks less frequently.

7. The spouse in the experimental group who talks more (total time) during the discussion will exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse in the experimental group who talks less.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

When the posttest scores were compared with the pretest scores the results showed that 14 couples in the experimental group and 10 couples in the control group had made progress toward consensus. For three of the couples in the experimental group and four of the couples in the control group the husband and wife had identical pretest and posttest scores so that there was no pretest difference between the husband's and wife's score and there was no change from pretest to posttest. Of the husbands and wives who had different scores on the pretest three couples in the experimental group and six couples in the control group made no gain toward consensus from pretest to posttest. There was not a case in either group where the husband and wife were farther apart on the posttest than on the pretest.

The gain scores for the two groups were computed by subtracting the differences in the posttest scores of each husband and wife from the difference in the pretest scores of each husband and wife.

Example:	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Posttest</u>
	H = 8	H = 7
	<u>W = 3</u>	<u>W = 5</u>
	d = 5	d = 2
	Gain score = 5 - 2 = 3	

The experimental group had a mean gain score of 2. as compared with 1.1 for the control group. A comparison of the two group means yielded a t score of 1.55 which was not significant at the .05 level. (The t value at the .05 level with 38 df = 2.027). Therefore, the first hypothesis was rejected. While the data indicated a definite trend toward greater consensus among the couples in the experimental group than among the couples in the control group, the difference was not statistically significant.

A t test for related measures was then used to analyze separately the gain scores of the experimental group and the gain scores of the control group. The results were a t score of 4.36 for the experimental group which was significant at the .05 level, and a t score of .98 for the control group which was not significant at the .05 level. Summarizing: Although the experimental group did make significant progress toward consensus and the control group did not, the experimental group did not make significantly greater progress toward consensus than did the control group. Thus, there was some evidence to favor the hypothesis; but, lacking complete verification, it should be rejected until further research evidence is obtained.

The second hypothesis predicted that on the posttest the mean of the difference between the responses of the

husbands and wives in the control group would be significantly larger than the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the experimental group. The respective mean difference scores for the two groups were 1.3 and .95, which, when compared, resulted in a t score of .95. Since this was not significant, the hypothesis was rejected. It should be noted that there was one "deviant" score of 8 in the experimental group. The next highest score in the experimental group was 2 and the highest score in the control was 4. With an N of 20 this one deviant score may have had a significant effect on the mean score of the experimental group.

As predicted in hypothesis three, the scores of the husbands and the wives on the pretest indicated that the husbands in this study were willing to take a significantly greater risk on the decision involved than were their wives. The husbands had a mean pretest score of 6.1 (a score of 6 indicated that one was willing to accept the new position if the chances were 5 in 10 that the new company would succeed). The wives had a mean pretest score of 4.85 (a score of 4 meant that one was willing to accept the new position if the chances were 7 in 10 that the new company would succeed). When analyzed the

data resulted in a t score of 2.81 which is significant at the .01 level.

The fourth hypothesis stated that for the experimental group the posttest responses of the couples would be more in the direction of the pretest response of the spouse who was perceived by the husband as more powerful in the self-report of power (Decision Power Index, Appendix B).

The t test for related measures was used to analyze the mean difference in change toward or away from the spouse who was perceived by the husband as more powerful and the spouse who was perceived by the husband as less powerful. The differences in change scores were computed by subtracting the change score of the spouse perceived as more powerful from the change score of the spouse perceived as less powerful.

Example:

	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Posttest</u>	
10			
9			
8	PMP	+1	
7			PMP = spouse
6			perceived
5			as more
4			powerful
3	PLP	+3	
2			PLP = spouse
1			perceived
			as less
			powerful

$$PLP - PMP = \text{change score}$$

$$3 - 1 = +2$$

A plus score meant that the spouse perceived as more powerful was actually more powerful and a minus score meant that the spouse perceived as less powerful was actually more powerful in this study. When analyzed, the data resulted in a mean difference in change score of 1.61 and a t value of 2.7578, which is significant at the .02 level. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted. The spouse who was perceived by the husband as more powerful did exercise greater power on the decision used in this study.

Husbands were more often perceived as more powerful by both spouses (see Tables 2 and 3). However, while both spouses more often perceived the husband as more powerful, the husbands' assessment of the power structure was more accurate. A t test for related measures was used to analyze the mean difference in change toward or away from the spouse who was perceived by the wife as more powerful and the spouse who was perceived by the wife as less powerful as measured by the Decision Power Index (see Appendix B). The result was a t score of 2.1017 which is not quite significant at the .05 level. (The t value at the .05 level = 2.145.) Since the test based on the husbands' perceptions was significant, the husbands' assessment of the power structure of the marriages involved in this study was more accurate than the wives' assessment.

TABLE 2

Spouse Perceived as More Powerful by Husband

	Control	Experimental		
H	14	13	27	$\chi^2 = 11.76$
W	2	5	7	p .001
	16	18	34	1 df

TABLE 3

Spouse Perceived as More Powerful by Wife

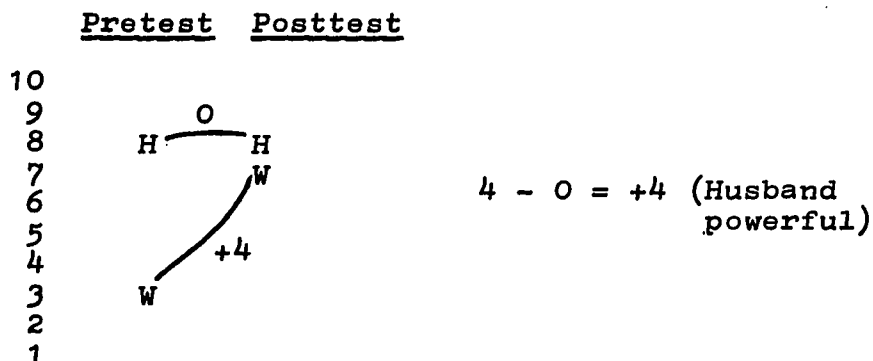
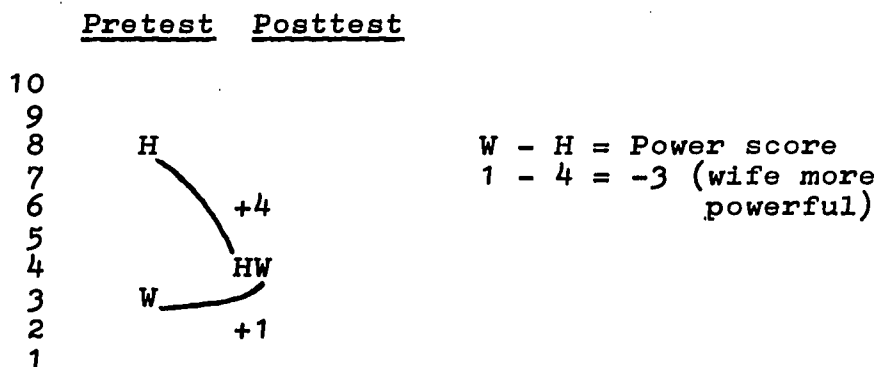
	Control	Experimental		
H	14	11	25	$\chi^2 = 10.12$
W	4	3	7	p .005
	18	14	32	1 df

When the perceived power scores of the husbands were compared with the perceived power scores of the wives, a t test for related measures (using couples' absolute difference scores) yielded a t score of 7.57 which is significant beyond the .001 level.

Hypothesis number four was intended for the experimental group. However, the t test for related measures was also used to analyze the mean difference in change toward or away from the spouse perceived as more powerful and the spouse perceived as less powerful by the husbands in the control group. The result was a t score of 2.4039, which is significant at the .05 level. The spouse who was perceived as more powerful by the husbands in the control group also exercised greater power on the decision used in this study. In comparing the experimental and control groups there was no significant difference in the tendency of the spouse perceived by the husband as less powerful to shift toward the spouse perceived by the husband as more powerful in the two groups. The t test for a difference between two independent means was used to compare the experimental mean (1.61) and the control mean (1.063). The result was a t score of .7323 which is not significant at the .05 level. Since both groups yielded significant evidence for the hypothesis, and since they did not differ between themselves the hypothesis must be accepted for both the experimental and control groups.

In order to test hypothesis number five a t test was used to analyze the mean of the actual power scores for the experimental group to see if the scores were significantly greater than zero in the plus direction. This was appropriate since a power score in the plus direction from zero signified that the husband was more powerful and a power score in the minus direction signified that the wife was more powerful.

Examples:



Thirteen of the scores were in the plus direction with only one in the minus direction. There were six zero scores which indicated that neither spouse had greater actual

power. The mean power score for the group was 1.8 which resulted in a t value of 3.7578 which is significant at the .01 level. Therefore, in the experimental group the husbands exercised greater power than the wives on the decision used in this study.

The fifth hypothesis dealt only with the experimental group. However, since there was also a shift toward consensus in the control group the same analysis was used to compare the mean of the actual power scores of the control group with zero to determine whether the scores were significantly greater than zero in the plus direction. For the control group there were nine scores in the plus direction with none in the minus direction and 11 zero scores. The mean power score for the control group was 1.0 which resulted in a significant t value of 2.8137. (The t value at the .05 level = 2.093.) When the experimental and control groups were compared, no significant difference was found between the mean power score of the experimental group (1.8) and the mean power score of the control group (1.0). ($t = 1.341$, not significant at the .05 level.) Thus, even in the control group where there was no husband-wife communication but where each spouse was given the other's pretest response by the experimenter the husbands had significant influence on the wives' decision.

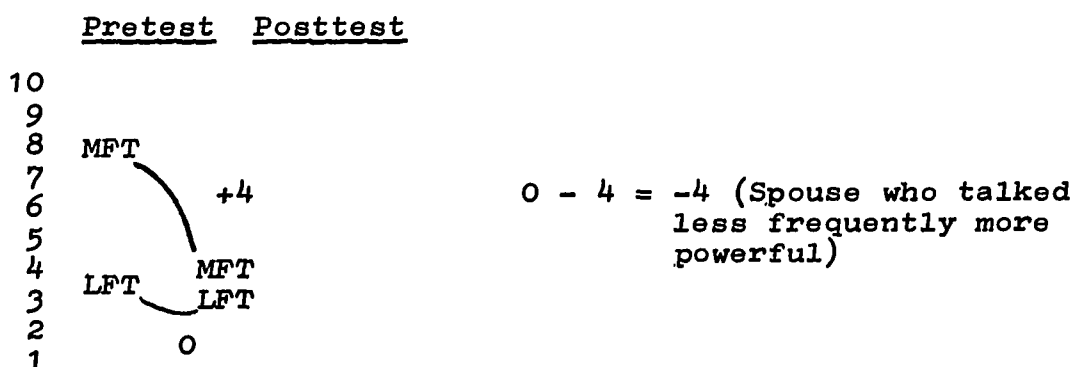
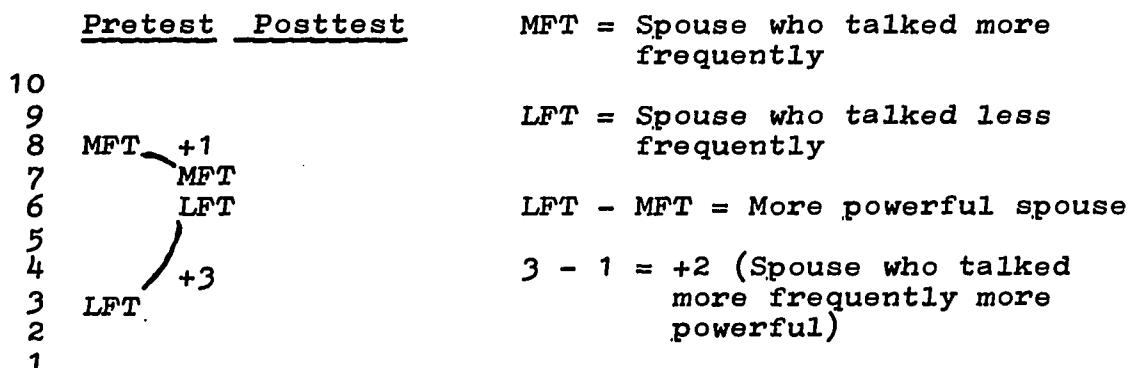
For both hypotheses four and five the scores were derived so that a positive score would indicate a shift towards one spouse (the spouse perceived as more powerful in four and the husband in five), and a negative score would indicate a shift toward the other spouse (the spouse perceived as less powerful in four and the wife in five). The most logical way to test the hypotheses was then to compute t tests asking if the means of the distributions were different from zero. It might be argued that a preferable test would be a t test of differences (thus differences between mean changes in the more and less powerful spouse in four, for example). In this study the two tests are mathematically the same. Both test the mean of the differences over a denominator based on the standard error of the mean of the differences and the number of pairs.

The sixth and seventh hypotheses predicted that the spouse in the experimental group who talked more frequently and the spouse who talked more (total time) during the discussion would exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse in the experimental group who talked less frequently and the spouse who talked less (total time).

For hypothesis six a t test was used to analyze the mean of the actual power scores for the experimental

group to see if the scores were significantly greater than zero in the plus direction. The scores were computed so that a positive score signified that the spouse who talked more frequently during the discussion was actually more powerful, whereas a negative score indicated that the spouse who talked less frequently was more powerful.

Examples:



There were nine plus scores, four minus scores, and four zero scores (a zero score indicated neither spouse was more powerful than the other). There were two cases where the husband and wife talked the same number of times, and there was one couple who would not allow their discussion

to be taped. The mean power score for the group was .765 in the plus direction but the score was not statistically significant ($\underline{t} = 1.0624$). Therefore, hypothesis six was rejected.

For hypothesis seven a \underline{t} test was used to analyze the actual power scores of the experimental group to see if the scores were significantly greater than zero in the plus direction. As in the previous hypothesis, the scores were computed by subtracting the pretest-to-posttest change of the spouse who talked more (total time) from the pretest-to-posttest change of the spouse who talked less (total time). A score in the plus direction from zero indicated the spouse who talked more (total time) during the discussion was more powerful and a score in the minus direction signified that the spouse who talked less (total time) during the discussion was more powerful. There were eight plus scores, five minus scores and five zero scores (indicating neither spouse was more powerful than the other). For one of the couples the husband and wife talked the same length of time and one couple would not allow their discussion to be taped. The mean power score for the group was 1.278 in the plus direction from zero. This resulted in a \underline{t} score of 2.0273 which is significant at the .10 level but not at the .05 level. (The \underline{t} value at the .05 level = 2.110) Therefore, while there was a

strong tendency for the spouse who talked more (total time) to have greater power on the decision used in this study, the result was not statistically acceptable at the probability level used and with the N available in this study.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Regarding the first hypothesis, that the experimental group would make greater progress toward consensus than the control group, the data indicated that the couples in the experimental group made progress toward consensus in the decision-making task. This progress, when measured between the pretest and posttest, was statistically significant at the .05 level of significance. However, the progress of the experimental group was not so much greater than that of the control group that it was statistically significant when the two groups were compared. Thus, the failure of the data to support the hypothesis was not due to the experimental group's not changing significantly in the hypothesized direction, but rather it was due to the fact that the control group also changed, though not significantly so, in the same direction, which was not anticipated.

That the control group made progress toward consensus in the decision-making task without any discussion of the decision can probably best be explained within the framework of balance theory, which was discussed in Chapter III. When the less powerful spouse (P) was informed by the experimenter of the pretest response (X) of the more

powerful spouse (O), the less powerful spouse, according to balance theory, was thrown into a state of imbalance. This imbalance probably created psychological tension which motivated the less powerful spouse to seek to regain a balanced state. Therefore, during the fifteen minute period between the pretest and the posttest the less powerful spouse decided to recover a balanced state by changing his response to more closely approximate the response of the more powerful spouse (see Figure 3). In fact, several wives in the control group told the experimenter at the end of the experiment that as they listened to the tape they thought about the husband's response and decided that he knew best and, therefore, changed their response to agree with his. One wife said, "As I listened to the music, I could just hear all my husband's arguments, so I decided to accept his position."

What then of those couples who did not move closer together from pretest to posttest? Their lack of change toward consensus may be explained in one of several possible ways: P may not have taken the hypothetical decision-making task seriously enough for the imbalance to create enough psychological tension to motivate him to change. Furthermore, while P's general sentiment toward O may have been positive, the immediate feelings of P toward O may have been negative and, therefore, P's

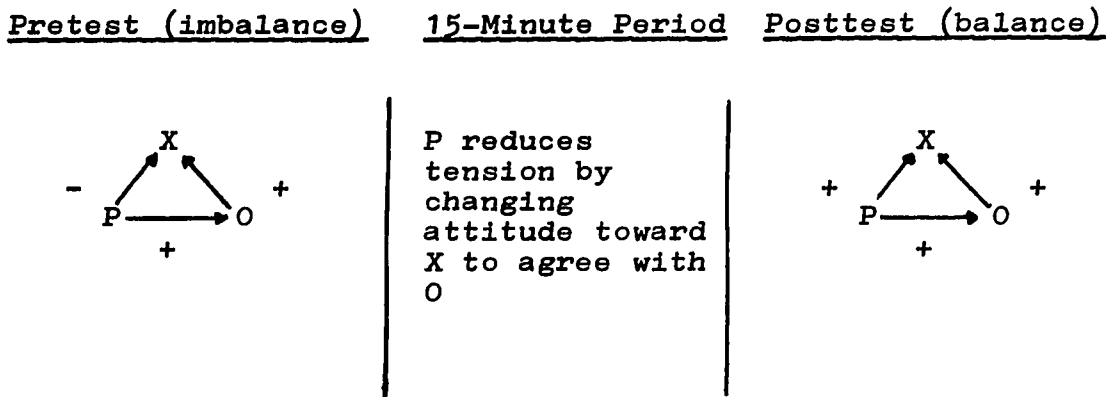


Figure 3

Diagram of the Less Powerful Spouse's
Balance-Restoring Behavior from
Pretest to Posttest

disagreement with O created a condition of balance. Since the experimenter had no way of knowing what transpired between the couples prior to his arrival and since there was no way to evaluate the emotional climate at the moment of the experiment, all one can do is speculate at this point. Another possible explanation may be that P may have perceived that to change his response to that of his spouse would tend to make him "look bad" or "weak" to the experimenter who was going to see his pretest and posttest responses. Therefore, he was put in a double bind in which to "save face" with the experimenter was more tension-reducing than to agree with his spouse.

Whatever the explanation for couples in the control group changing toward greater consensus, the fact that they did change seems to indicate that husbands and wives know how the other thinks and marital power tends to operate even when there is no communication about the specific decision involved.

The experimental group may have made significantly greater progress toward consensus than the control group had the couples in the experimental group been instructed to reach a definite agreement in their discussion. However, they were simply instructed to discuss the decision as if they were confronted with the situation described in the risk-taking decision (Appendix C) and were having to make

that decision. Therefore, they were not required to reach a consensus in their discussion which probably affected their posttest responses.

The non-significant finding in hypothesis two is congruent with the findings in hypothesis one. Since the experimental group did not make significantly greater progress toward consensus than the control group, the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the control group was not significantly greater than the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the experimental group.

The fact that the husbands were willing to take a greater risk in responding to the pretest than their wives, as predicted in hypothesis three, is in agreement with the general conception that wives in our culture tend to be more security-oriented than husbands. In a study of sex differences in judgment, Wallach and Kogan (1959) used the risk-taking decision from which the decision for this study was adapted as one of their decision-making situations. The major difference was that their subjects were put in the role of advisers to someone facing the decision rather than being put in the position of having to make the decision for themselves. Wallach and Kogan found that there was no significant difference in the

responses of males and females. However, in responding to a similar decision involving the risk of income loss through an investment, they found the females to be significantly more conservative than the males. Possible loss of income was a factor in the decision used in this study.

A question that was frequently raised by the wives during the discussion of the decision with their husbands was, "Could you come back to your present job if the new company failed?" On the other hands, the husbands more frequently saw the offer from the new company as a chance for adventure, an opportunity to prove themselves and as an escape from a more stilted and static, though more secure, position. Thus, the husbands' responses reflected greater risk-taking than the responses of their wives.

For hypothesis four the husband's perceived power score was used to measure the relationship between perceived power and actual power because other research has resulted in significant discrepancies between husbands' and wives' perceptions of marital power (Burchinal and Bauder, 1965; Heer, 1962; Safillios-Rothschild, 1969; Scanzoni, 1965; Wilkening and Morrison, 1963; Olson, 1968). Research has also indicated that the husband's assessment of the power structure is likely to be more accurate than

that of the wife (Heer, 1963). The findings of the present study were consistent with previous research on both points. There were significant differences in the husbands' and wives' perceptions of marital power. While there was overall agreement by husbands and wives that the husband was more often perceived as more powerful, when their perceived power scores were compared there was almost no agreement. Only two husbands and wives had identical perceived power scores, while 21 of the wives perceived their husbands as more powerful than their husbands perceived themselves and 17 of the wives perceived their husbands as less powerful than their husbands perceived themselves.

The discrepancy between husbands' and wives' perceptions of the marital power structure may be explained by the fact that couples are not accustomed to conceptualizing their interaction in terms of who actually makes certain decisions. The Decision Power Index (Appendix B) required couples to recall past decision-making experiences. Research has indicated that individuals were unable to recall what occurred in their interaction with their spouses even soon after the interaction took place (Kenkel, 1963; Olson and Rabunsky, 1972). "Even if one makes a conscious effort to concentrate on an interaction with another, the give-and-take that takes

place in decision-making usually disguises who actually made the final decision (Olson and Rabunsky, 1972, p. 229)."

Families characteristically have more difficulty in reporting who makes family decisions because mutual consultation so often precedes the final decision that the relative influence of each partner tends to be masked in the process (Blood, 1958, p. 47).

The problem of recall and the relative obscurity of actual marital power in decision-making plus the subjectivity of how individuals perceive themselves and their influence leave little room for surprise at the lack of agreement between husbands' and wives' perceptions of marital power.

That husbands were more accurate than wives in their assessment of the marital power structure is not so easily explained. In fact, no satisfactory explanation has been given by previous researchers and none can be offered here. The observation can only be made that in this study the husbands' perceptions of marital power were significantly accurate when measured by the actual power scores whereas the wives' perceptions were not significantly accurate.

The fifth hypothesis, that the husbands would exercise greater power than the wives on the decision, was supported by the data. Two factors, apart from the fact that the husbands were more often perceived as more

powerful by both spouses, probably affected the outcome of the results on this hypothesis. First, the decision used in this study involved the husband's occupation. Therefore, one would expect the husband to have greater influence on the decision. The second factor which may have influenced these results was the sex of the experimenter. Kenkel (1961B) conducted a study of marital decision-making in which half the couples were interviewed and observed by a male and half by a female. He reported that 92% of the wives in the female-observed group had high or medium influence whereas 72% of the wives in the male-observed group had high or medium influence. High influence by the wives was only half as likely to occur in the male-observed group. Since the sex of the researcher in this study was a male, this may have had some influence on the results being in the direction of the husband. However, that the husbands were perceived as more powerful and that the decision dealt with the husband's occupation were probably much more salient factors than the sex of the researcher.

Contrary to the predicted outcome in hypothesis six, the spouse who talked more frequently during the discussion did not exercise significantly greater power on the posttest response than the spouse who talked less frequently. There was a trend in the predicted direction

but it was not significant at the .05 level. Previous studies have found a significant relationship between frequency and/or amount of communication and influence in decision-making (Strodtbeck, 1951; Smock, 1971). One possible explanation for no significant support for this hypothesis from the data of this study is that each verbal communication was scored as a communication frequency even when that communication was no more than an "uh-huh" of agreement, a "yes" or a "no." Therefore, there were some cases where one spouse did most of the talking but the other spouse "talked" more frequently.

Regarding hypothesis seven, there was a strong tendency for the spouse who talked more during the discussion to exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse who talked less. However, the tendency was not quite strong enough to be significant at the .05 level. The trend was in the predicted direction and was congruent with previous research (Strodtbeck, 1951; Smock, 1971). The result may prove significant with the use of a larger N.

More research is needed on the effect of husband-wife communication on marital power in decision-making. A study similar to this one could be considerably strengthened by increasing the number of subjects. Another recommendation would be to instruct the couples to arrive

at a unanimous joint decision during the discussion and then possibly have them respond to a posttest separately. Another type of exercise for the control group, which would distract them from thinking about the decision, may yield different results. The risk-taking decision (Appendix C) is recommended for further use as a decision-making task for couples. As a whole the couples in this study related to the decision quite well, with at least 14 of the couples indicating that at some point in their experience they had been confronted with a very similar type of decision. Others said they had talked about such a situation. Those couples who had the greatest difficulty relating to the decision were couples where the husbands were physicians. Their training and experience were such that they could not project themselves very well into the "present position" described in Appendix C. Nor could they very easily see themselves as moving into an entirely new business venture.

A study could be designed so that the couples were administered the pretest and then instructed to discuss the decision over a period of several weeks since such decisions are not usually made in 15 minutes. One husband suggested that the tape recorder be left for a week and that they be allowed to discuss the decision at various intervals during that week.

If the Decision Power Index (Appendix B) were to be used with a comparable sample the questions concerning the purchase of a car and which television program to watch should be changed. All the couples in the sample used in this study had two cars and most had two television sets. Therefore, the experimenter had to ask each couple to assume they were buying a family car which both would use and to assume they had only one television set.

In view of the recent criticisms of marital power studies based on self-reports of power (Safilios-Rothschild, 1969, 1970; Olson and Rabunsky, 1972; Turk and Bell, 1972; and others), more studies which measure actual power in decision-making are needed.

CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of husband-wife communication on marital power in decision-making. The subjects were 40 couples who were selected from the parents of children enrolled in the School of Home Economics Nursery School program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The subjects were selected on the basis of their homogeneity of characteristics related to variables that had been found to affect marital power in previous research. Couples were randomly assigned to a control and an experimental group, with 20 couples in each group. The data were collected in the homes of the couples in the spring of 1972. A Decision Power Index was administered to each spouse to ascertain his perception of marital power. The pretest consisted of each spouse responding to a risk-taking decision. This was followed by 15 minutes of discussion of the decision by the couples in the experimental group and a 15-minute period of no communication by the control group, during which time a musical tape was played. At the end of the 15-minute period each spouse in both groups made a second response to the risk-taking decision which comprised the posttest.

Seven hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance. Four of the hypotheses were found not to be significant:

1. The husbands and wives in the experimental group will make significantly greater progress toward consensus in the decision-making task than the husbands and wives in the control group.

2. On the posttest the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the control group will be significantly larger than the mean of the difference between the responses of the husbands and wives in the experimental group.

3. The spouse in the experimental group who talks more frequently during the discussion will exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse in the experimental group who talks less frequently.

4. The spouse in the experimental group who talks more (total time) during the discussion will exercise greater power on the posttest response than the spouse in the experimental group who talks less.

Three of the hypotheses were supported by the data:

1. The mean of the scores of the husbands on the pretest will show significantly greater risk-taking than the mean of the scores of the wives on the pretest.

2. For the experimental group, the posttest responses will be more in the direction of the pretest response of the spouse who is perceived by the husband as more powerful in the self-report of power.

3. The husbands in the experimental group will exercise greater influence than the wives on the decision.

The major conclusions of the study were as follows:

1. While husband-wife communication has a tendency to affect marital power in decision-making, the dynamics of marital power are such that they affect decision-making, especially by the less powerful spouse, even when there is no interspousal communication about a specific decision.

2. Husbands are more willing to take risks in decisions regarding their occupations and income than their wives who are more conservative with regard to such decisions.

3. Husbands' assessments of the marital power structure are more accurate than wives' assessments.

4. Both husbands and wives more often perceive husbands as more powerful.

5. Husbands are more powerful in decisions related to their occupations.

6. The spouse who talks more during husband-wife communication has a tendency to have greater influence in decision-making.

7. Further research is needed to investigate the effect of communication on marital power in decision-making.

REFERENCES

- Argyle, M., Lalljee, M., and Cook, M. The effects of visibility on interaction in a dyad. Human Relations, 1968, 21, 3-17.
- Berlo, D. K. The process of communication. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960.
- Berlo, D. K. Interaction: The goal of interpersonal communication. In J. H. Campbell and H. W. Hepler (Eds.) Dimensions in communication. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1966. Pp. 36-55.
- Blood, R. O. New approach in family research: Observational methods. Marriage and Family Living, 1958, 20, 47-52.
- Blood, R. O., Jr. and Wolfe, D. M. Husbands and wives. Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960.
- Blood, R. O., Jr. The measurement and bases of family power: A rejoinder. Marriage and Family Living, 1963, 25, 475-478.
- Blood, R. O., Jr. Love match and arranged marriage. New York: The Free Press, 1967.
- Broderick, C. B. Beyond the five conceptual frameworks: A decade of development in family theory. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1971, 33, 139-159.
- Brown, G. W. and Rutter, M. The measurement of family activities and relationships. Human Relations, 1966, 19, 241,243.
- Brown, R. Social Psychology. New York: The Free Press, 1965.
- Burchinal, L. G. and Bauder, W. B. Decision-making patterns among Iowa farm and nonfarm families. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1965, 27, 525-530.

- Campbell, F. L. Demographic factors in family organization: The effects of age at marriage and fertility on power and division of labor in Detroit marriages. Dissertation Abstracts, 1968, 28, 5160.
- Campbell, J. H. and Hepler, H. W. (Eds.) Dimensions in communication. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1966.
- Centers, R. Conjugal power structure: A re-examination. American Sociological Review, 1971, 36, 264-278.
- Davis, A., Gardner, B. B., and Gardner, M. R. Deep South. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941.
- Davis, H. L. An exploratory study of marital roles in consumer purchase decisions. Dissertation Abstracts, 1971, 31, 3668.
- Fortune, H. O. A study of the power position of mothers in contemporary Negro family life in New York city. Dissertation Abstracts, 1964, 24, 4309-4310.
- Godfrey, E. P. A construction of family types and their initial empirical validation. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Radcliffe College, 1951.
- Hampe, G. D. The social determinants of the distribution of power in the marital pair. Dissertation Abstracts, 1970, 31, 1394.
- Heer, D. M. Dominance and the working wife. Social Forces, 1958, 36, 341-347.
- Heer, D. M. Husband and wife perceptions of family power structure. Marriage and Family Living, 1962, 24, 65-67.
- Heer, D. M. The measurement and bases of family power: An overview. Marriage and Family Living, 1963, 25, 133-139.
- Heider, F. Attitudes and cognitive organization. Journal of Psychology, 1946, 21, 107-112.
- Hill, R. Decision-making and the family life cycle. In E. Ehanas and G. F. Streib (Eds.), Social Structure and the Family: Generational Relations. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965. Pp. 113-139.

- Hoffman, L. W. Effects of the employment of mothers on parental power relations and the division of household tasks. Marriage and Family Living, 1960, 22, 27-35.
- Kenkel, W. F. Traditional family ideology and spousal roles in decision-making. Marriage and Family Living, 1959, 21, 334-339.
- Kenkel, W. F. Husband-wife interaction in decision making and decision choices. Journal of Social Psychology, 1961, 54, 255-262. (a)
- Kenkel, W. F. Sex of observer and spousal roles in decision-making. Marriage and Family Living, 1961, 23, 185-186. (b)
- Kenkel, W. F. Observational studies of husband-wife interaction in family decision-making. In M. B. Sussman (Ed.), Sourcebook in Marriage and the Family. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963. Pp. 144-156.
- King, K. B., Jr. A comparison of the power structure of the Negro and white family by socioeconomic class. Dissertation Abstracts, 1964, 25, 2657-2658.
- Kligler, D. H. The effects of the employment of married women on husband and wife roles. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 1954.
- Komarovsky, M. Blue-collar marriage. New York: Random House, 1962.
- Kotlar, S. L. Middle-class marital roles--Ideal and perceived in relation to adjustment in marriage. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Southern California, 1962.
- Lederer, W. J. and Jackson, D. D. Mirages of marriage. New York: W. W. Norton, 1968.
- Lupri, E. Contemporary authority patterns in the West German family: A study in cross-national validation. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1969, 31, 134-144.
- Michel, A. Comparative data concerning the interaction in French and American families. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1967, 29, 337-344.

- Middleton, R. and Putney, S. Dominance in decisions in the family: Race and class differences. American Journal of Sociology, 1960, 65, 605-609.
- Olson, D. H. Decision-making in couples: A comparison of a self-report and behavioral measure of power. Dissertation Abstracts, 1968, 29, 394-395.
- Olson, D. H. and Rabunsky, C. Validity of four measures of family power. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1972, 34, 224-234.
- Perrella, V. C. and Waldman, E. Marital and family characteristics of workers in March 1965. Monthly Labor Review, 1966, 89, 258-263.
- Rainwater, L., Coleman, R. P. and Handel, G. Workingman's wife. New York: Oceana Publications, 1959.
- Rodman, H. Marital power in France, Greece, Yugoslavia and the United States: A cross-national discussion. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1967, 29, 320-324.
- Rollins, J. M. Two empirical tests of a Parsonian theory of family authority patterns. Family Life Coordinator, 1963, 12, 3-78.
- Safilios-Rothschild, C. A comparison of power structure in urban Greek and French families. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1967, 29, 345-352.
- Safilios-Rothschild, C. Family sociology or wives' family sociology? A cross-cultural examination of decision-making. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1969, 31, 290-301.
- Safilios-Rothschild, C. The study of family power structure: A review of 1960-1969. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1970, 32, 539-552.
- Scanzoni, J. A note on the sufficiency of wife responses in family research. Pacific Sociological Review, 1965, 8, 109-115.
- Sirles, J. W. Conjugal power structure in military families in relation to marital adjustment. Dissertation Abstracts, 1970, 30, 5575-5576.

- Smith, R. C. Verbal discussion versus note passing tasks in the study of family role structure. Journal of Nervous Mental Disorders, 1971, 152, 173-183.
- Smock, P. L. An interactional analysis of the relationship between frequency and duration of communication patterns and marital power. Dissertation Abstracts, 1971, 31, 6742.
- Straus, M. A. Family measurement techniques. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969.
- Strodtbeck, F. L. Husband-wife interaction over revealed differences. American Sociological Review, 1951, 16, 468-473.
- Taylor, H. F. Balance and change in the two-person group. Sociometry, 1967, 30, 262-279.
- Turk, J. L. and Bell, N. W. Measuring power in families. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1972, 34, 215-222.
- Wallach, M. A. and Kogan, N. Sex differences and judgmental processes. Journal of Personality, 1959, 27, 555-564.
- Waller, W. The family: A dynamic interpretation. New York: The Dryden Press, 1951.
- Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H. and Jackson, D. D. Pragmatics of human communication. New York: W. W. Norton, 1967.
- Wilkening, E. A. and Morrison, D. E. A comparison of husband and wife responses concerning who makes farm and home decisions. Marriage and Family Living, 1963, 25, 349-351.

APPENDIX A
FAMILY DATA SHEET

Is wife currently employed outside the home? no
 part-time
 full-time

Religious background:

Husband: Protestant Catholic Jewish
 Greek Orthodox Other: _____

Wife: Protestant Catholic Jewish
 Greek Orthodox Other: _____

APPENDIX B
DECISION POWER INDEX

APPENDIX B
DECISION POWER INDEX

In every family somebody has to decide such things as where the family will live and so on. Many couples talk things over first, but the final decision often has to be made by the husband or the wife. Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible by checking one of the five responses.

WHO USUALLY MAKES THE FINAL DECISION ABOUT . . .

1. . . . what car to get?

- husband always
- husband more than wife
- husband and wife exactly the same
- wife more than husband
- wife always

2. . . . whether or not to buy some life insurance?

- husband always
- husband more than wife
- husband and wife exactly the same
- wife more than husband
- wife always

3. . . . what house or apartment to take?

- husband always
- husband more than wife
- husband and wife exactly the same
- wife more than husband
- wife always

4. . . . what job the husband should take?

- husband always
- husband more than wife
- husband and wife exactly the same
- wife more than husband
- wife always

5. . . . whether or not the wife should go to work or quit work?
- _____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always
6. . . . how much money your family can afford to spend per week on food?
- _____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always
7. . . . what doctor to have when someone is sick?
- _____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always
8. . . . where to go on a holiday outing?
- _____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always
9. . . . when sexual relations will occur?
- _____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always
10. . . . what T. V. program to watch in the evening?
- _____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always

11. . . . whether and/or when the children will have
music or dancing lessons?

_____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always

12. . . . where your family will spend your vacation?

_____ husband always
_____ husband more than wife
_____ husband and wife exactly the same
_____ wife more than husband
_____ wife always

APPENDIX C
RISK-TAKING DECISION

APPENDIX C

RISK-TAKING DECISION

Let's assume that Mr. _____ is assured of a lifetime job in his present position, with a modest, though adequate, pension upon retirement. On the other hand it is very unlikely that his salary will increase much before he retires. Recently he was offered a job with a small, newly founded company with a highly uncertain future. The new position would pay considerably more to start and would offer the possibility of a share in the ownership if the company survived the competition of the larger competitors.

Listed below are several probabilities or odds of the new company's proving financially sound. Please check the lowest probability that you would consider acceptable to make it worthwhile for him (you) to take the new job. (Note: the lowest probability on the list is "1 in 10").

- _____ The chances are 1 in 10 that the company will (10)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 2 in 10 that the company will (9)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 3 in 10 that the company will (8)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 4 in 10 that the company will (7)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 5 in 10 that the company will (6)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 6 in 10 that the company will (5)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 7 in 10 that the company will (4)
prove financially sound.
- _____ The chances are 8 in 10 that the company will (3)
prove financially sound.

_____ The chances are 9 in 10 that the company will (2)
prove financially sound.

_____ He should not take the new job no matter what (1)
the probabilities.

APPENDIX D
HUSBAND-WIFE RESPONSE TO PRETEST FORM

APPENDIX D

HUSBAND-WIFE RESPONSE TO PRETEST FORM

You indicated that the new job offer would be acceptable to you if the chances of the new company's success were _____.

Your spouse indicated that the new job offer would be acceptable to him her if the chances of the new company's success were _____.