

A REPLICATIVE STUDY OF THE MEASUREMENT OF MARITAL STRAIN  
UTILIZING THE RANK-ORDERING TECHNIQUE

by

Dennis J. Barnes

Thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Sociology

APPROVED:

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Dr. C. A. Ibsen, Committee Chairman

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Dr. E. G. Eriksen

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Dr. R. Dean Wright

March, 1971

Blacksburg, Virginia

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer would like to express his gratitude and sincere appreciation to members of his committee, fellow students, and others of the Department of Sociology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, whose help and professional advice have been instrumental in bringing about the completion of this research endeavor.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to the following persons: Dr. Charles A. Ibsen, the writer's Major Professor, for his constant encouragement and invaluable guidance throughout the research period, in all of its phases, and to Mr. John Wood for his assistance in helping the author with difficult methodological concepts and statistical computations required in analyzing the results obtained, from various testing of hypotheses.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

As the social climate of American society has changed over the years from a predominantly rural to what has been termed an urban "technological superstate," the perspective of the family researcher has also changed.<sup>1</sup> A review of the literature reveals that one important direction of this change has been that of increasing concern among family sociologists with the nature of interpersonal relationships. Interest in the dynamics of interpersonal behavior in courtship, marriage, and the family, for example, was evident in the late thirties and early forties in the work of Waller (1938), Burgess and Cottrell (1939), Becker and Hill (1942), and others. Earlier studies had directed attention to such concerns as residential propinquity, ethnic differences, changes in the functions of the family as an institution, and to such social problems as poverty, child-labor, illiteracy, unemployment, etc.; whereas, later studies began placing greater emphasis on the study of interpersonal feelings and attitudes, roles and role-taking in the family, and similar subjects.

Thus, in place of these former concerns a new type of problem

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<sup>1</sup>For a detailed account of these changes in family research perspectives see: Stryker, Sheldon, "Symbolic Interactionism in Family Sociology," in H. T. Christensen, Handbook of Marriage and the Family, Rand McNally and Company, 1964, pp. 143-166.

situation had emerged, one which likewise reflected a particular socio-cultural climate with its own values and norms. This latter statement refers, of course, to the growing preoccupation among family scholars with what might be called "self-other" problems; in which individuals and groups are concerned with interpersonal relationships in general and those involving self and other(s) in particular. Central to the study of such relationships is the concept of the social self, as the product of the perceived and imagined appraisals of others first given a systematic theoretical structure by George H. Mead (1934: 140-141).

Although the first full-scale treatment of the family from the point of view of symbolic interactionism appeared in Waller's (1938) work, it is noteworthy that Burgess (1926) was probably the one most instrumental in initiating the trend toward study of the family in this context. Burgess not only proposed ". . . study of the family as a living rather than a dead form<sup>2</sup> . . . "; he also took issue with those of the time (1926) who regarded conceptions of self and other as illusions lacking reality. In so doing he thus emphasized the major premises of symbolic interactionist theory, as the following quote indicates:<sup>3</sup>

These social images, these conceptions of ourselves and others . . . seem to many of us the very substance of human nature and personality. What is human nature but the capacity to have social images, to put oneself in the other person's place and look at oneself, so far as one is able,

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<sup>2</sup>E. W. Burgess, "The Family as a Unity of Interacting Personalities," Family, (1926:3).

<sup>3</sup>A more detailed discussion of symbolic interactionism as a theoretical framework, especially from the standpoint of its selection and utilization, is presented later on in this chapter.

in the mirror of the attitudes of other persons? . . . For the study of human nature, personality and groups like the family, the basic reality is just this social image, and this conception of one's role in the family, in the congenial group and in the community. Intimate studies of family life reveal that the actual problems of human beings center, in general, around the struggle to realize our conceptions of our roles . . . For it is in his social images, his memories, his wishes, his dreams, his illusions, his faiths that a human being really lives.<sup>4</sup>

From the standpoint of interactionist theory roles are, as indicated above, the social reality of the personality; however, they are not seen as absolutes. Rather, they are relative to social situations, which means that they may become obsolete in relation to changes in life conditions. Thus, one of the most fruitful outcomes of research in the area of the family, in recent years, has been the growing awareness of the complex nature of interpersonal relationships and, as a consequence, the stimulation of research efforts designed to take this complexity into account. Role relationships, which were in the past viewed as simple, isolated, or segmentalized units of behavior, are increasingly being analyzed from the standpoint of their mutual influence on each other in a context of social change; that is, from the standpoint of their interdependence and reciprocity relative to the social situation of the time.

In respect to American family life in general and marriage in particular the social situation at the present time appears paradoxical. For example, as a companionate relationship requiring the total

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<sup>4</sup>This quotation excerpted from Christensen, op. cit., p. 145.

investment of personality in order to successfully perform their expected roles as a unity of interacting personalities (Burgess, 1963: 2-3), the growing complexity of society in all areas of family process and function has made achieving such competence increasingly difficult. Moreover, while some stress and strain is no doubt inherent in the relationship itself, as is true of all human relationships (Goode, 1960: 483-496), the social situation at present tends to increase these strains as well as to create new ones. Since the major interest of the present study is that of analyzing the nature of strain in the marital relationship the roles of husbands and wives are discussed in considerable detail below.

The roles of husbands and wives, like any other set of self-other roles, consist of a complex pattern of expectations and responses which are reciprocal in nature. Adjustment in either role is influenced by the consistency with which the other responds by manifesting the appropriate behavior called for by the role pattern. Hence, when such does not occur and there is inconsistency in the responses of the other to the individual, he becomes insecure in his own role or so chronically anxious about his own role-playing ability that he becomes inadequate in the performance of a given role. Thus, the individual falls prey to what Sullivan (1947: 18-22) described as an anticipated unfavorable appraisal of one's current activity by someone whose opinion is significant. Moreover, the marital relationship is one in which two individuals with uniquely different socialization experiences are brought together into an intimate association of a comprehensive nature (Becker and Useem,

1942: 13-26). Consequently, when inconsistencies in role-playing do occur there exists no "scape goat," that is, blame is assigned to one of the marital partners. This fact in itself constitutes a source of strain for the relationship.

Another source of strain is that of differential socialization experiences, as alluded to above. Each spouse has internalized his own unique conceptions of marital roles during the oedipal phase of childhood with the parents as role models (Parsons, 1955); and these conceptions are brought to the marital relationship. Hence, some conflict may be internal to the role itself (Stryker, 1957: 286-296). Also, as Merton (1957) has shown, role relationships are "role sets," that is, the individual engages, by virtue of one of his positions, in several role relationships with different individuals. Thus, the individual cannot meet all the demands to the satisfaction of all the persons who are a part of his total role network; and consequently, this constitutes another source of role strain.<sup>5</sup>

Marital roles, however, are not such ironclad entities of behavior as to not allow the individual some choice and flexibility in attempting to reduce role strain in his own situation. For example, over time a balance is usually struck by the marital partners in their relationship through the relearning and reshaping of role expectations and

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<sup>5</sup>For the purposes of the present study role strain is defined as a felt difficulty on the part of an individual in fulfilling his role obligations.

performances. This latter process is essentially what Cottrell (1953: 54-60) had reference to in coining the term "self-other balance," and what Goode (1960b: 483-496) described as the process of role-bargaining.<sup>6</sup> Thus, if an individual does not always sacrifice his own needs for those of the marital partner, neither does he always ignore the needs of the other. The two partners can, therefore, meaningfully take the role of other and pursue it as an end even if it means loss of some personal role-gratification. That such a balance is usually achieved between the complete "other" and complete "self" orientations in successful marriages was found by Baber (1953). In this study divorced couples were found to be four times as far apart in their views of correct roles for self and spouse as compared with the married couples.

As indicated above, whether or not a marital partner responds consistently with the expectations of the other partner depends on his own preformed concepts of his marital role, his expectations regarding the reciprocal role of his spouse, his perceptions of his mate's expectations of him, and the resulting degree of correspondence between the two sets of role concepts and expectations. If these role concepts are similar and if role perception is fairly accurate, then each partner is better able to anticipate the other's feelings and to modify his own performances in accord with the other's expectations.

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<sup>6</sup>Goode approaches his analysis of role strain from the standpoint of structural role theory in contradistinction to the "Meadian" approach, the latter being the particular orientation of the present study. However, the writer takes the position that all orientations make their own unique, and valuable contributions to our understanding of the family.

Hurvitz (1960a: 610-615), in the introductory section of his study of marital strain, sums up the nature of marital roles as follows:

Within the family the roles of the husband-and-father and wife-and-mother are recurrent and regular units of conduct, oriented to the other of the pair. The complement of roles of each of the spouses constitutes that spouse's role-set. These roles have two aspects or valences: each spouse's performance of his own role-set and each spouse's expectations of how the other will perform his role-set. Marital strain results from the differences between role performances and role expectations.<sup>7</sup>

Before a discussion of the purpose and research problem of the present study is presented, it seems worthwhile at this point to emphasize the multi-dimensional aspects of marital strain. As a form of role conflict marital strain constitutes a major source of emotional stress and thus leads to personality changes, which, in turn, may have integrative or disintegrative affects on marital relationships. Moreover, the sum total or the cumulative effects of such changes will serve to produce changes in the total societal structure (Goode, 1960c: 483-496). The latter would appear to be a good example of the role of the family in generating social change and, conversely, the role of a society growing in complexity in generating changes in the family.

#### Research Problem Statement

In the present investigation of marital strain, based as it is on certain assumptions regarding roles and expectations, it was necessary

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<sup>7</sup>Nathan Hurvitz, "The Measurement of Marital Strain," American Journal of Sociology, 65(1960), pp. 610-615.

to take into account several factors before a decision was reached concerning a research design with the greatest efficacy. First, a discrepancy in some of the prior research done in the family field had been noticed which should demand the attention of any careful research effort. For example, most of the studies reviewed by the writer depicted a direct relationship between value consensus on the part of marital partners and their marital adjustment; however, the findings of a few studies indicated that the relationship was not that simple and direct.<sup>8</sup> Hurvitz (1960) found that when the husband and wife agreed on the priorities to be given to the various roles comprising the husband's role-set there was greater adjustment, but agreement about the wife's role was not found to be significantly related to either. Levinger and Breedlove (1966) also found that a relationship is not always present. Hobart and Klausner (1959) failed to find a relation between agreement on marital role conceptions and adjustment. Indeed, it appeared that nearly all the studies using the rank ordering technique for the measurement of marital adjustment produced findings conflicting with the idea of a simple relationship between similarity in values assigned certain roles by spouses and their marital adjustment.<sup>9</sup> Thus, in consideration of the foregoing the decision was made to do a replication of one of the

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<sup>8</sup>For more detail see Jacobson, Allvar in Heiss (1968), pp. 278-280.

<sup>9</sup>Some family researchers do not agree with the writer's current usage of the term "marital adjustment," preferring, rather, such terms as "marital satisfaction" and "competence."

aforementioned studies which had utilized the procedure of rank-ordering the roles of the spouses.

Second, the concept of marital strain as a sensitizing concept appeared to be the most appropriate way of taking the multi-dimensional aspects of marital role relationships into account. Blumer (1954: 3-10), has suggested that this is the more realistic approach to the study of social phenomena in the empirical world. For example, the term "role strain" when used as a sensitizing concept remains role strain. What changes is the application or use of the term. Thus, as a sensitizing concept role strain can be expressed in a distinctive manner in each empirical instance. In the context of the present study, then, the term "marital strain" is merely a form of role strain, and once this latter concept is defined and understood, no laboring over an operational definition to justify its usage is required.

Thirdly, from the standpoint of family theory there are good grounds for the justification of more replicative studies in relation to the volume of original research efforts being conducted. Replication of some of the prior research in the field of the family might serve the important purpose of clarifying the many conflicting findings in particular areas as well as verification for the purpose of theory-building.

Thus, in consideration of the above factors the major purpose of the present study is that of replicating a research effort carried out by Nathan Hurvitz (1960). The Hurvitz study was clearly framed within the symbolic interactionist theoretical framework which, in the writer's opinion, constitutes one of the most suitable orientations to the study

of interpersonal relationships. Moreover, the technique of rank-ordering the roles of marital spouses was used in his study which would appear to be the more reliable way of assessing strains in marital relationships.

Hence, as an initial effort to gain insight into the marital relationship in respect to the nature of strain which might be present, this study was concerned with the following research question:

What are the effects of inconsistencies in role performances and role expectations comprising the marital relationship?

Since the research design of the present study constitutes an exact replication of that of Hurvitz's, a detailed discussion of the latter study is presented below.

### The Hurvitz Study

The purpose of the following discussion is that of presenting a synopsis of Hurvitz's methodological approach to the measurement of marital strain. This is deemed a necessary step from the standpoint of both clarity and that of allowing the reader to make comparisons between the two studies.

From a sampling universe of middle-class, married couples living in the suburban Baldwin Hills area of southwestern Los Angeles, California, a random sample of 104 respondents was drawn for this study. To collect the data from sample subjects the author used the semi-structured interview technique. Couples were asked to complete separate interview schedules simultaneously but independently in the presence of the researcher.

As previously indicated, the author, having defined marital strain as the result of differences between role performances and role expectations, formulated the following hypotheses for testing:

Hypothesis I

Husbands and wives who indicate less strain in their relationship are happier in marriage than those who indicate more.

Hypothesis II

Husbands and wives the rank order of whose role performances and expectations are similar indicate less strain in their relationship than husbands and wives who differ in the rank order of their role performances and expectations.

Hypothesis III

Husbands and wives the rank order of whose role performances correspond with the modal rank of role performances in their subculture indicate less strain in their relationship than husbands and wives the rank order of whose role performances do not correspond with the modal rank order of role performances in their subculture.

Hypothesis IV

Husbands and wives the rank order of whose role expectations of the other spouse correspond with the modal rank order of role expectations of the other spouse in their subculture indicate less strain in their relationship than husbands and wives the rank order of whose role expectations of the other spouse do not correspond with the modal rank order of expectations of the other spouse in their subculture.

In addition to questions designed to secure information concerning the significant social characteristics of sample subjects in this study <sup>10</sup> the interview schedule also contained a Marital Roles Inventory (devised by the author) and the Locke and Wallace Short Marital-Adjustment Test.<sup>11</sup> The basic instrument of the study, however, was the Marital Roles Inventory which is described in detail below.

This instrument listed in random order and on separate pages the role-sets of the husband and wife. Each spouse was given a list of his own roles and a list of those of his spouse's for the purpose of ranking.

Thus, one of the lists each spouse received reported his performance of his roles; the other list his expectations of how the spouse should perform his (or her) roles. Listed below are the 10 performance roles for the husband in the order that they were presented to respondents in the Hurvitz study. The wife's expectation roles of the husband's performances are inserted in parentheses.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I do my (he does his) jobs around the house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (he is) a companion to my (his) wife.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (he helps) the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I earn (he earns) the living and support (supports) the family.

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<sup>10</sup>Some selected characteristics of sample subjects in the Hurvitz study are compared with those of sample subjects in the writer's study in Chapter 2.

<sup>11</sup>An example of this test is to be found in Appendix A.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I do my (he does his) wife's work around the house if my (his) help is needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I practice (he practices) the family religion or philosophy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (he is) a sexual partner to my (his) wife.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I serve (he serves) as the model of man for my (his) children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I decide (he decides) when the family is still divided after discussing something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I represent and advance (he represents and advances) my (his) family in the community.

Similarly, the wife's performance roles are listed below with the husband's expectations of how the wife should perform her roles inserted in parentheses. Again, these are listed randomly and do not correspond in order with the listing of the husband's roles.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (she helps) earn the living when my (her) husband needs my (her) help or when the family needs more money.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I practice (she practices) the family religion or philosophy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I care (she cares) for the children's everyday needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (she is) a companion to my (her) husband.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (she is) the homemaker.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (she is) a sexual partner to my (her) husband.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I serve (she serves) as the model of women for my (her) children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I represent and advance (she represents and advances) my (her) family socially and in the community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (she helps) the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.

Instructions required each subject to number (rank) his performance roles " . . . in the order of importance in which you actually carry out your roles or functions in the family at the present time," and, in respect to expectations of the spouse's roles, each was asked to rank them " . . . in the way you want or prefer your husband (wife) to carry out his (her) roles in the family at the present time." (Hurvitz, 1960: 611)

The above procedure, which gave the rank order of each subject's performance and expectation roles, allowed the author, then, to determine the differences between these two aspects of the marital relationship and thereby analyze the degree of role strain in it. Moreover, the procedure produced two sets of findings, namely: An Index of Strain and an Index of Deviation. For the purpose of clarity both of these research techniques should be fully described. This can be done best, perhaps, by operationally defining them:

1. Index of Strain: the difference between the rank order of the role-set of a husband or wife, ranked as performances by one spouse and as expectations by the other.
2. Index of Deviation: the difference between the total sample's modal rank order of each role-set and the rank order assigned to the same set by each respondent.

Thus, in addition to the Index of Strain there were two indexes of deviation for each spouse: a) an Index of Deviation of Performance, or "P roles" and, b) an Index of Deviation of Expectation, or "E roles."

Through the procedure above and having obtained marital-adjustment scores for each subject in the sample frame, a total of 8 independent variables were available to the author for testing the hypotheses of

his study. These are summarized below:

1. Husband's marital-adjustment score
2. Wife's marital-adjustment score
3. Husband's Index of Strain
4. Wife's Index of Strain
5. Husband's Index of Deviation of P roles
6. Wife's Index of Deviation of P roles
7. Husband's Index of Deviation of E roles
8. Wife's Index of Deviation of E roles

For both the Indexes of Strain and the Indexes of Deviation scores were derived by taking the cube root of the sum of the differences found between any two role-sets, or between any given role-set and its modal rank ordering by all husbands or wives.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the greater the differences in the rank ordering of roles by respondents the higher were the index scores obtained.

Various correlations among the variables in the study yielded levels of significance in 9 of the 15 associations tested.<sup>13</sup> These were as follow: Significant inverse correlations were found between the

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<sup>12</sup>The modal rank ordering of the role-sets found in the Hurvitz study are compared with those of the writer's study in Appendix B.

<sup>13</sup>Table XV, in Chapter 3, compares the correlations found among all the variables for both Hurvitz's study and that of the writer's.

husbands' Index of Strain and the marital-adjustment scores of both husbands and wives, but such correlations were not found between the wives' Index of Strain and the marital-adjustment scores of the husbands and wives. Thus, Hypothesis I could be accepted for the husbands but not for the wives. Lack of strain in the performance of the husband's role was, therefore, found to be associated with the happiness of both husbands and wives in marriage. Although a similar association was not found for the wives this does not mean that none exists. Hurvitz (1960) interpreted the latter as a weakness in both the Marital Roles Inventory and Marital-adjustment Scale, and to special characteristics of the sample studied. A significant correlation was found between the husbands' and wives' Indexes of Strain which required the acceptance of Hypothesis II. Such an association indicates that there is a tendency for spouses to either agree on the rank order of both of their role-sets or to disagree about the rank order of both role-sets.

Significant correlations were found between the husbands' Index of Strain and the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and between the wives' Index of Strain and the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles. Thus, Hurvitz found evidence to support Hypothesis III of his study; the association of these variables indicating that husbands and wives who perform their roles differently from the modal rank order of roles experience increasing strain the more they differ from it.

Since no significant correlations were found between the husbands' Index of Strain and the Husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles, or between the wives' Index of Strain and the wives' Index of Deviation of E roles, Hypothesis IV of the study was rejected. This finding indicated

that marital strain may be associated with an individual pattern of expectations of the roles of the other spouse rather than difference from the modal rank order of role expectations by all spouses in one's particular subculture.

Other significant correlations found among the variables in the Hurvitz study are merely mentioned at this point but these associations are compared with those found in the writer's study in Chapter 3, and are discussed in some detail. Other significant correlations were found between the following:

1. The husbands' Index of Strain and the wives' Index of Deviation of E roles.
2. The wives' Index of Strain and the husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles.
3. The husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles.

#### Related Research

While a vast body of literature exists in the family field having as its major concern the nature of interpersonal relationships, and especially as this relates to role conflict, there is not the abundance of research reports that might be expected relative to role strain in the marital relationship. Most of these studies have dealt with role strain in a general way or have failed to take into account the fact that husbands and wives attach priorities to various roles comprising the marital relationship; that is, some roles are valued or held in

higher esteem than others. Thus, an error is introduced into research when this hierarchical nature of roles is not accounted for. Moreover, where marital-adjustment is concerned a wide variety of measuring techniques have been employed and through their use a considerable number of conflicting findings are noticeable in the literature. Bowerman (1964), in reviewing over 60 studies published since 1940 found that 23 had used a measure based on the Burgess-Cottrell (1939), Terman (1935), or Locke (1951) indices or some modification of these. Only 10 studies had used a single item rating, and 12 studies, using records or demographic data, had divorce or separation as their criterion. The remaining 15 studies had used some other measure of adjustment, such as role tension, empathy, similarity of interests or number of problems in marriage.

Brief reviews of the methodology and findings of several studies which appeared to the writer to bear the greatest relevance to both the subject matter and the approach of the present study are presented below.

Luckey (1968), using the "Interpersonal Check List" in her study of 594 middle-class, married respondents and seeking to assess the effects of congruency of self and other spouse concepts on marital satisfaction, found that satisfied couples had greater congruence, but that the trend was significant only when the focus was on congruence of the couple's view of the husband. That is, if a woman sees her husband as he sees himself, the couple is likely to be highly satisfied; whereas, no evidence was found that would suggest that a man's understanding of his wife increased their marital happiness. Hurvitz (1960), it may be recalled, found evidence that lack of strain in the husband's performance

of his roles was associated with marital-adjustment for both spouses, but did not find a similar association for the wives. It would appear that the greater the disparity in the way both husband and wife view the husband's roles the greater is the marital strain in the relationship.

Stuckert (1963), using a configurational approach, that is, dividing the sample into homogeneous subsamples according to factors related to the dependent variable (marital satisfaction), studied 50 married couples in order to assess the effects of discrepancies in role expectations and perception on marital-adjustment. This study produced findings similar to those above. For example, it was found that the accuracy with which the wife perceives the marital expectations of her husband the greater is her marital satisfaction, but the accuracy of the husband's perception of his wife's views is not associated with satisfaction for either. Moreover, it was found that the degree of similarity between the views of the husband and wife is associated with the husband's marital satisfaction but not to that of the wife.

Kotlar (1965), in a recent study with a research design very similar to that of Luckey's (1968) obtained almost identical results. The congruence between the wife's description of her husband and his description of himself was found to be significantly greater among adjusted couples, but the congruence between the husband's description of his wife and her self-description was not significantly related to marital-adjustment. Again, this agrees with the Hurvitz study.

Levinger (1968), using a sample frame of 60 middle-class couples, and using the technique of interview coupled with performance (2 to 3 hour sessions) to assess the nature of task and social behavior in marital

roles, found evidence that suggests that social-emotional performance is the essence of the marital relationship as seen by both spouses. This finding supports the wisdom of rank-ordering of roles in the Hurvitz study. Doing so allows the respondent to reflect his values concerning which roles may produce the most strain when the other spouse does not live up to expectations.

Benson (1952), in a statistical analysis of portions of the Burgess-Wallin study of 1,000 engaged couples and their subsequent marital-adjustment, found that effective performance in the roles of provider and homemaker, desire for children, and the sharing of religious interests contributed more to happy married living than did other roles, i.e., recreational interests. While such a study does indicate that couples assign priorities to various roles, it tells us nothing of the strain introduced into the marital relationship when role performances and role expectations are inconsistent.

It is important to note at this point that the criticism leveled at most attempts to measure marital-adjustment, namely, that they are measuring the reactions of only one person, is to some degree justified. There have been attempts to remedy this situation, however. (Buerkle and Badgley, 1959; Farber, 1957.) The former developed an "Index of Marital Integration" for the purpose of focusing in on consensus in interpersonal relations; while, the latter devised the "Yale Marital Interaction Battery." However, such refinement of techniques does not entirely solve the problem of taking into account the mutual influence of various roles comprising the role-sets of husbands and wives, and it is felt that for the purposes of the present study the approach of

utilizing a sensitizing concept such as marital strain is the only one capable of so doing.

The studies cited above are in no way exhaustive of all those which relate in some manner to the Hurvitz study, or to the writer's; however, studies which appeared to have the most similarity in design and theoretical approach to Hurvitz's (1960) have been reviewed. We now turn to a discussion of the theoretical orientation of the present study.

### Theoretical Orientation of the Study

The particular theoretical framework within which the present study was conceived and carried out was that of symbolic interactionism. Since Burgess first suggested (in 1928) the feasibility of viewing the family as "a unity of interacting personalities," research studies utilizing this approach have flourished, suggesting the fact that where the research problem is concerned with interpersonal relationships the merits of this approach have become generally recognized. This is not to deny the utility of other referential frames within which particular problems may be fruitfully investigated; it merely means that the writer viewed interactionist theory as the most suitable theoretical "tool" to use given the nature of interpersonal relationships and his particular approach to analyzing marital strain.

Without going into detail concerning the underlying basic assumptions of symbolic interactionism, suffice it to say at this point that it is always incumbent on the student of sociology to acquire some

competence in searching out the basic assumptions on which a particular formulation rests. Such competence allows him to couch his own problem within the most suitable conceptual scheme congruent with the nature of the problem itself. Some additional support, however, for the selection and utilization of this particular conceptual framework in the present study is given below.

Being a social psychological orientation symbolic interactionism, in regard to both its basic underlying assumptions and the major tenets of the theory itself, is especially suitable to use when the researcher's concern is with what goes on between persons rather than with what goes on exclusively within persons (Mangus, 1957: 54-74). Moreover, it allows the researcher to keep in focus the centrality of values which are present and operative within the human personality while, at the same time, avoiding the assumption that an individual's values are necessarily congruent with those of his society (Goode, 1960: 484).

The nature of the interdependence and reciprocity of social roles, in general, and role performances and expectations, in particular, can be analyzed most effectively within the conceptual framework of interactionist theory, especially since these are the "end products" of the socialization experiences of the individual, learned for the most part in primary group associations. Mead (1934), Cooley (1909), et. al., have stressed the importance of these latter relations in the effects they have on the individual's capacities to assume and carry out his role obligations as an adult.

The above discussion is set forth for the purpose of showing the singular suitability of symbolic interactionism to the problem of interest in the present study, and is not meant to be an exhaustive analysis of the framework's merits in this regard.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>For a detailed account of the basic assumptions and major tenets of symbolic interactionist theory and its merits in analyzing the marital relationship see, A. R. Mangus, "Role Theory and Marriage Counseling," in J. Ross Eshleman, Perspectives in Marriage and the Family, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969, pp. 54-74.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

#### Design of the Research

In the selection of a sampling universe, even though a given study attempts to replicate as nearly as possible the specific methodology of a previous study, the probability of obtaining a sample with the same characteristics is extremely slight. Some degree of uniqueness is inherent in each and every sample drawn. However, in the present study an attempt has been made to approximate as closely as possible the research design of the Hurvitz study in respect to both the selection of the sampling universe and an appropriate technique for collection of the data. It may be recalled that in the Hurvitz study the sample population consisted of suburban, middle-class couples; thus, the study area for the present study was selected with those characteristics in mind.

In the succeeding pages the study area, the research technique, and the specific sampling procedure for this study are described in detail.

#### The Study Area

The present study was conducted in the Hollins area of Roanoke County, Virginia, during the months of October and November, 1970. The exact size of the area is unknown since Hollins is an unincorporated

place, but may be approximately described as lying from about 2 miles north of the Roanoke City corporate limits to within a few miles of the Botetourt County line. Moreover, it was determined, through the use of maps obtained from American Air Surveys, Inc., that this area comprised a total of 517 housing units at the present time which, assuming two adult persons per household, provides an estimation of the population of the area, namely, slightly in excess of 1,000 adult persons.

The Hollins area, as previously indicated, is suburban and, due to certain topographical features of the region, makes for a sort of natural clustering of the population into 5 divisions. The composition of this present population is nearly all white, a large percentage of them having been former city residents. Thus, in terms of population change, residents have followed the national trend, that of moving from urban to suburban places.

Table I presents data on the population distribution of the Hollins area by the aforementioned 5 natural "centers" by number of housing units contained in each. Also, this table shows the number of housing units drawn for sampling purposes.

### Research Technique

A precoded and semi-structured interview schedule was used to collect the data from sample respondents. This instrument, which was designed to secure data of an interpersonal nature from the husbands and wives, contained a total of 55 questions. Ten of these sought information

TABLE I

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF HOLLINS, VIRGINIA,  
BY AREA AND NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS\*

Area	Number of Housing Units	Units in Sample (10 Percent Random)
North Hills	151	15
Plymouth Colony	34	3
Starmount	56	6
Summerdean	135	14
Summerdean Gardens	141	14
Totals	517	52

\*Data obtained from American Air Surveys, Inc., dated February 1, 1969.

which would aid in the identification of sample characteristics; 22 were designed to collect pertinent data concerning the role relationships in marriage of husbands and wives and; another 23 consisted of the Locke and Wallace Short Marital-Adjustment Test (Locke and Wallace, 1959: 351).

While the above technique is more time consuming for the researcher than are other alternative techniques, i. e., telephone surveys, it does provide the researcher with certain advantages over other methods. For example, combining the questionnaire and the interview into one technique affords the researcher the opportunity of ". . . motivating the respondent to supply accurate information . . ." and ". . . to guide the respondent in his interpretation of the questions" (Gorden, 1969: 52-53). Moreover, in this particular study it was necessary for the interviewer to be present during certain phases to keep husbands and wives from conferring with each other. This was especially important in respect to that section of the interview schedule which attempted to assess the nature of spousal roles.

#### Sampling Procedure

From the 517 housing units comprising the Hollins area a 10 per cent random sample was drawn. This procedure was carried out as follows: The housing units in each of the 5 divisions (refer to Table I) of the area were systematically numbered; then, by using a table of random numbers the desired number of housing units for the sample was selected.

Thus, the sample frame in its entirety comprised a total of 52 housing units. All interviews were conducted in the presence of the writer with the respondents in their homes.

Successful interviews were carried out with 35 of the 52 families in the sample population. This comprised a total of 70 respondents as compared with 104 sample subjects in the Hurvitz study. The reasons for not being able to complete the other interviews are set forth below:

1. Husband deceased .....	4
2. Refused interview .....	7
3. Refused part of the interview .....	3
(supplied data for sample description)	
4. Sickness .....	1
5. Divorced .....	1
6. Could not contact .....	1

Although the response rate achieved, taking into consideration all of the above reasons, is 67.3 per cent, when only the refusals are considered this comes to 83.3 per cent.

In each case where respondents refused the interview the writer probed for their reasons. The 2 most frequently given reasons were: a) dissatisfaction with student demonstrations on campuses and, b) "too much prying into the private lives of citizens," by various agencies. The 1970 Census was frequently mentioned in respect to the latter. A third reason given by 2 of the sample subjects was: not wanting to participate in a "sex study."

The writer feels, however, that due to the random geographical distribution of those not participating in the study no sampling bias was introduced into the study because of their exclusion. On the average there were 2 refusals per division of the area.

### Sample Characteristics

Significant social characteristics of sample subjects indicated their middle-aged, middle-class status. There are some noticeable differences and similarities, however, between the sample populations of this study and that of the Hurvitz study, and these are noted as the present sample is described.

The mean age of the husbands in the sample was found to be 47.7 years, while that for the wives was found to be 44.3 years. Hurvitz (1960) found the ages for husbands and wives in his sample to be approximately 40 and 35 years, respectively. Thus, respondents in the present study were somewhat older than those in the Hurvitz study (7-10 years approximately). This difference is possibly due to the current trend in population movements; the movement to the suburbs of urban dwellers upon reaching retirement age.

Table II presents the age-data for husbands and wives categorized into age-groups. There were no respondents in the sample under 21 years of age. Seven of the husbands and 8 of the wives were in the category, 21-35; eight of the husbands and 9 of the wives ranged in ages from 36-44 years; 10 of the husbands and 13 of the wives from 45-54 and;

TABLE II

AGE OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Age Category	Number	Per cent
Husbands:		
21-35	7	10.0
36-44	8	11.4
45-54	10	14.3
55 or over	10	14.3
Wives:		
21-35	8	11.4
36-44	9	12.9
45-54	13	18.6
55 or over	5	7.1
Total:	70	100.0

and 10 of the husbands and 5 of the wives were 55 years of age or older. For the sample as a whole 75.6 per cent were over 35 years of age, with 21.4 per cent of these being over 55.

Although the present study was concerned for the most part with securing data for descriptive purposes relative to length of time husbands and wives had been married to their present spouses, additional information was obtained on how many marriages these respondents had previously had. Fifty-nine of the subjects reported that they had had only the present marriage, as compared with 11 who had engaged in 2. Since this latter group comprised only 15.7 per cent of the total, it is deemed unlikely that their having been previously married and divorced constituted a sampling bias for the study in its effort to measure marital strain. (See Kirkpatrick and Hobart, 1954: 10-19)

Table III presents the data relative to length of time respondents in the sample had been married to their present spouses. Since husbands and wives provided exactly the same responses to this particular question only the husband's response was used.

The modal family group in the present study was thus found to have been married from 20-24 years. This contrasts somewhat sharply with the length of marriage for the modal family group in the Hurvitz study, namely: 8-14 years. However, it may be recalled that respondents in the present study were from 7-10 years older than those of Hurvitz's and, therefore, such a finding follows logically.

The mean number of children per family was 2.1 (median number, 2). Table IV summarizes the data in respect to the age and school-status of

TABLE III

LENGTH OF RESPONDENTS' MARRIAGES TO PRESENT SPOUSE

Length of Marriage	Number	Per cent
Husbands:		
Less than 5 years	5	14.3
5-9 years	4	11.4
10-14 years	4	11.4
15-19 years	5	14.3
20-24 years	7	20.0
25-29 years	4	11.4
30-34 years	1	2.9
35 years or more	5	14.3
Total:	35	100.0

TABLE IV

RESPONDENTS' CHILDREN, BY AGE AND SCHOOL STATUS

Status	Number of Families	Per cent
No children	2	5.7
Preschool, 0-5 years	4	11.4
Grade school only, 6-13	2	5.7
High school only, 14-18	6	17.1
Post high school, 19 or over	11	31.4
Combination of preschool and grade school ages	3	8.6
Combination of grade school and high school ages	2	5.7
Combination of high school and post high school ages	2	5.7
Other (Ages listed)	3	8.6
<b>Total:</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>99.9</b>

the children. Again, since the husbands and wives responded alike to this question only one of the spouse's (husband's) data are used for the purpose of description.

Two families reported that they had no children; 4 reported children of preschool age; 2 grade school only, 6-13 years; 6 high school only, 14-18 years; 11 post high school, 19 years of age or older; 7 reported some combination of the above categories and, 3 gave an "other" response; that is, they listed the exact ages of their children because no particular category sufficiently described the age-status of the children.

Approximately one-half of all these families had some children of school age (51.4 per cent); 31.4 per cent had children post high school category; with only 17.1 per cent having children of preschool age or no children. The relatively high percentage of families with post high school age children only is not surprising in view of the mean ages of the husbands and wives themselves, in this particular sample.

The range of educational background for both husbands and wives in the sample was quite broad. Table V summarizes the data.

Four of the husbands and wives had finished grade school only; 10 had some high school; 17 had finished high school; 10 had attended trade or business schools; 15 some college training; 7 had finished college and, 6 had some post-graduate education. Only one respondent declined to give his educational level. Considering the fact that 55.7 per cent of these respondents had gone beyond the high school level, the general picture for the sample was one of fairly high educational attainment.

TABLE V

EDUCATION OF RESPONDENTS

Educational Level	Number of Respondents	Per cent
Husbands:		
Finished grade school	3	4.3
Some high school	4	5.7
Finished high school	5	7.1
Trade or business school	4	5.7
Some college	11	15.7
Finished college	4	5.7
Post-graduate school	3	4.3
DK/ref.	1	1.4
Wives:		
Finished grade school	1	1.4
Some high school	6	8.6
Finished high school	12	17.1
Trade or business school	6	8.6
Some college	4	5.7
Finished college	3	4.3
Post-graduate school	3	4.3
DK/ref.	0	0.0
Total:	70	99.9

Table VI presents the data obtained relative to the occupational involvement of the sample population.

Thirty of the respondents, or 42.8 per cent of them, held a professional position or were proprietors, managers, or officials with the husbands holding slightly more than 3 times as many of these positions as the wives. It may be seen from the data that 12 or approximately one-third of the husbands were in professional positions, with another one-third (11) being proprietors, managers, or officials. This characteristic coincides exactly with that of the Hurvitz study. The wives were rather low in these categories as might be expected, 17 or approximately one-half of them reporting housewife status.

Data for the family income of sample subjects are presented in Table VII. As with education above no heavy concentration of respondents into a single category occurred. The median income range of these families was 9,000-10,999 dollars. Hurvitz (1960) found the mean income per family in his sample to be 9,615 dollars. Although there is a 10-year time interval between the two studies the income data obtained are probably much more comparable than they would, at first sight, appear to be. Incomes and living standards, for example, have consistently been higher in other parts of the country (particularly the Northeast and Far West) than in the South. None of the families had an income under 3,500 dollars, while 6 families reported that their income was 15,000 dollars or more.

The religious affiliation of respondents in the sample comprised an interesting finding, and one which was at considerable variance with that of the Hurvitz study. As may be seen from the data presented in Table VIII

TABLE VI

OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Per cent
Husbands:		
Professional	12	17.1
Proprietor, manager or official	11	15.7
Clerical	1	1.4
Skilled worker	7	10.0
Semi-skilled worker	1	1.4
Retired	3	4.3
Wives:		
Professional	4	5.7
Proprietor, manager or official	3	4.3
Clerical	5	7.1
Skilled worker	1	1.4
Semi-skilled worker	3	4.3
Retired	2	2.9
Housewife	17	24.3
Total:	70	99.9

TABLE VII

FAMILY INCOME OF RESPONDENTS

Income	Number of Families	Per cent
\$ 3,500-4,999	1	2.9
5,000-6,999	4	11.4
7,000-8,999	9	25.7
9,000-10,999	6	17.1
11,000-12,999	7	20.0
13,000-14,999	2	5.7
15,000 and over	6	17.1
Total:	35	99.9

TABLE VIII

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENTS

Affiliation	Number	Per cent
Husbands:		
Protestant	32	45.7
Catholic	3	4.3
Wives:		
Protestant	33	47.1
Catholic	2	2.9
Total:	70	100.0

nearly all of the respondents were of the Protestant faith (92.8 per cent). This characteristic contrasts sharply with that of Hurvitz's sample where Protestants constituted approximately one-third of the sample, Catholics and other faiths about 15 per cent, and where those of the Jewish faith constituted one-half of the sample.

In summary, a typical family comprising the sample population in this study may be described as consisting of a husband and wife, approximately 48 and 44 years of age respectively.<sup>15</sup> The couple has been married from 20-24 years, have 2 children, one or both of which is likely to be of school age. Both have obtained high school educations, or higher, and while the husband is employed either in a professional position or that of a proprietor, manager or official the wife is carrying out her role as homemaker. The family has an income of approximately 10,000 dollars per year. Moreover, both the husband and wife are of the same religious faith, namely, Protestant; and, has been married to their present spouse only.

Chapter 3 will present the findings of the present study, along with a detailed comparison of these with the Hurvitz study.

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<sup>15</sup>An age difference of from 7 to 10 years between spouses in this study and that of Hurvitz was previously indicated.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE MEASUREMENT OF MARITAL STRAIN

#### Analysis of the Data

In Chapter 1 of this report the particular research problem to which the present study addressed itself was stated as follows: What are the effects of inconsistencies between the role performances and role expectations of husbands and wives on the marital relationship? Moreover, it was postulated that such inconsistencies would result in role-strain for the marital partners, or a felt difficulty on their part in fulfilling their marital role obligations. Thus, the major task of the study was that of assessing the differences between the role performances and role expectations of the spouses for the purpose of measuring the degree of marital strain in the relationship.

To accomplish the above purpose the basic instrument used was a modified form of the Marital Roles Inventory, as devised by Hurvitz (1960). The same random order for the role-sets of the husbands and wives was used in the present study as was used in that of the author's. As indicated, however, two roles were added to the wife's role-set and one to the husband's set. These role-sets, as revised, are presented below. The husband's role-set is listed first with the rewording of his

roles, and which were presented to the wife for the purpose of reporting her expectations of the husband's roles, enclosed in parentheses.<sup>16</sup>

- \_\_\_\_\_ I do my (he does his) jobs around the house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (he is) a companion to my (his) wife.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (he helps) the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I earn (he earns) the living and support (supports) the family.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do my (he does his) wife's work around the house if my (his) help is needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I practice (he practices) the family religion or philosophy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (he is) a sexual partner to my (his) wife.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I serve (he serves) as the model of men for my (his) children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I decide (he decides) when the family is still divided after discussing something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I represent and advance (he represents and advances) my (his) family in the community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (he helps) manage the family income and finances.

Following are the wife's roles which were presented to her to rank and which report her role performance. In parentheses is the rewording of the wife's roles which was presented to the husband to rank. These

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<sup>16</sup>As a result of his study Hurvitz suggested that the role-sets of the spouses be revised so as to include the one above on "managing the family income" for the husbands, and the two listed last in the wife's role-set below.

latter report his expectations of her roles.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (she helps) earn the living when my (her) husband needs my (her) help or when the family needs more money.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I practice (she practices) the family religion or philosophy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I care (she cares) for the children's everyday needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (she is) a companion to my (her) husband.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (she is) the homemaker.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am (she is) a sexual partner to my (her) husband.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I serve (she serves) as the model of women for my (her) children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I represent and advance (she represents and advances) my (her) family socially and in the community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (she helps) the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help (she helps) manage the family income and finances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I decide (she decides) when the family is still divided after discussing something.

As in the Hurvitz study, two different sets of instructions were given the respondents for completing the Marital Roles Inventory. One set required each subject to number his own roles "in the order of importance in which you actually carry out your roles or functions in the family at the present time." The second set of instructions required each subject to number his spouse's roles "in the way you want or prefer your wife (husband) to carry out her (his) roles or functions in the family at the present time." This procedure gave the rank order of both the performance and expectation roles for each spouse. Thus, the rank-order

of each spouse's roles, as he performs them, could be compared with the rank-order of the other spouse's expectations of the way he (she) wanted or preferred them to be performed. This research technique provided for a measure of the difference between the rank-ordering of either role-set by the spouses. For example, the husband's Index of Strain was determined by taking the differences between husband's and wife's rank-ordering of the husband's roles, and then taking the cube root of the sum of the differences found. The wife's Index of Strain was computed similarly: by taking the differences between the wife's and husband's rank-ordering of the wife's roles, then taking the cube root of the sum of the differences found.

Table IX shows a typical rank-ordering of roles by a pair of spouses, and is presented for the purpose of illustrating the above procedure.

The second research technique, the Index of Deviation, was used to measure the difference between the total sample's modal rank order of each role-set and the rank-order assigned to the same set by each respondent. Thus, there were two indexes of deviation for each spouse:

1. The husband's or wife's deviation from the modal rank order of performance (P) roles, and

2. The husband's or wife's deviation from the modal rank order of expectation (E) roles by all persons comprising the husband's or wife's subculture.

In carrying out the above procedure two steps were involved: First, to derive both the Index of Deviation of P roles and the Index of Deviation of E roles for each of the sample subjects the modal rank orders of

TABLE IX

PROCEDURE USED FOR THE DETERMINATION OF A SPOUSE'S  
INDEX OF STRAIN

Husband's P Roles	Husband (rank order)	Wife (rank order)	Cubed Difference
1. I do my jobs around the house.	10	4	216
2. I am a companion to my wife.	1	1	0
3. I help the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.	5	5	0
4. I earn the living and support the family.	2	3	1
5. I do my wife's work around the house if my help is needed.	9	8	1
6. I practice the family religion or philosophy.	4	6	8
7. I am a sexual partner to my wife.	6	2	64
8. I serve as the model of men for my children.	3	7	64
9. I decide when the family is still divided after discussing something.	8	9	1
10. I represent and advance my family in the community.	11	11	0
11. I help manage the family income and finances.	7	10	27
Sum of the Cubed Differences:			382

Cube root of 382 = 7.3 (husband's I.S.)

these roles by all subjects had to be determined. This was done by inspection, that is, by setting down the ranks assigned to each role item in a given role-set and thus noting the most frequently given ranking for that particular role.<sup>17</sup>

The results obtained were very similar to those obtained in the Hurvitz study; however, some differences occurred. Listed below are the modal rank orders for the role-sets of subjects in the present study, followed by some commentary on how these differ from Hurvitz's (1960).

A. Husbands' modal rank order of the husband's P roles.

1. I earn the living and support the family.
2. I am a companion to my wife.
3. I help manage the family income and finances.
4. I practice the family religion or philosophy.
5. I help the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
6. I am a sexual partner to my wife.
7. I do my jobs around the house.
8. I serve as the model of men for my children.
9. I do my wife's work around the house if my help is needed.
10. I represent and advance my family in the community.
11. I decide when the family is still divided after discussing something.

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<sup>17</sup>There are 4 sets of these roles: Husbands' and wives' Performance roles and husbands' and wives' Expectation roles.

B. Wives' modal rank order of the husband's P roles.  
(wives' E roles)

1. He earns the living and supports the family.
2. He is a companion to his wife.
3. He helps the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
4. He practices the family religion or philosophy.
5. He is a sexual partner to his wife.
6. He helps manage the family income and finances.
7. He serves as a model of men for his children.
8. He decides when the family is still divided after discussing something.
9. He does his jobs around the house.
10. He represents and advances his family in the community.
11. He does his wife's work around the house if his help is needed.

C. Wives' modal rank order of the wife's P roles.

1. I am a companion to my husband.
2. I am the homemaker.
3. I care for the children's everyday needs.
4. I am a sexual partner to my husband.
5. I help the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
6. I serve as the model of women for my children.
7. I practice the family religion or philosophy.
8. I help manage the family income and finances.
9. I represent and advance my family socially and in the community.

10. I decide when the family is still divided after discussing something.
  11. I help earn the living when my husband needs my help.
- D. Husbands' modal rank order of the wife's P roles.  
(husbands' E roles)
1. She is the homemaker.
  2. She is a companion to her husband.
  3. She cares for the children's everyday needs.
  4. She is a sexual partner to her husband.
  5. She serves as the model of women for her children.
  6. She helps the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
  7. She represents and advances her family socially and in the community.
  8. She practices the family religion or philosophy.
  9. She helps manage the family income and finances.
  10. She helps earn the living when her husband needs her help or when the family needs more money.
  11. She decides when the family is still divided after discussing something.

The similarity in the modal rank orders of the role-sets above with modal rank orders obtained in the Hurvitz study was striking. A few minor differences were noted, however. For example, in respect to the husbands' P roles the husbands ranked the role of being a sexual partner to the wife lower than did subjects in the Hurvitz study; the wives, on the other hand, ranked this role the same as did wives in the Hurvitz study. One striking difference in the modal rank orders of these roles between the present study and that of Hurvitz's occurred in respect to

the role of practicing the family religion or philosophy. This role was ranked relatively high by subjects in this study compared to Hurvitz's study. This latter may be due to some regional characteristic, or to the uniqueness of the sample studied.

Having secured the modal rank orders of the roles in the role-sets of the spouses the second step was to compare the role-sets of each subject with these modal rank orders. The procedure, therefore, for determining the Indexes of Deviation of both P and E roles for the spouses was similar to that in determining the Indexes of Strain. The husband's indexes of deviation of P and E roles resulted from the difference between the husband's rank-ordering of the roles and their modal rank-ordering by all the husbands; the wife's indexes of deviation of P and E roles resulted from the difference between the wife's rank-ordering of the roles and their modal rank-ordering by all the wives. These indexes were computed by taking the cube root of the sum of the cubed differences found.

Six of the independent variables used in the present study were derived from the above techniques, and two others, for a total of eight, consisted of the marital-adjustment scores of the sample respondents. As indicated previously, these latter were obtained through the administration of the Locke and Wallace Short Marital-Adjustment Test.

Variables pertinent to the testing of each hypothesis of the study are set forth in the tabulations which follow in the next section.

### Tests of Hypotheses

There were four hypotheses formulated for testing in the present study (Chapter 1: The Hurvitz Study). In the discussion which follows each hypothesis is restated, and the levels of significance of the correlations obtained from the association of pertinent variables shown and discussed. A summary discussion of the findings follows the testing of the hypotheses.

**HYPOTHESIS I: HUSBANDS AND WIVES WHO INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP ARE HAPPIER IN MARRIAGE THAN THOSE WHO INDICATE MORE.**

The test of this hypothesis involved the husbands' and wives' Marital-adjustment scores and the husbands' and wives' Indexes of Strain. Table X shows the manner in which these four variables were associated with each other and the correlation coefficients obtained. Thus, since other studies have shown a relationship in marriage between conflict and the marital-adjustment of spouses (See Dyer, 1962: 371-375), and since, marital strain is indicative of conflict, it seemed reasonable to test the assumption that high indexes of strain would be associated with low marital-adjustment and vice versa.

Thus, as is indicated in Table X, significant inverse correlations were found between the husbands' Index of Strain and the marital-adjustment scores of the husbands ( $r = -.33$ ) and wives ( $r = -.44$ ); but, such correlations were not found between the wives' Index of Strain and the marital-adjustment scores of the husbands ( $r = -.26$ ) and wives ( $r = -.22$ ).

TABLE X

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS I: HUSBANDS AND WIVES WHO INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP ARE HAPPIER IN MARRIAGE THAN THOSE WHO INDICATE MORE.\*

Type of Association	r	Level of Significance**
Husbands' Index of Strain and Husbands' Marital-Adjustment scores .....	-.33	Significant.
Husbands' Index of Strain and Wives' Marital-Adjustment scores .....	-.44	Significant.
Wives' Index of Strain and Husbands' Marital-Adjustment scores .....	-.26	Not significant.
Wives' Index of Strain and Wives' Marital-Adjustment scores .....	-.22	Not significant.

\*N = 70

\*\*The level of significance utilized in this analysis is the .05 with N - 2 degrees of freedom (33). A table of critical values for several levels of significance is found in Bruning and Kintz, (1968: 229).

These findings require the acceptance of the first hypothesis for the husbands but not for the wives. The findings relative to the four hypotheses of the study are discussed in the succeeding section.

HYPOTHESIS II: HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE PERFORMANCES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE SIMILAR INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP THAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES WHO DIFFER IN THE RANK ORDER OF THEIR ROLE PERFORMANCES AND EXPECTATIONS.

Since the Index of Strain for respondents in the study was determined by comparing the rank order of the role performance of a subject with that of the rank order of expectations of his performance in that role obtained from his spouse, the testing of the second hypothesis involved only the correlation of their Indexes of Strain. It was found that there is a relatively high correlation between the Index of Strain for the husbands and that of the wives. Table XI shows this to be  $r = +.50$ , which requires the acceptance of Hypothesis II.

HYPOTHESIS III: HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE PERFORMANCES CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE PERFORMANCES IN THEIR SUBCULTURE INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP THAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE PERFORMANCES DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE PERFORMANCES IN THEIR SUBCULTURE.

As shown in Table XII, the testing of this hypothesis involved the association of the husbands' Index of Strain with the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles, and the wives' Index of Strain with the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles.

TABLE XI

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS II: HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE PERFORMANCES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE SIMILAR INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP THAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES WHO DIFFER IN THE RANK ORDER OF THEIR ROLE PERFORMANCES AND EXPECTATIONS.\*

Type of Association	r	Level of Significance**
Husbands' Index of Strain and wives' Index of Strain .....	.50	Significant.

\*N = 70

\*\*Bruning and Kintz, (1968: 229)

TABLE XII

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS III: HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE PERFORMANCES CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE PERFORMANCES IN THEIR SUBCULTURE INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP THAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE PERFORMANCES DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE PERFORMANCES IN THEIR SUBCULTURE.\*

Type of Association	r	Level of Significance**
Husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and husbands' Index of Strain .....	.08	Not significant.
Wives' Index of Deviation of P roles and wives' Index of Strain .....	.41	Significant.

\*N = 70

\*\*Bruning and Kintz, (1968: 229).

A significant correlation was found, in this case, between the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles and the wives' Index of Strain; but, such a correlation was not found between the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the husbands' Index of Strain. Hence, Hypothesis III was accepted for the wives but not for the husbands. The correlations are presented in Table XII: ( $r = +.08$ , for the husbands, and  $r = +.41$ , for the wives).

However, the failure of this study to find a significant correlation in respect to the husbands, in this test, does not mean that no such relationship (between the husbands' Index of Deviation and the husbands' Index of Strain) exists. It means, rather, that the writer in this study did not find evidence that a relationship does exist. Moreover, it should be noted here that Hurvitz (1960) found such a relationship in his study.

**HYPOTHESIS IV: HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE IN THEIR SUBCULTURE INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP THAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE IN THEIR SUBCULTURE.**

The testing of this hypothesis involved four variables: husbands' and wives' Indexes of Deviation of E roles, and husbands' and wives' Indexes of Strain. Table XIII presents the findings. Thus, as the table indicates, significant correlations were found between the husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and the husbands' Index of Strain ( $r = +.34$ ); and between the wives' Index of Deviation of E roles and the

TABLE XIII

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS IV: HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE IN THEIR SUBCULTURE INDICATE LESS STRAIN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP THAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES THE RANK ORDER OF WHOSE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH THE MODAL RANK ORDER OF EXPECTATIONS OF THE OTHER SPOUSE IN THEIR SUBCULTURE.\*

Type of Association	r	Level of Significance**
Husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and husbands' Index of Strain .....	.34	Significant.
Wives' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Strain .....	.48	Significant.

\*N = 70

\*\*Bruning and Kintz, (1968: 229).

wives' Index of Strain ( $r = +.48$ ). These findings required the acceptance of Hypothesis IV.

Although Hurvitz (1960) did not find significant correlations for the above associations of variables in his study, the findings in the present study suggest that such a relationship exists; that is, that marital strain may be associated with the modal rank order of role expectations of the other spouse in an individual's subculture.

Table XIV presents the other associations tested in the present study. A significant correlation was found between the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the wives' Index of Strain ( $r = +.39$ ). In the following associations, however, nonsignificant correlations were obtained: the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles and the husbands' Index of Strain ( $r = +.13$ ); the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles ( $r = +.13$ ); and the husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and the wives' Index of Deviation of E roles, ( $r = +.19$ ).

#### Discussion of the Findings

The first hypothesis of this study was accepted for the husbands but not for the wives, based on the correlations obtained. This is interpreted as meaning that lack of strain in the performance of the husband's roles is associated with both the husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction, as measured by a previously validated instrument.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Locke and Wallace Short Marital-Adjustment Test.

TABLE XIV

TESTS OF OTHER ASSOCIATIONS\*

Type of Association	r	Level of Significance**
Husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and wives' Index of Strain .....	.39	Significant.
Wives' Index of Deviation of P roles and husbands' Index of Strain .....	.13	Not significant.
Husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and wives' Index of Deviation of P roles .....	.13	Not significant.
Husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Deviation of E roles .....	.19	Not significant.

\*N = 70

\*\*Bruning and Kintz, (1968: 229)

It may be recalled that a similar association was not found for the wife's performance roles. However, failure to find evidence of such a relationship does not prove its nonexistence; rather, it implies inadequacies in the basic instruments used in the study (the Marital-adjustment Scale and the Marital Roles Inventory); in its procedures, as well as special characteristics of the sample studied, or all these factors combined.

Hypothesis II, based on the correlation between the husbands' and wives' Indexes of Strain, was accepted. Thus, where one spouse had a low Index of Strain the other spouse also had a low index of Strain, and where one spouse had a high Index of Strain the other spouse tended to have a high one too. This means that there is a tendency for husbands and wives who agree about the rank order of the roles of one spouse to agree about the rank order of the roles of the other spouse, while husbands and wives who disagree about the rank order of the roles of one of the spouses also tend to disagree about the rank order of the roles of the other.

The findings relative to the first two hypotheses in the present study correspond rather closely with those of the Hurvitz study, however, the two studies are at considerable variance with each other in respect to the third and fourth hypotheses. Hurvitz (1960), for example, found evidence to support his acceptance of Hypothesis III for both husbands and wives, whereas, this study produced evidence which would support the hypothesis for the wives only. Moreover, Hypothesis IV was rejected in the Hurvitz study, while evidence in the present study resulted in its acceptance.

Thus, in respect to Hypothesis III the interpretation is that wives who perform their roles differently from the modal rank order of P roles in their subculture experience increasing strain the more they deviate from it. Absence of strain, therefore, for wives in marriage appears to be associated with a rank order of role performances which is like that of other wives. As indicated above, Hurvitz (1960) found evidence to support a similar relationship for the husbands while, this study did not.

In the test of Hypothesis IV significant correlations were obtained in respect to the Index of Deviation of E roles and the Index of Strain for both husbands and wives; thus, the hypothesis was accepted. Marital strain was found to be associated with a subcultural pattern of expectations of the other spouse, which is interpreted as meaning, in this sample, that husbands and wives experience increasing strain the more they deviate from the modal rank-ordering of expectation roles of the other spouse by members of their particular subculture. This means that wives tend to hold similar views of the way they expect husbands to perform their roles, and likewise, husbands tend to have similar views of the way in which they expect the wives to perform their roles.

When a husband or wife actually does deviate in his performance roles, however, the husband's deviation from the modal rank-ordering of P roles results in greater strain for the relationship than does the wife's deviation. When examined carefully this latter finding is not necessarily incongruent with that pertaining to the expectation roles of the other spouse. It would appear to indicate, however, that husbands

are more concerned with their image as a husband than they are with the wife's performance; while, on the contrary, wives are vitally concerned with the way the husband performs. Thus, from either the husband's or the wife's point of view strain is introduced into the relationship when either feels that the husband is "out of step" with other husbands.

Significant associations were not found between the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles or, between the husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and the wives' Index of Deviation of E roles.

Table XV presents a comparison of the two studies in respect to the correlations obtained from various associations of the variables, with levels of significance indicated in each case. The major discrepancies between the two studies involved the following associations: a) husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the husbands' Index of Strain, b) husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and the husbands' Index of Strain, c) wives' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Strain, and e) the husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and the wives' Index of Deviation of P roles. There was agreement on the findings for both studies on 10 of the associations tested.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to present and to interpret the findings of the present study as clearly as possible, as well as to compare these with the findings obtained in the Hurvitz study. However, in a replicative study such as this it is incumbent on the researcher to ascertain whether or not his study actually does replicate the model

TABLE XV

A COMPARISON OF THE FINDINGS OF THE TWO STUDIES\*

Type of Association	<u>Hurvitz</u> r	<u>This Study</u> r
Husbands' Index of Strain and husbands' Marital-Adjustment scores	-.22 S	-.33 S
Husbands' Index of Strain and wives' Marital-Adjustment scores	-.23 S	-.44 S
Wives' Index of Strain and husbands' Marital-Adjustment scores	-.07 NS	-.26 NS
Wives' Index of Strain and wives' Marital-Adjustment scores	-.08 NS	-.22 NS
Husbands' Index of Strain and wives' Index of Strain	.20 S	.50 S
Husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and husbands' Index of Strain	.31 S	.08 NS
Wives' Index of Deviation of P roles and wives' Index of Strain	.34 S	.41 S
Husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and wives' Index of Strain	.39 S	.39 S
Wives' Index of Deviation of P roles and husbands' Index of Strain	.03 NS	.13 NS
Husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and husbands' Index of Strain	.16 NS	.34 S
Wives' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Strain	-.07 NS	.48 S
Husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Strain	.50 S	.57 S
Wives' Index of Deviation of E roles and husbands' Index of Strain	.28 S	.22 NS
Husbands' Index of Deviation of P roles and wives' Index of Deviation of P roles	.24 S	.13 NS
Husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Deviation of E roles	-.06 NS	.19 NS

\*N = 70

S - significant; NS - not significant.

The level of significance utilized in both analyses was the .05.

study. This is especially true in this instance since there was a substantial difference in the sizes of the samples drawn, special characteristics of the samples, and because of some revision in the basic instrument used -- the Marital Roles Inventory.

In Chapter 4 we turn our attention to the specific question of whether or not this study has indeed replicated the Hurvitz study.

## CHAPTER 4

### TESTING FOR A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN FINDINGS

#### Problem Statement

The particular problem to which this chapter addresses itself is that of ascertaining whether or not there are significant differences between this and the Hurvitz study in respect to the correlations obtained, and on which the findings are based. The question is, basically, this: Are the correlation coefficients obtained in the two studies sufficiently overlapping to assure that the two random samples drawn came essentially from the same type of population universe? Thus, if significant differences between the two sets of  $r$ 's for the studies are found the conclusion would have to be that the present study is not a replication of Hurvitz's (1960), the sample having come from a different population.

The following test, based on Fisher's  $z$  transformation of  $r$ , is, therefore, a test of the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the two sets of correlations obtained in the Hurvitz study and that of the writer's.

#### Testing for Significant Differences

In conducting this test a new variable ( $z'$ ) is first derived, the distribution of which is approximately normal in form and whose

distribution is independent of either the population correlations or the sample sizes. Thus, through the use of this particular test any value of  $r$  may be transformed to a new variable  $z'$  which permits us to test the significance of the difference between any two values of  $r$  obtained from two independent random samples. The new variable,  $z'$ , is defined as

$$z' = \frac{1}{2} \log_e (1 + r) - \log_e (1 - r)$$

where  $r$  is the observed value of the correlation coefficient. (Edwards, 1967: 248). Thus, following through with the logic,

$$z' = z_1 - z_2$$

that is, we may transform any two correlations into Fisher  $z$  scores and then take the difference to determine the value of the new variable  $z'$ . Fisher  $z$  transformation scores in this study were obtained from a table in Appendix E of Bruning and Kintz (1968).

Table XVI lists the Fisher  $z$  scores obtained for both this and the Hurvitz study, as well as the value of  $z'$ , obtained by taking the difference in these scores. Also, this table shows the significance of the difference obtained for each of the 15 associations of variables in the studies; this latter determined by dividing by a value (.2760) computed to take into account the fact that the samples were of different sizes. This procedure is shown in the table.

TABLE XVI

RESULTS OF THE TEST FOR ANY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE  
IN THE CORRELATIONS OBTAINED IN THE TWO STUDIES\*

$z_1 \left[ \sqrt{1/N_1-3} \right]$	$z_2 \left[ \sqrt{1/N_2-3} \right]$	$z_1-z_2 \left[ \sqrt{(1/N_1-3) + (1/N_2-3)} \right]$	Level of Significance**
.343	.223	.119	.432
.472	.234	.238	.862
.266	.070	.196	.710
.224	.080	.144	.520
.549	.203	.347	1.256
.080	.321	.240	-.871
.436	.354	.082	.295
.412	.412	.000	.000
.131	.030	.101	.365
.354	.161	.193	.698
.523	.070	.593	2.149
.648	.549	.098	.356
.224	.288	.064	-.232
.131	.245	.114	.413
.192	.060	.252	.914

\* $N_1$  is the present study.  $N_2$  is the Hurvitz study.

\*\*The level of significance utilized in this analysis is the .05. For the corresponding associations of variables for the above data refer to Table XV, p. 62.

Thus, from the foregoing table it may be seen that in 14 of the 15 associations tested in the two studies there were no significant difference in the correlations obtained, since a  $z$  larger than 1.960 would be required to be significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the decision was reached to accept the null hypothesis and to conclude that this study replicates the Hurvitz study rather closely in respect to populations sampled.

As noted above, there was one exception where the difference in  $r$ 's obtained in the two studies did yield a significant  $z$  (2.149). This pertained to the association of the wives' Index of Deviation of E roles and the wives' Index of Strain. A significant  $r$  was not obtained in the Hurvitz study, while a rather high  $r$  was obtained in the present study; however, this may merely represent a spurious relationship. Further research needs to be done in respect to the possible existence of such sub-cultural patterns of behavior before valid judgments can be reached, i. e., does marital strain result when husbands and wives feel that they are not viewing the role of the opposite spouse congruently with the way other spouses in their subculture do (following the local norm of expectations of the role of the other spouse)?

The close similarity of findings in the two studies would seem to bear out the following contentions pertaining to the replication function of research: a) the retesting of prior research findings serves the important role of giving direction to research, that is, it sharpens the focus of the researcher so that his attention can be given to those areas where research is most needed and where the results obtained will

add the most to theory and, b) from the standpoint of methodology, replicative studies help to reduce the tendency of current social research to vacillate between conflicting approaches (with the consequence that little is added to substantive family theory), by demonstrating the suitability and potentiality of a particular approach to a particular type of problem. In other words, through replication of the Hurvitz study we have established the utility of a method as well as supported a body of knowledge pertaining to marital strain.

Chapter 5 briefly summarizes the foregoing report and attempts to portray the husbands and wives comprising the sample in respect to their roles and real-life situations. Some conclusions are also reached concerning future directions for research in the area of spousal role-relationships.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the present study and the research problem which constituted its major concern were set forth in Chapter 1. These were: a) to replicate a research study previously carried out in the area of marital roles (Hurvitz, 1960), and b) to do this, as the author did, through the use of a sensitizing concept, "marital strain," the problem being one of investigating the effects of inconsistencies in role performances and role expectations between the spouses.

A thorough review of the Hurvitz study was presented next in order to clarify and illustrate the research design and its procedures and techniques for working with the data; also, because it was the model for the methodological approach of this study. Following was a discussion of some pertinent related research, that which appeared to bear the greatest relevancy in respect to problem area investigated. Also, some discussion of the theoretical orientation of the study was presented in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 described the selection of the sample and delineated certain of its significant social characteristics. These were compared with the sample population in the Hurvitz study and were found to be, on the whole, similar in nature.

Chapter 3 consisted of an analysis of the data obtained and an interpretation of the findings, which were then compared with the findings of the Hurvitz study.

In Chapter 4 the question was raised as to whether or not the present study actually comprised a replication of the Hurvitz study. Thus, a Fisher's z test was conducted on the correlations of all 15 associations treated in the two studies to determine if they were significantly different; thereby, indicating that the two samples were not drawn from the same type of population and, that, consequently, the present study did not constitute a replication. Only one significant z was found and, therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Thus, on the basis of the findings in this analysis a portrayal of sample subjects in respect to the nature of marital strain and its effect on the marital relationship may be presented as follows:

When husbands and wives perform their roles consistently with the expectations of the other spouse the result is a more harmonious and satisfying marital relationship. Further support of this assertion stems from the fact that there is a tendency for both of the spouses, in a particular relationship, to have either a high Index of Strain or a low Index of Strain. However, when the husband deviates from the "local norm" (modal rank ordering of husbands' P roles) it is the wife who experiences the greater strain, that is, greater difficulty in the performance of her own roles as a wife. In contrast to this, the wife's deviation from the "local norm" does not have the same effect on the husband. The conclusion is, therefore, that it is the husband's role-set which has the greater capacity to introduce strain into the relationship, when he does not perform his roles in line with the wife's expectations or in near conformity with the performance pattern of other husbands in

his subculture. On the other hand, when the wife deviates in the performance of her roles from the modal performance by other wives, it is she (not the husband as indicated above) who experiences the greater strain. Hence, the implication is that wives are more aware of the way they should perform their roles than husbands are.

From the standpoint of expectation roles a subcultural pattern was found to exist for both husbands and wives in the sample population. Thus, a common notion exists among the spouses of the way in which the opposite spouse should perform his (her) roles, and any deviation from this produces strain. However, when these subcultural norms of role expectations were associated with each other, i.e., husbands' Index of Deviation of E roles and wives' Index of Deviation of E roles, no evidence of a relationship was found.

When the wife feels that either she or her husband is not performing somewhat congruently with such subcultural norms of behavior she experiences difficulty with the performance of her roles; there is no evidence in this study, however, to indicate that the husband experiences strain when this happens -- only when he feels he is "out of line" with the notion of how husbands should perform in his own subculture. This would suggest the possibility that husbands in this sample are more concerned with their image as a husband as viewed by other husbands than they are with their image as a husband to the wives.

From the rank-ordering of both performance and expectation roles in this study husbands and wives were found to assign higher priority to certain roles than to others. For example, both spouses tended to assign

top rank to the husband's role as "breadwinner" for the family. Also, both tended to rate the role of being a homemaker high for the wife and; it was clearly evident from the high priority generally assigned the role of companionship that both spouses valued this role-function of the other spouse greatly.

Although the above indicates that some differences between performances and expectations may be more significant than others, it does not tell us which differences in role performances and expectations are most often associated with marital strain. For example, does the difference between the husband's performance, in respect to earning the living, and the wife's expectations of his performance in that role result more often in marital strain than, say, the difference between his performance of the role of being a companion to his wife and her expectations of him in that role? It is felt that future research efforts would be more fruitful in this area if a method of weighting these differences in the scoring was devised. Moreover, as a result of the present study it is suggested that future efforts concerned with this problem restudy the Marital Roles Inventory for the purpose of improving its ability to measure marital strain; this latter could be done from the standpoint of restructuring the statements so that some of the roles do not appear overlapping to the respondents. Also, a shortening of the instrument might serve to increase its effectiveness in measuring strain.

The present study was conducted with a middle-class, middle-aged group of married respondents and, hence, the results are not generalizable beyond this context. However, it would seem desirable to replicate the study using other types of samples. Indeed, this must be done if the

findings reported here are to become a body of general theory concerning an important aspect of the marital relationship. If this research effort creates interest in such further replication, then it will have been a truly worthwhile endeavor.

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APPENDIX A

LOCKE AND WALLACE SHORT MARITAL-ADJUSTMENT TEST

C. Instructions: In the following questions frank and honest replies are of the highest importance. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. For each question circle the number given after the most appropriate, or most applicable answer in your case.

34. How often do you kiss your mate?
- |                       |                       |    |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----|
| every day ..... 25    | almost never ..... 50 |    |
| now and then ..... 23 |                       | 59 |
35. Have you ever wished you had not married?
- |                       |                 |    |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----|
| frequently ..... 31   | rarely ..... 34 |    |
| occasionally ..... 22 | never ..... 26  | 60 |
36. When disagreements arise they generally result in:
- |                            |   |    |
|----------------------------|---|----|
| husband giving in ..... 50 | neither giving in ..... 22                    |    |
| wife giving in ..... 31    | agreement by mutual<br>give and take ..... 53 | 61 |
37. Do you and your mate agree on aims, goals, and things believed to be important in life?
- |                            |                              |    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|----|
| always agree ..... 26      | frequently disagree ..... 22 |    |
| almost always agree ... 15 | almost always disagree .. 31 | 62 |
| occasionally agree .... 40 | always disagree ..... 13     |    |
38. Do you and your mate agree on sex relations?
- |                             |                              |    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----|
| always agree ..... 43       | frequently disagree ..... 50 |    |
| almost always agree .... 33 | almost always disagree .. 41 | 63 |
| occasionally disagree .. 23 | always disagree ..... 14     |    |
39. Do husband and wife engage in outside activities together?
- |                       |                       |    |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----|
| all of them ..... 34  | few of them ..... 13  |    |
| some of them ..... 24 | none of them ..... 40 | 64 |

40. Do you and your mate agree on friends?
- |                           |    |                            |    |           |
|---------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|-----------|
| always agree .....        | 25 | frequently disagree .....  | 13 |           |
| almost always agree ..... | 70 | almost always disagree ... | 31 | <u>65</u> |
| occasionally disagree ... | 40 | always disagree .....      | 40 |           |
41. What is the total number of times you left mate or mate left you because of conflict?
- |                |    |                         |    |           |
|----------------|----|-------------------------|----|-----------|
| no times ..... | 54 | two or more times ..... | 22 |           |
| one time ..... | 13 |                         |    | <u>66</u> |
42. Do you and your mate agree on right, good, and proper behavior?
- |                            |    |                            |    |           |
|----------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|-----------|
| always agree .....         | 61 | frequently disagree .....  | 40 |           |
| almost always agree .....  | 51 | almost always disagree ... | 13 | <u>67</u> |
| occasionally disagree .... | 40 | always disagree .....      | 22 |           |
43. Do you and your mate agree on ways of dealing with inlaws?
- |                          |    |                            |    |           |
|--------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|-----------|
| always agree .....       | 43 | frequently disagree .....  | 23 |           |
| almost always agree .... | 52 | almost always disagree ... | 52 | <u>68</u> |
| occasionally disagree .. | 23 | always disagree .....      | 50 |           |
44. How frequently do you and your mate get on each other's nerves around the house?
- |                  |    |                     |    |           |
|------------------|----|---------------------|----|-----------|
| never .....      | 52 | almost always ..... | 32 |           |
| almost never ... | 60 | frequently .....    | 23 | <u>69</u> |
| occasionally ... | 50 | always .....        | 41 |           |
45. What are your feelings on sex-relations with your mate?
- |                      |    |                         |    |           |
|----------------------|----|-------------------------|----|-----------|
| very enjoyable ..... | 43 | a little enjoyable .... | 22 |           |
| enjoyable .....      | 52 | not at all enjoyable .. | 31 | <u>70</u> |
| tolerable .....      | 13 |                         |    |           |
46. Do you and your mate generally talk things over together?
- |                    |    |                     |    |           |
|--------------------|----|---------------------|----|-----------|
| never .....        | 31 | almost always ..... | 33 |           |
| now and then ..... | 40 | always .....        | 16 | <u>71</u> |
47. If you had your life to live again would you?
- |                              |    |  |  |           |
|------------------------------|----|--|--|-----------|
| marry the same person? ..... | 27 |  |  |           |
| marry a different person? .. | 12 |  |  | <u>72</u> |
| not marry at all? .....      | 21 |  |  |           |
48. In leisure time, which do you and your mate prefer?
- |                          |    |                             |    |           |
|--------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|-----------|
| both to stay at home ... | 44 | one to be on the go and the |    |           |
| both to be on the go ... | 51 | other to stay at home ..    | 31 | <u>73</u> |

49. Do you and your mate agree on handling family finances?
- |                          |    |                           |    |           |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------|----|-----------|
| always agree .....       | 25 | frequently disagree ..... | 22 |           |
| almost always agree .... | 16 | almost always disagree .. | 13 | <u>74</u> |
| occasionally disagree .. | 22 | always disagree .....     | 40 |           |
50. During sexual intercourse are your physical reactions satisfactory?
- |                |    |                  |    |           |
|----------------|----|------------------|----|-----------|
| very .....     | 34 | a little .....   | 23 |           |
| somewhat ..... | 25 | not at all ..... | 14 | <u>75</u> |
51. Do you and your mate agree on the amount of time spent together?
- |                          |    |                           |    |           |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------|----|-----------|
| always agree .....       | 16 | frequently disagree ..... | 40 |           |
| almost always agree .... | 60 | almost always disagree .. | 31 | <u>76</u> |
| occasionally disagree .. | 41 | always disagree .....     | 13 |           |
52. Do you and your mate agree on demonstration of affection?
- |                          |    |                           |    |           |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------|----|-----------|
| always agree .....       | 16 | frequently disagree ..... | 14 |           |
| almost always agree .... | 33 | almost always disagree .. | 23 | <u>77</u> |
| occasionally disagree .. | 41 | always disagree .....     | 32 |           |
53. Is sexual intercourse between you and your mate an expression of love and affection?
- |                   |    |                    |    |           |
|-------------------|----|--------------------|----|-----------|
| always .....      | 52 | almost never ..... | 22 |           |
| almost always ... | 34 | never .....        | 13 | <u>78</u> |
| sometimes .....   | 42 |                    |    |           |
54. Check any of the following items which you think have caused serious difficulties in your marriage:
- |                             |     |                              |     |           |
|-----------------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| a. difficulties over money  | ___ | h. adultery                  | ___ |           |
| b. lack of mutual friends   | ___ | i. mate became familiar with | ___ |           |
| c. constant bickering       | ___ | another person               | ___ |           |
| d. interference of inlaws   | ___ | j. drunkenness or            | ___ |           |
| e. lack of mutual affection | ___ | alcoholism                   | ___ | <u>79</u> |
| f. unsatisfying sex         | ___ | k. other reasons             | ___ |           |
| relations                   | ___ | l. nothing                   | ___ |           |
55. How happy would you rate your marriage?
- |                  |    |                  |    |           |
|------------------|----|------------------|----|-----------|
| very happy ..... | 17 | unhappy .....    | 22 |           |
| happy .....      | 43 | very unhappy ... | 13 | <u>80</u> |
| average .....    | 40 |                  |    |           |

## APPENDIX B

### MODAL RANK ORDER OF ROLE-SETS OBTAINED IN THE HURVITZ STUDY

#### Husbands' Performance Roles:

1. I earn the living and support the family.
2. I am a companion to my wife.
3. I help the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
4. I am a sexual partner to my wife.
5. I serve as the model of men for my children.
6. I do my jobs around the house.
7. I do my wife's work around the house if my help is needed.
8. I decide when the family is still divided after discussing something.
9. I represent and advance my family in the community.
10. I practice the family religion or philosophy.

#### Wives' Expectation Roles of the Husbands' P roles:

1. He earns the living and supports the family.
2. He is a companion to his wife.
3. He helps the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
4. He is a sexual partner to his wife.
5. He serves as the model of men for his children.
6. He practices the family religion or philosophy.
7. He does his jobs around the house.

8. He decides when the family is still divided after discussing something.
9. He does his wife's work around the house if his help is needed.
10. He represents and advances his family in the community.

The Modal Rank Order of the Wives' P roles and the Modal Rank Order of the Husbands' E roles was found to be the same in the Hurvitz study, as follows:

1. I am (she is) the homemaker.
2. I am (she is) a companion to my (her) husband.
3. I care (she cares) for the children's everyday needs.
4. I am (she is) a sexual partner to my (her) husband.
5. I help (she helps) the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide.
6. I serve (she serves) as the model of women for my (her) children.
7. I practice (she practices) the family religion or philosophy.
8. I represent and advance (she represents and advances) my (her) family socially and in the community.
9. I help (she helps) earn the living when my husband (her husband) needs my (her) help or when the family needs more money.

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A REPLICATIVE STUDY OF THE MEASUREMENT OF MARITAL STRAIN  
UTILIZING THE RANK-ORDERING TECHNIQUE

Dennis J. Barnes

Abstract

Investigation of the effects of inconsistencies in role performances and role expectations between spouses constituted the research problem. The major purpose of the study was to replicate a previous research effort in that area. Nathan Hurvitz's, The Measurement of Marital Strain (1960), was the study selected.

The problem was approached by using "marital strain" as a sensitizing concept, and through the technique of allowing spouses to rank-order roles comprising role-sets of both their own and that of their spouse. Thus, the basic instrument of the study was the Marital Roles Inventory which listed roles in each spouse's role-set in random order, and which yielded two sets of findings: By the "Index of Strain" the difference was measured between the performances and expectations of spouses; by the "Index of Deviation," the difference was measured between the rank-order assigned to roles by a given subject and the total sample's modal rank-ordering of the same set of roles.

Fifteen associations of variables were used to test the hypotheses; fourteen of these yielded findings similar to those of the Hurvitz study (Fisher's z transformation test on the correlations obtained in both

studies was used). Major conclusions of the study were: a) Lack of strain in the performance of the husbands' roles is associated with both the husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction, b) there is a direct relationship between husbands' and wives' Indexes of Strain, and c) absence of strain for wives appears to be associated with a rank-order of role performances which is like that of other wives.