

**MARITAL CONFLICT AMONG HINDUS
IN THE DURBAN METROPOLITAN AREA**

by

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Almost all married people fight, although many are ashamed to admit it. Actually a marriage in which no quarrelling at all takes place may well be one that is dead or dying from emotional undernourishment. If you care, you probably fight.

Flora Davis

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SAMEVATTING

Hierdie proefskrif ondersoek die probleem van huwelikskonflik in die Suid-Afrikaanse Hindoegemeenskap waar egskeiding geleidelik toeneem.

Die doel van die studie is om op objektiewe en wetenskaplike wyse inligting te bekom oor faktore wat aanleiding gee tot hierdie konflik. Die identifisering van hoë risiko faktore kan waardevol wees om aan te dui wat gedoen kan word om ernstige huweliksonenigheid in die eerste plek te voorkom, of dit kan bydra om ernstige huweliksprobleme wat reeds voorkom op te los voordat die verhoudinge onherstelbaar beskadig is.

Die ondersoekmonster sluit twee groepe egpare in wat van mekaar onderskei word op grond van die kwaliteit van hulle huwelik. Die een groep (die SM-groep) se huwelike was oor die algemeen bestendig en gelukkig. Die ander groep (die UM-groep) se huwelike het oor 'n periode van minstens ses maande duidelike tekens van spanning en onbestendigheid getoon. Gedurende die tydperk van die studie het die 100 egpare van die UM-groep professionele hulp van 'n welsynorganisasie, hospitaal of huweliksvoorligtingsentrum ontvang. Die 50 egpare in die SM-groep is deur maatskaplike werkers aanbeveel op grond van hulle besonder gelukkige huwelike.

Gegewens van die twee groepe is deur die gebruikmaking van 'n onderhoudskedule ingewin. Die response van die twee groepe is vergelyk om te bepaal of, en in watter opsigte, die twee groepe egpare van mekaar verskil het.

Dit is bevind dat die volgende faktore met gebrekkige huweliksaanpassing geassosieer word : huwelike op 'n vroeë onderdom; 'n lae vlak van formele op-

voeding; lae beroeps- en sosio-ekonomiese strata; ouers wat baie twis; oorhaastige verbintenisse; huwelike wat nie die ouers se goedkeuring wegdra nie; voorhuwelike swangerskap; periodieke werkloosheid van die broodwinner en voortdurende werksverandering; finansiële skulde; behuising van minder bevoorregte mense; beperkte tydperk van hofmakery; groot onderdomsverskille tussen huweliksmaats; minder realistiese huweliksverwagtinge; onbeplande swangerskappe; tē na of tē min verbintenisse met ouers van getroude pare; 'n negatiewe gesindheid teenoor skoonfamilie; ouers se afkeur van 'n voornemende lewensmaat; afwesigheid van vriende; konflik oor die keuse van vriende; vermorsing van beperkte lewensmiddele deur die misbruik van drank sowel as dobbelary; gebrekkige kommunikasie tussen egliede; probleme op seksuele vlak en verskil van mening oor die verdeling van arbeid tuis.

Die volgende faktore word met 'n suksesvolle huwelik geassosieer : 'n beperkte mate van konflik met ouers; gesamentlike besoek aan skoonfamilie; gesamentlike deelname aan belangstellings buite die huis; gesonde persoonlikheidstrekke; die moontlikheid om vrylik gevoelens aan die huweliksmaat oor te dra sonder 'n vrees vir vergelding; konstruktiewe hantering van konflik; verstandige besteding van gesinsinkome; demokratiese verhoudinge; seksuele aanpasbaarheid en 'n gemeenskaplike vriendekring.

'n Beroep word gedoen vir 'n nasionale gesinsprogram (ook sover dit die Hindoegemeenskap betref wat aanleiding sal gee tot 'n verbetering in die gehalte van die gesins- en huwelikslewe. Dit is nodig dat gesamentlike bydraes deur die sentrale regering, universiteite, skole, die media, die sake- en nywerheidssektore sowel as welsyns-, kulturele-, godsdienstige- en diensorganisasies gemaak sal word ten opsigte van gesinsverrykingsprogramme.

ABSTRACT

This is a thesis on marital conflict among Hindu South Africans, a community in which the divorce rate is steadily rising.

This study aims to gather objective and scientific information on some of the more important factors responsible for this conflict. Identification of high risk factors would provide valuable pointers about what needs to be done to prevent serious marital discord from arising in the first place, or, having arisen, what can be done about resolving them satisfactorily before relationships have been irreparably harmed.

The sample comprised two groups of couples who were differentiated from each other by the quality of their marriages, one whose marriages have been generally stable and happy (the SM group) and the other whose marriages have been showing obvious signs of strain and instability over a period of at least six months (the UM group). At the time of the study the 100 couples who comprised the UM sample were receiving professional assistance at some welfare agency, hospital or marriage guidance centre. The 50 couples who comprised the SM sample were recommended by social workers on account of their very happy marriages.

Data from the two groups were obtained through the use of an interview schedule. Their responses were compared so as to determine whether, and in what respects, the two groups of spouses differed from each other.

The following factors were found to be associated with poor marital adjustment : marriage at an early age; low educational, occupational and socio-economic levels; quarrelsome parents; hasty unions; marriage against parents'

wishes; pre-marital pregnancy; periodic unemployment of breadwinner, and frequent change of occupation; debts; disadvantaged housing, short courtship period; marked age differences between partners; a more idealised, less realistic set of expectations regarding married life; unplanned pregnancies, too close or too little attachment with one's parents; a negative attitude toward in-laws; parents' disapproval of prospective partner; absence of friends; conflict over the choice of friends; activities which jeopardise a family's limited resources such as drinking and gambling; poor communication between spouses; sexual problems; and disagreement over division of labour in the home.

The following factors were associated with good marital functioning : some conflict with one's parents, but not too much; visiting in-laws together; joint participation in outside interests; wholesome personality traits; freedom to communicate one's real feelings to the spouse without fear of retribution; constructive ways of handling conflict; wise handling of family's finances; democratic relationships; sexual compatibility; and a circle of mutual friends.

A call is made for a National Family Programme (which will include the Hindu community) whereby the quality of family and married life can be improved. Joint contributions need to be made by the central government, universities, schools, the media, business and industry, as well as welfare, cultural, religious and service organisations.

CHAPTER ONE

THE NATURE, AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

1. Background to the Study

This is a thesis on marital conflict among Hindu South Africans. The subject is particularly important because disharmony in marriage often causes much personal suffering. Moreover, when a community's family life becomes unhealthy or when families start disintegrating, social stability is undermined and progress is hampered. Different religions and ethical practices may differ with regard to the proposed solutions after a marriage has broken down, but there is little disagreement about the desirability of identifying and rectifying the causes before this happens.

Marriage in South Africa is a civil contract and its termination can only be formally effected by law. The divorce rate, therefore, is affected by the laws and regulations governing marriage. The Divorce Act of 1979 has introduced certain changes in the law leading to the easier availability of divorce. Whereas previously "guilt had to be proved on the part of one of the spouses, under the new law the spouses only have to prove the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage" (Keech, 1984, p. 178).

Whilst a divorce represents a broken marriage, it is unlikely that the divorce rate itself can be directly equated with the rate of marriage breakdown (as defined by divorce, separation or desertion) in our society. This is because no statistics on desertions and informal separations are available. It is very likely, as Kephart (1981) points out, that desertions and informal separations have accounted for a substantial number of marriage breakdowns in the past,

especially when divorce was not easily available (p. 10). Merrill et al., (1950) make a similar observation, viz., that the increase in divorce does not necessarily mean that there has been an absolute increase in family conflict, but merely that it has come to public attention to a greater degree than formerly (p. 303).

The origin of the present study can be traced back to the mid-1970's when it became apparent that the Indian divorce rate in South Africa was steadily rising. Figures published by the Department of Statistics confirm this observation.

TABLE 1.1

PERCENTAGE OF ASIAN MARRIAGES TERMINATED IN DIVORCE
IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE YEARS 1968-1982^(a)

YEAR	NO. OF DIVORCES	SPECIFIC DIVORCE RATE ^(b)
1968	88	
1969	160	
1970	143	1,4
1971	163	1,5
1972	187	1,7
1973	135	1,2
1974	226	1,9
1975	265	2,2
1976	292	2,4
1977	364	2,9
1978	316	2,5
1979	391	3,0
1980	519	3,9
1981	639	4,6
1982	723	5,2
1983	762	5,3

(a) Department of Statistics : Marriages and Divorces in the R.S.A. (1978-1983), Govt. Publication, Pretoria.

(b) Number of divorces per 1 000 married couples.

Table 1.1 shows that divorces among Asians, most of whom are of Indian origin (Year Book 1984, p. 24), increased from 316 in 1978 to 762 in 1983. This represents a substantial increase of 141% (Dept. of Statistics : Marriages and Divorces in the RSA, 1978-1983).

Between the same years marriages had risen from 129 601 in (1978) to 142 502 (in 1983), an increase of 10%. The divorce rate had risen from 2,4 divorces per 1 000 married couples in 1978 to 5,3 per 1 000 married couples in 1983. During this period 4 979 children were involved (Dept. of Statistics : Marriages and Divorces in the RSA, 1978-1983). Although the divorce rate of the Asian community in comparison with the other population groups (Blacks excluded) is still the lowest, the percentage increase is the highest (Proposed National Family Programme, p. 20). This becomes evident when one notes that the number of divorces for the country as a whole (excluding Blacks) during the period 1978-1982 was 62,8 percent (Proposed National Family Programme, p. 18).

Besides the increasing divorce rate the breakdown in family life is reflected by a rise in the incidence of phenomena such as infidelity, child neglect, family violence, cohabitation and illegitimacy. The increase in the number of illegitimate births in the Indian community, rose from 2 099 in 1976 to 2 461 in 1980 while the number of people living together increased from 4 651 in 1970 to 5 940 in 1980 - an increase of 28 percent.

The statistics of the welfare services provided by the Department of Internal Affairs^(a) and the private welfare agencies for the period 1978 to 1982 are given in Tables 1.2 and 1.3 (Proposed National Family Programme, pp. 24-25) although it should be noted that not all the cases have resulted from divorce.

(a) These services now fall under the control of the House of Delegates, Department of Health Services and Welfare.

TABLE 1.2

PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN FOUND IN NEED OF CARE
IN TERMS OF THE CHILDREN'S ACT, 1960^(a)

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	Increase 1978-1982
1. Foster care % increase/decrease	513	514 0,0	1 203 134,5	1 079 70,3	868 19,6	69,2
2. Children's homes % increase/decrease	35	101 88,6	185 83,2	177 -4,3	102 42,4	191,4
3. Schools of industry % increase/decrease	24	29 20,8	207 ^(b) 269,0	169 57,9	94 44,4	291,6

The general decrease in placements in terms of the Children's Act especially from around 1981 can be attributed to improved social work services and the latest policy of the Department^(c) to commit children only as a last resort.

(a) Source : Department of Constitutional Development and Planning (1985) : Proposed National Family Programme. Directorate of Social Planning, Pretoria.

(b) Increased number attributed to a second Children's Act school opened.

(c) House of Delegates, Department of Health Services and Welfare.

TABLE 1.3

PRE-STATUTORY SERVICES RENDERED BY THE THREE BIGGEST
DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES IN NATAL ^(a)

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	Increase 1978 - 1982
1. Uncontrollable children % increase/decrease	262	319 21,8	336 5,3	380 13,1	350 -7,9	+33,6
2. Marital problems % increase/decrease	78	114 46,2	120 5,3	131 9,2	129 -1,5	+65,4
3. Legal aid investigations % increase/decrease	37	313 745,9	298 -4,8	456 53,0	348 -23,7	+840,5

These statistics do not give a complete picture of the breakdown in family life. Several other organisations render welfare services to the Indian community. According to the Department of Health, Services and Welfare there is a marked increase in the number of people calling for help at the various welfare agencies.

In January the case load of the Child Welfare Societies in Natal concerned with family and marriage problems was as follows: ^(b)

Uncontrollable children	251
Unmarried mothers	1 263
Cases of child neglect	458
Divorce	83
Marital problems	4 791

(a) Source : Department of Constitutional Development and Planning (1985): Proposed National Family Programme.

(b) Source : op.cit., p. 25.

Community leaders and welfare workers have been expressing growing concern since they view the increasing tendency towards divorce and the breakdown of family life as a sign that the Indian community "is becoming sick". One week-end newspaper complains as follows : "A serious disease is afflicting the people whose culture always ranked marriage as a most sacred institution" (Sunday Tribune 1/8/84). Another newspaper found it "disturbing" that an increasing number of young mothers or wives were separating from, or were being deserted by, their partners (Sunday Times 25/7/84).

In view of the above-mentioned circumstances one hears frequent calls for an investigation into the factors which are associated with marital instability. The present research, a comparative study of "happy" and "troubled" marriages among Hindus in the Durban metropolitan area, has been undertaken in response to this call. The writer spurns a defeatist attitude and believes that it is possible to minimise marital discord by controlling its causes.

2. Motivation for the Study

It was noted in the previous section that the steady increase in the divorce rate among Indians is causing considerable concern among those who consider it a sign of moral decay. However, there are instances when a divorce is often the only satisfactory solution to an impossible family situation. Nevertheless, divorce continues to be seen as a sign of failure - an admission by the marriage partners that they lack the ability, trust, or stamina to continue a sacred relationship. Very often, unlike a bereaved spouse, a recently-divorced person is left to face his/her problems of readjustment on his/her own. Even if such a person were fortunate enough to receive some social support, divorce is still likely to cause a measure of personal suffering. The termination of an intimate personal relationship and the accompanying

feelings of guilt or foolishness make divorce a painful experience, even if there are no serious clashes. From a social viewpoint the major cost of divorce is the division of families with children into smaller and, therefore, weaker units.

A family consisting of a mother and children is likely to have a lower income than a two-parent family. And single parents, regardless of their sex, have great difficulty handling both the role of breadwinner and the role of parent. It is for reasons such as these that the Centre for Child and Adult Guidance of the Human Sciences Research Council has embarked on a project aimed at reducing the high divorce rates among Whites, Coloureds and Indians. It is anticipated that the findings of the present study will provide valuable input when this national survey reaches a more advanced stage.

To date, research pertaining to marital functioning among Indians is scarce. Two studies were undertaken in 1977, one by Naidoo and the other by de Kock. Naidoo's investigation was psychological and quantitative in nature as opposed to the present study which has its setting in the field of social work and combines the quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. Naidoo himself saw his study as a "pioneering research" which "provides few answers but stimulates much research." He investigated the interrelationship between marital adjustment, personal adjustment and role discrepancy. Although this study is a useful contribution in an area where guesses, theories and folklore abound, it differs significantly from the present project, in another important respect : it has only marginal relevance for the practitioner in the field of marital conflict (Naidoo, 1977, p. 116).

de Kock (1977) studied attitudes towards divorce and remarriage. He found that only 4,7 percent of his White sample was totally against divorce compared

to 32,7 percent of the Indian sample. With regard to remarriage de Kock's finding was that 12,6 percent of the Whites were totally opposed to it as compared to 39,6 percent of the Indians. He concluded that the "the more traditional Indian South African regards marriage as more permanent than the less traditional Afrikaans-speaking White South African" (p.15). If one reads the present signs correctly the figures for Indians with respect to both divorce and remarriage would be much lower. Attitudes are changing, and seeking explanations for these changes is an important aspect of this study.

The present study will shed light on the dynamics of marital disharmony and its treatment. This would have great value for social workers, marriage guidance counsellors and other personnel working in the field of marriage relations. The factually derived information would also benefit the area of premarital counselling : young couples could be assisted to temper romantic expectations with realistic ones.

The findings of this investigation, moreover, should provide the administrator with a good indication of the current status pertaining to marital discord among Indians as well as the adequacy of the facilities which are available for helping couples in trouble. Moreover, those areas and policies which call for change can be identified.

It is also expected that sufficient curiosity would be aroused and enough controversy generated by the findings so that they may become the subject of further enquiry by research workers of the future. Marriage guidance personnel insist that there is a need to continually augment and update the store of scientific facts in this vital area. Outdated attitudes, practices and intervention procedures have no place in a rapidly changing society. The data that is gathered, moreover, must be separate from questions of moral issue.

It is acknowledged that research into marriage is difficult, not only because of the complexity of the subject itself but because matrimony stands at the centre of powerful social, religious and legal prescriptions which influence this most intimate of personal relationships in different ways. Nevertheless, if the profession of social work is to make its rightful contribution towards human happiness, it will be necessary to find ways and means of overcoming the problems that confront the research worker in this field.

Such knowledge has implications beyond the limits of couple relationship. Social scientists generally agree that the family is a central institution whose well-being is closely related to the welfare of man and society. The family furnishes the intimate environment that sustains most individuals and is the chief socialiser of the young. Welfare personnel are only too familiar with the fact that broken and unhappy homes often give rise to individuals with unstable personalities (Brigham et al., 1969). Unhappy parents provide unhappy homes; children grow up in these unhappy homes; in later life they provide unhappy homes for other children. And individuals who have been brought up in unhappy homes have less than an even chance themselves of achieving lasting and satisfying marriage unions. There is an urgent need to break this chain. The present study will contribute to this end.

In the present project two sets of couples, one of which is happily married and the other not, are compared on several variables. The aim is to identify some of the more important circumstances and conditions which make for good and poor marriages. Once the positive factors have been identified every effort can be made to promote them in the wider community. These factors may relate to attitudes, practices, policies or programmes. Conversely, the negative factors which would be identified can become the targets of attack. Society's resources can be mobilised against them with the aim of eradicating

them or, if this is not possible, of minimising their destructive effects.

The writer is in an especially favoured position for carrying out a research project of this nature. She is a married Hindu woman who has a good knowledge of the customs and practices of the group to which she belongs. In addition, as a lecturer in the Department of Social Work, she is, through the students whose work she supervises, in contact with families who seek the assistance of a variety of social work agencies. In 1983, her keen interest in the area of marriage and family life led to her appointment as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Family Enrichment, a body whose report was due to be submitted for consideration by the South African Cabinet.

3. Aims of the Study

The overall aim of this investigation is to gather objective and scientific information relating to the factors involved in marital conflict between Hindu couples in the Durban metropolitan area.

In order to accomplish this purpose it would be necessary to identify some of the important points of difference between two groups of couples : one whose marriages have been generally stable and happy (hereafter referred to as the SM group) and the other whose marriages have been showing obvious signs of strain and instability over a period of at least six months (hereafter referred to as the UM group). Further details pertaining to these two groups are presented in section 6 of this chapter.

It was decided to obtain the relevant information through the use of an interview schedule. In order to systematise and facilitate the handling of the mass of information that was going to be obtained, it was considered essential

to classify the various items under twelve broad headings as follows:

1. Biographical Data
2. Economic Factors
3. Courtship and Engagement
4. Children and Marital Adjustment
5. Parental Influences on Marital Adjustment
6. General Personality Patterns
7. Companionship and Compatibility between Spouses
8. Personality Traits as Perceived by Spouse
9. Communication
10. Marital Disagreement and Conflict
11. Sexual Behaviour
12. Potential Conflict Areas Between Spouses

From these data an attempt is made to determine whether and in what respects the two groups of spouses differ significantly. Stated more specifically, answers are sought to the following questions :

- a) What are the factors and circumstances which promote healthy marital functioning
- b) Conversely, what are the factors and circumstances which tend to undermine marriages
- c) What are some of the more important issues which lead to husband-wife clashes among Hindus
- d) What forms do these conflicts take
- e) How are these conflicts generally resolved
- f) Are there any factors, circumstances or practices peculiar to Hindus which affect marital relationships for better or for worse

- g) What are some of the more important factors in the backgrounds of individuals that make them "good" or "risky" marriage propositions
- h) What are the steps that can and need to be taken in order to improve the functioning of poorly adjusted couples

Identification of high-risk factors would provide valuable pointers about what needs to be done to prevent serious marital discord from arising in the first place, or, having arisen, what can be done about resolving them satisfactorily before relationships have been irreparably harmed.

At this point in the research it is necessary to sound a note of caution. Ideally, all the factors which regulate the relationship between husband and wife should be identified and studied in depth. However, this is hardly possible because it is unlikely that these factors operate in isolation. Rather, it is the total personality, interacting with the environment, that is involved in behaviour - not independent, dissociated fragments and traits.

While never losing sight of the interrelationships among the different aspects of an individual's make-up and functioning, it is helpful, as Waller and Hill (1951) rightly point out, to disentangle some of the major strands from this unified matrix of influences and study them separately (p. 274). These authors state : "Personality is a unity, but we may distinguish certain aspects of it and relate them to marriage interaction" (Waller and Hill, 1951, p. 274). A similar approach has been used by Glueck and Glueck (1951) in their famous study relating to delinquency.

It is against this background, and a clear understanding of the wholeness of husband-wife relationships, that the researcher has ventured to select a limited number of factors for closer scrutiny - factors which, taken together,

provide a reasonably accurate assessment of the emotional tone of a marriage.

4. Preparation for the Main Research

4.1 General

There were two possible ways in which the investigator could obtain the data she required to identify those factors which appeared to be of fundamental importance in the etiology of happy and unhappy marriages. These were :

- a) To mail a questionnaire to the respondents; or
- b) to interview them personally and fill in a questionnaire based on their responses.

After carefully considering the advantages and disadvantages of each method option (b) was chosen. Some of the reasons for this decision were as follows:

- a) Using a mail questionnaire carried with it the risk of considerable wastage; it was likely that the questionnaire may not be returned; or they may be returned incomplete; or they may be completed inaccurately.
- b) In a face-to-face interview, the interviewer has an opportunity to check the honesty, the certainty and the exact meaning of the subject's reply. The speed of the subject's response, his tone of voice, the direction of his eye, the intonation and the directness or circumlocution of his statement, often provide a clue to the quality of the information which he is giving. When the subject seems uncertain in his reply, the interviewer may ask for additional information, sometimes on matters which are not covered by the standard interview. This may direct the inquiry toward important data which would have been overlooked if the interview had been

confined to the minimum material. There are few such bases for determining the quality of the replies on a questionnaire, and little opportunity for extending the data beyond the set limits of a questionnaire.

The next step was to decide on the areas which needed to be investigated and, on the basis of this list, to compile an interview schedule for the pilot study.

4.2 The Construction of the Interview Schedule

The stages which were followed in the compilation of the trial interview schedule are outlined below:

- a) The researcher studied the contributions of various well-known writers in the areas of marriage and divorce, paying particular attention to the questionnaires they used to gather their information.
- b) Using these questionnaires as a basis, she compiled her own interview schedule. A number of the items used by acknowledged authorities in the field of marriage, such as Burgess and Cottrell (1939), Terman (1938) and Locke (1951) were retained in their original form; some items were re-phrased so as to make them more intelligible to those Indian subjects whose grasp of English was minimal; and some new items were included in the schedule.
- c) Next, the writer discussed the contents of her draft interview schedule with informed colleagues both within and outside the University of Durban-Westville. Their comments and observations helped to improve the instrument.

d) After she was satisfied as to the validity of her interview schedule, the researcher used it in a pilot study. No further alterations were necessary. The interview schedule, in its final form, was now ready for use in the main study.

4.3 The Pilot Study

Since this research was the first of its type to be carried out among Indians, it was advisable to carry out a preliminary study in order to test the suitability of the interview schedule, to establish methods and procedures, and to gauge the reactions of the respondents to the investigation generally. The earliest stages of the preliminary studies were exploratory. They involved lengthy, unstructured interviews and talks with key informers. Once this had given the researcher a "feel" for the problem, the rest of the preliminary investigation proceeded in a systematic manner.

From the outset it was clear that the original set of questions pertaining to the sexual area, both marital and premarital, caused the respondents obvious discomfort. This was so inspite of the great care that was taken to couch such questions in very acceptable language and to present them in a matter-of-fact way. For this reason the researcher was compelled to modify her questions so that they were more acceptable to the clients. Loss of valuable information in a vital area of married life was the price the researcher had to pay for this but this was preferable to receiving misleading answers.

The pilot study in its proper form began in November 1983 and continued to February 1984. Six couples who were introduced to the researcher by her senior students were interviewed by the investigator herself. Four of these couples were experiencing serious marital problems while the other two were happily

married. These couples did not form part of the sample of the main study.

The pilot study provided the researcher with valuable insights and ideas which helped her to improve the quality of her study. She realised, for instance, that a strictly standardised procedure could not be followed in the interviews. Instead, the interviews had to be adjusted to the kind of person being interviewed and the kind of situation in which the interviewer found herself. A quick evaluation of the respondents had to be made at the beginning of the meeting and the interview then had to be adjusted to his probable educational level, social status, and reactions. If the respondent was well educated, the study was presented to him as an attempt to gather information in a scientific way about the factors relating to marital adjustment. This was being done by going out into the laboratory of the community and getting the experiences of people. On the other hand, if the subject had a low level of education, an appeal was made to his kindness of heart and his interest in the welfare of people.

The pilot study also provided the investigator with an opportunity of assessing the methods she proposed to use when quantifying and analysing the interview data. Only two interviews were recorded on tape, as the recording machine made the respondents feel uncomfortable. In spite of assurances of confidentiality, the respondents were obviously suspicious and inhibited. They did not, however, seem to object to supplementary note-taking.

As part of the briefing sessions she had with the social workers who assisted her with the completion of the interview schedules in the main study, the researcher passed on to them the details of her experiences and lessons gained during the pilot study.

5. Choice Of Locale

Originally, it was the writer's intention to locate her study over the entire province of Natal where 85% of the Republic's Indian population is settled (Year Book 1984, p. 83).

Discussions with informed colleagues as well as certain practical considerations caused the writer to change her plan. She had to acknowledge that this would be too extensive an area to cover. Such an ambitious project would have called for a bigger research grant and more time than was available. A pilot study had indicated that an average time of three hours would be required to interview each couple. It was therefore decided to keep the sample size within manageable proportions.

In view of these circumstances it was decided to locate the study in the Durban metropolitan area extending from Tongaat in the north to Chatsworth in the south and inwards to Pinetown. Besides being reasonable in size, the choice of this area had three other advantages, viz.

- a) The Indian population was concentrated in this area. In 1984, 85 percent of the Indian population of Natal was living within a radius of approximately 150km of Durban (Year Book 1984, p. 83).
- b) In her nine years as a lecturer in the Department of Social Work at the University of Durban-Westville, the writer came to have an intimate knowledge of the blessings and the problems of the Indian community settled in this area. During this period she was also able to establish cordial relations and contacts with staff members of various welfare agencies. As matters turned out, their active support, encouragement and assistance

proved invaluable for the successful completion of this project.

- c) Of lesser importance perhaps, but a noteworthy consideration, was the fact that the various agencies and respondents who participated in the study were within reasonable travelling distance of the researcher's home and place of work.

As mentioned earlier, Hindu couples are the main focus of this study. In 1980, 70 percent of the Republic's Indian population were Hindus (Year Book 1984, p. 85). Her decision to study marital conflict among, by far the largest religious group, in preference to groups who are in the minority, gave the investigator an important advantage, viz., it facilitated the task of obtaining suitable couples for her samples, since she had a larger population from which to draw her subjects.

6. The Sample

6.1 Principles Guiding the Composition of the Samples

The sample comprised two groups of couples who were differentiated from each other, by the quality of their marriages. They may be categorised as follows:

6.1.1 Couples whose Marriages are Stable (SM's)

A couple was judged to have a stable marriage if they were recommended by a social worker or a senior social work student as one of the most happily married couples known to him (or her). A somewhat similar criterion was used by Locke in his classic study in which he compared a divorced and a happily married group. He adjudged a couple as being "happily married if they were recommended by some relative, friend or acquaintance as one of the most

happily married couples known by the person making the recommendation" (Locke, 1951, p. 15).

6.1.2 Couples whose Marriages are Unstable (UM's)

A couple was judged to have an unstable marriage if either of the spouses, or both of them were, at the time of the interview, seeking or receiving professional assistance at some welfare agency, hospital or marriage guidance centre. To be eligible for inclusion in the sample, the major presenting problem had to be one of marital conflict; this problem, moreover, should already have existed for at least six months.

Only Hindus were considered for inclusion in the sample. It was necessary to keep the group homogenous since there are significant differences amongst the various religious and cultural groups comprising the Indian community in South Africa and these differences are manifested in each group's lifestyle and practices.

6.2 Further Information Pertaining to the Samples

6.2.1 The SM Group

The group whose marriages were stable comprised fifty couples. Twenty-two of these were interviewed by the researcher herself and the remaining twenty-eight by qualified social workers who had kindly consented to assist with the fieldwork outside their normal working hours.

All these couples were interviewed at their homes in the evenings or at weekends. Often two visits were required in order to complete the interview schedule. Husbands and wives were interviewed separately.

The couples were generally conscientious in keeping their appointments. The prestige of the University helped to secure their co-operation.

6.2.2 The UM group

The group whose marriages were regarded as being unstable comprised one hundred couples. These were drawn from cases which were currently being handled by the social workers who were on the staff of one or other of the institutions assisting in the study.

A total of sixty-six completed schedules were received from the Child and Family Welfare Societies in Durban, Phoenix, Chatsworth, Pinetown, Verulam and Tongaat as well as two provincial hospitals, viz., R.K. Khan and King George V.

The remaining thirty-four cases volunteered to participate in the study and were referred to the researcher by social workers at the Chatsworth Community Services Association and the Family and Marriage Society of Durban.

The researcher interviewed some of these couples at their homes in the evenings or over week-ends. In other cases, where the home conditions were unfavourable and congested, the couple were invited for the interview to the offices of the Community Services Association.

The social workers reported that where refusals were encountered, it was generally the husband who refused to co-operate. Such cases were omitted from the study entirely. Included in the sample were only those couples, both of whom were prepared to offer responses .

6.2.3 The Total Sample

The sample that was finally chosen comprised fifty couples in the SM group and one hundred couples in the UM group and was distributed as follows:

TABLE 1.4

DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY AGE AT PRESENT
AND TYPE OF MARRIAGE

Class Intervals (Years)	Stable Marriages				Unstable Marriages				
		Husbands	%	Wives	%	Husbands	%	Wives	%
14 - 19		0	0	2	4	0	0	2	2
20 - 24		6	12	15	30	13	13	28	28
25 - 29		12	24	10	20	24	21	25	25
30 - 34		6	12	6	12	12	12	12	12
35 - 39		14	28	9	18	28	28	17	17
40 and over		12	24	8	16	23	23	16	18
	N	50	100	50	100	100	100	100	100
	\bar{X}	34,02	-	30,28	-	27,82	-	29,31	-
	SD	7,76	-	7,85	-	7,82	-	7,85	-

The UM group was larger since it was felt that a greater amount of information relevant to the present study could be obtained from them. The size of the SM group was considered sufficient for furnishing comparative data.

Analysis of the responses provided in the biographical section of the questionnaire yielded further information relating to the sample and this will be presented in Chapter Five.

7. Interviews with the Spouses

As indicated earlier, an interview schedule was used, listing twelve broad areas in which information was sought (see Appendix A). These areas were briefly listed in Section 3 of this chapter. More specifically, the schedule called for information relating to such matters as age, position in the family, health, education, occupation, employment history, earnings, amount saved at time of marriage, participation in organized social groups, friendships with men and women, length of courtship and engagement, attachments to and conflicts with parents, happiness of parents' marriage and certain items on the occupation, education, and the socio-economic status of the parents.

Qualified social workers conducted the interviews and, with the help of the interviewees, completed the schedules. Their training and experience furnished them with the skills necessary for establishing and maintaining rapport with the respondents, detecting and circumventing defensive and evasive responses, coping with antagonisms, irrelevancies and other such problems, and identifying signs of disturbance in marital relationships. Also helpful was their sound working knowledge of community affairs and the general position relating to Indian families in the greater Durban area. The interview schedules were handed out in advance to the social worker so that they could familiarise themselves with the instrument. The investigator then visited them and discussed the various items with a view to clarifying possible ambiguities.

The social workers were thoroughly briefed regarding their role in the research, the contents of the interview schedule and the goal of the interview.

The interview generally began with some easy impersonal questions asked in a friendly way. This initial period spent in talking to the subject about some topic of interest helped to create a cordial atmosphere and establish a situation in which the respondents were willing to provide information which was sought. It was made clear to them that their co-operation in the enquiry was entirely voluntary and that whatever information they furnished would be kept confidential. It was necessary to give them this assurance in order to gain their confidence and support.

The sequence in which the items appear in the interview schedule was determined by the course which the interview was expected to follow so that the recording of the information would be as unobtrusive as possible and not interrupted by the continual turning of pages. Frequently, when the respondents had clearly forgotten that they were being interviewed and were relating with considerable frankness their family and marital problems, the recording of the information was delayed until immediately after the interview in order not to interrupt the flow of their thoughts.

In general, the wives were cordial in manner and appeared to be more open and candid in whatever they had to say. The husbands talked easily enough about their jobs but a few of them became noticeably uncomfortable when the interviewer turned to the marriage relationship.

Problems related to income, housing, unemployment, and other environmental issues tended to increase as one moved down the socio-economic ladder. There was considerable uncertainty among some members of the sample about how much longer they were going to retain their jobs, in view of the depressed economic conditions which prevailed in the country at the time of the survey.

The type of home background covered by the sample varied considerably, ranging from the wealthy cultured home to the home where mere existence was the immediate problem. Besides yielding valuable information on individual items in the schedule, the interviews provided the writer with a global framework within which she was able to analyse the many problems of marriage at greater depth. They also proved to be a valuable source of quotations, many of which were used in this thesis to illustrate certain points.

Throughout the study an attempt was made to search, not simply for isolated differences between happily and unhappily married couples, but for patterns of relationship which could be interpreted meaningfully. As matters turned out, the in-depth interviews often enabled the researcher to catch the tone of the respondents' remarks, the indignation and the humour, the reasons offered for the opinion they expressed, the association of ideas and the depth of expressed convictions. It is not possible to classify these qualitative aspects with statistical precision. Nor is it possible for a purely statistical approach to portray the dynamic factors as they operate when a particular couple interact. For these reasons, it was decided to combine the quantitative and qualitative approaches in this research. The qualitative approach seeks to reveal something of the interplay of social and psychological variables.

8. Definition of Terms

Five terms feature prominently in this report, viz., marital adjustment, marital conflict, joint family, nuclear family and communication. Since the specific uses of these terms can be considered most meaningfully in the context in which they appear, no attempt will be made at this point to isolate and explain them. Such elaboration and clarification as is needed will be

done in the appropriate sections.

9. Division of the Report

This report is divided into three main parts as follows:

- (a) Chapters One to Four provide the background to the study and the framework within which it has been carried out. Consequently these chapters are concerned with the reasons for undertaking the study, its design and scope, its cultural setting, and its relationship to some of the well known research projects which have already been completed in the area of marriage and marital adjustment.
- (b) The findings of the present study are given in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. These are related, where necessary, to the theoretical viewpoints and previous findings presented in the earlier chapters.
- (c) The implications of the results and the recommendations which flow from them form the subject matter of Chapter Eight. Special consideration is given to the role which various agencies and institutions can play in improving the quality of marriage generally, and by extension among Hindus in South Africa.

CHAPTER TWO

MARRIAGE AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT

1. The Nature of Marriage

1.1 Introduction

Marriage is a complex relationship that can be viewed from many perspectives - sociological, biological, cultural, anthropological, religious, legal and psychological. Moreover, patterns of marriage vary from culture to culture and, even within a given society, there may be considerable variation over a period of time (Gerdes, 1976, p. 1).

Winch, (1971) defines marriage as "a socially approved union of one or more men with one or more women in the relationship of husband and wife" (p. 569). Williamson (1967) sees marriage as "a relatively permanent sexual union implying a number of interlocking statuses and roles" (p. 8).

With marriage, the recently united couple enters a new world, a reality that contrasts sharply with the world they knew as single persons. Marriage brings with it new roles, and the two who are now husband and wife begin to treat each other differently from the way they did prior to marriage. They, for example, no longer see one another on an optional basis. No matter how committed to each other they were before marriage, there was always an option underlying their relationship. At any given time it was their decision whether or not they were going to see each other; if they so wished, they could dispense with their agreements and understandings and break up. While it is true that in our current society marriages are easily broken, the

critical difference is that a married couple's relationship is no longer a private matter. Before marriage, a couple can separate and move away from each other and hardly any legal formalities are involved. The same cannot be said of divorce.

The changes in legal and social relationships that come with marriage lead to changes in the way the couple act toward each other. Marriage entails obligations of support and nurturance that must be fulfilled - whether or not one wishes to fulfill them. For most, for example, it is no longer an option whether or not one will come home at night, cook a meal, share money, visit relatives or even talk to the other. The changed relationship demands these activities, turning them from options into responsibilities, and those who refuse to follow such expectations are probably married for only a short time.

An essential part of the new reality that marriage brings is that of marital sex (Leslie, 1980, p. 460). Before marriage, sexual relationships may have been forbidden, slightly approved, highly approved, or any combination of the preceding, depending on who was reacting to the fact of premarital sex. It may or may not have been a part of the individual's life before marriage. But after marriage there is hardly any choice. Marriage, by definition, entails sexual relations.

Marriage also brings with it decisions regarding parenthood (Christensen, 1968, p. 283). A couple faces three questions : (1) if (2) if so, when and (3) if so, how many? Their answers to these questions sets them on a marital course that steers them in directions and activities that affect every aspect of their existence. Adjusting to the arrival of children in one's marriage is a complex matter as it involves almost every part of one's

life.

1.2 Reasons for Marriage

An important reason for marrying, as one leaves a parental home, is that the only way any one may feel complete again is by establishing a family of one's own. In this way the individual is able to find again the intimacy, warmth, and sharing that are so much a part of the satisfactions of the socialised human being. Marriage, says Landis (1975), is modern man's best arrangement for avoiding loneliness. As young people grow older and sense more keenly the impersonal character of the adult experience of our time, they come to accept the need "to establish a close tie - one that will guarantee them not only companionship but sociability itself, stable, tangible and ever-present sociability". Those who find marriage so miserable that they cannot endure it and seek a way out through divorce, do not generally remain single for long. Very soon they seek another mate. Some even return to the former mate to have another try (p. 5).

Any human being is in a dismal state indeed when he begins to feel that there is no one in the world who cares deeply about him or about whom he cares very much. A person's life is most meaningful when it means a great deal to some other person or persons (Pitts, 1964, p. 97). This need for unqualified love is fulfilled in the normal childhood home by the parent-child relationships.

Another reason often given for marriage is that it helps both husband and wife to satisfy the need for status and recognition. Even when there are many other channels through which ego satisfaction can be realised - and there are, particularly for the male and the female who can continue a

career together with marriage - most persons today are very dependent on marriage for a share of their ego satisfaction.

Yet another point in favour of marriage is that it is our society's only approved outlet for the sex drive. Once marriage is entered into, it becomes the habitual way of bringing relief, pleasure, relaxation, comfort and closeness. In a good marriage, says Eysenck (1983), both the man and the woman are able to nurture feelings of intimacy, security and trust that lead to high self-esteem and general stability (p. 7).

Statistics on morbidity and mortality also support the institution of marriage: it would appear that the married are healthier - physically and mentally - than the unmarried (Williamson, 1967, p. 14; Eysenck, 1983, p. 7). Rates of admissions to mental hospitals run two or three times as high for single as for married persons (Adler, 1953, pp. 185). Married persons also have a lower suicide rate than the unmarried (Rip, 1978, p. 25); and it is reported that they are happier than the unmarried (Orden and Bradburn 1968, pp. 715).

Up to this point the positive aspects of the motivation to marry have been stressed, since it is assumed that these are generally the main reasons responsible for most marriages. However, there are those who marry in order to escape from an unbearable situation at home, or perhaps, marry out of pity. Some young people marry because of a feeling of loneliness which has developed because of neglect or lack of affection in the parental home. There are also young girls who have elected to marry in order to conceal pregnancy, and there are still others who have plunged into a hasty union out of sheer spite.

In Landis' view (1975), probably every motive of which human beings are capable, enters into one marriage in one way or another : escape, fortune, prestige, economic security or status-seeking. Both man's negative and positive drives affect almost every decision he makes. Although one cannot say that it is wrong to marry for any one of these motives, one must recognise the weakness inherent in a marriage based on some of these considerations (p. 16).

While certain very fundamental needs are fulfilled in marriage, it should also be noted that marriage often interferes with other needs (Hart, 1976, pp. 34-43). The need to be loved, for example, often runs counter to the need for self-realisation and ego satisfaction. Certain hostilities develop when the demands of love become so great that they frustrate one's desires to attain financial or vocational success. The shelter of marriage, which makes one feel secure, may at times interfere strongly with one's desire to be free of ties and obligations or to venture and experiment and seek new experiences.

Another argument against marriage is the fact that, because relationships within a family are close and intense, it has the potential for producing a considerable amount of misery and suffering. Rossi (1968) points out that of all the murders committed in the United States, 38 percent are within the family (p. 27).

1.3 Factors in Mate Selection

The question of "who marries whom" is an old one but has still not been answered satisfactorily (Leslie, 1980, p. 420). Sociologists and psychologists have postulated various theories of mate choice. Some of these stress

environmental factors while others lay the emphasis on subtle, and largely unconscious forces in the personality.

Most popular of the current theories, at least from the layman's point of view, is the romantic doctrine of the "soul mate". This notion implies that of all the millions of people in the world, two persons are predestined for each other. A related view is Carl Jung's idea that falling in love involves being caught by one's "anima", i.e. every man inherits an anima which is an "archetypal form" expressing a particular female image he carries within his genes. When the right woman comes along (i.e. the one who corresponds to the archetype), he instantly is "seized" (Kephart, 1981, p. 242).

These popular beliefs help one to understand why some people do not expect science to find an explanation, based on reason, as to why people fall in love.

A consideration of a wide range of studies relating to mate selection suggests that they can be grouped under five main headings. These are outlined below:

1.3.1 Propinquity

According to this theory a person generally "selects" a mate from a group of people he knows. Such people may be from the same neighbourhood, school, church or work place. In one study in Columbus, Ohio, it was found that more than half of the adults who had been married in that city had actually lived, before marriage, within sixteen blocks of one another (Clarke, 1952,

pp. 18-19). If one were to accept this theory, the chances are good that the "one and only" lives within walking distance.

1.3.2 Ideal Mate

This theory assumes that the individual has a fairly clear idea of the kind of person he considers would be the perfect mate for him. This romantic portrait in the individual's mind vividly depicts her physical features and the mental, temperamental, moral and social characteristics she will possess. Since a single person who possess all these attributes in the correct proportions is often not available, the individual has to make a compromise: he discovers that certain other factors are of greater importance and need to be considered when choosing a life partner (Burgess and Locke, 1945, p. 417). He proceeds to make his choice accordingly.

1.3.3 Parental Image

According to this theory, which is Freudian in origin, a person tends, usually unconsciously, to fall in love with a person similar to his parent of the opposite sex. Case histories secured by interviewing couples both before and after marriage seem to substantiate this view but do not prove it conclusively (Burgess and Locke, 1945, p. 419).

Coombs (1966) makes an interesting observation in this regard : since the parents are the agents of socialisation, the parents and the child hold similar values. This becomes an important factor when choosing a mate. Thus the person chosen may have characteristics and values similar to those of the mate's parents (p. 166).

1.3.4 Homogamy

In debates relating to the choice of a mate, one often hears the question: "Which is stronger - for like to be drawn to like (homogamy) or for opposites to attract each other (heterogamy)?" In all probability, say Burgess and Locke, couples are attracted to each other by both likenesses and differences (Burgess and Locke, 1945, p. 421). Bowman (1974) writes in similar terms : "Husband and wife should have complementary rather than clashing characteristics, enough similarity to be mutually agreeable and enough dissimilarity to be mutually stimulating" (p. 134).

Cattell and Nesselroade (1967) recently found significant correlations on a number of personality traits possessed by husbands and wives. This was found among both happily and unhappily married couples. The correlations, however, were substantially higher among the happily married than among the unhappily married couples. The study failed to establish whether the tendency of these couples to resemble each other was the reason for their attraction in the first place (i.e. a case of birds of a feather flocking together), or whether the correlations were simply an outgrowth of similarity creeping in as a result marital experiences and close living.

When examined in overall terms it would appear that much depends upon the two personalities involved. In some cases like, in other cases unlikes, have happy marriages.

1.3.5 Role Play

According to this view, persons tend to choose partners on the basis of marital role agreement. Thus it would be unlikely for a man who believed

that a woman's place is in the home to marry a career woman. It is not the roles themselves, but the agreement on role playing that is the important factor. A compatible couple would be one in which both spouses play the expected or agreed-upon roles, almost irrespective of what these roles actually are.

Overall, an examination of the various theories suggest that, when selecting a mate, men and women view each other through an initial screening or filtering process represented by a potential "field of eligibles". Persons tend at first to screen out those whose educational level, age, race and religion are very different from their own - although there are, of course, exceptions in all these areas.

Today, as Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1981) note, there appears to be a trend toward selecting one's mate on the basis of more rational criteria. This is in contrast to the romantic belief of being helplessly "swept of one's feet". Frank questions are being asked, taking into account the realities of marriage - the costs and rewards - before a decision is made about whether, when, and whom to marry (p. 178).

2. Marriage : From Institution to Companionship

Marriage is presently in a period of change. The companionship concept of marriage (with its emphasis upon affection, comradeship, democracy) is replacing the earlier notion of marriage as a relation that stresses respect, obedience, authority and duty (Burgess and Locke, 1945, p. 27). The family in earlier times, exhibited its institutional aspects more prominently than it does today. Such elements as the support of the family by the husband-father, the maintenance of the home and the bearing and care of children by

the wife-mother, and mutual protection were considered criteria for evaluating the success or failure of marriage and family life. The man was accepted as the head of the family. He had considerable authority over both his wife and their children. This authority was supported by the mores. There was a clear-cut division of labor by sex both in the home and in the occupational world outside the home. One could accurately speak of "men's work" and "women's work".

If the husband proved to be shiftless or the wife incompetent as a homemaker, there would likely be trouble in the family. Concepts such as "compatibility", "communication", "sexual adjustment", and "marriage enrichment" had little place in the marriages of earlier days. The marriage followed the parental pattern and was held together to a great extent by forces exerted from the outside. The external influences included public opinion toward divorce, the effect of separation and divorce upon the social position and economic status of the person, and the pressure of intimate groups, such as family and friends.

In the early days many a couple considered their marriage to be successful in the absence of love. Because of this and also because of the widespread opposition to divorce and the division of labor which made husband and wife economically necessary to each other, the divorce rate was low. In a sense, in earlier times the marriage was considered more important than the persons in it. The couple were expected by society to perform certain duties, make sacrifices and accept circumstances, unless extreme, for the good of the marriage. Once they were married, a couple would almost certainly stay married "until death did them part".

Nowadays marriage is considered less important than the persons in it and dissolvable when it ceases to meet their personal expectations. In this companionship concept of marriage, feelings play a most important part. Couples fall in love and their capacity to change from being in love to loving is crucial for the survival of the relationship. The emphasis on feelings means that the couple need to have mutual openness, treat each other on a basis of equality, share and exchange responsibilities at home, arrange their lives so that (if desired) both can work, share their love and satisfy their mutual needs.

Several factors have contributed to changes in the social structure of society and these, in turn, have influenced the marital relationship. Some of the more important changes will now be discussed briefly.

2.1 Changes in Family Roles

The division of roles in the traditional family consisting of the father who used to be the main breadwinner and the mother who used to be housewife, has changed dramatically over the past three decades. Factors affecting the married woman such as entering the open labour market, early marriage, fewer children and a higher life expectancy result in an extension of her responsibilities as homemaker and mother. The previously well-defined or closed roles of men and women have gradually been replaced by a more "open" role. These changes have resulted in the redistribution of responsibilities regarding household chores and a more equal distribution of power within the family (Jaco and Belknap, 1953, pp. 551-557).

It is reasonable to suppose that, generally, there is a mixture of the

two types of marital relationships, the institutional and the companionship. Within individual marriages there is a wide range of combinations. This may be one reason for the confusion among couples. The husbands may subscribe to the "traditional" view of marital roles, namely, that the husband is the head of the family and its sole breadwinner. He sees the wife's position in terms of obedience to him and her function as that of housewife and mother. Yet this husband may be married to a wife with a modern concept of marriage which she views in terms of equal status, separate incomes and shared responsibilities. Under these circumstances, the stage is set for a stressful marriage. FAMSA and its branches regard role conflict as one of the three major causes of marital discord in South Africa (Gerdes, 1976, p. 6). Conflicts relating to roles arise when family patterns change too rapidly: in these times there is no clearly defined pattern of interaction and the onus to work out a pattern rests largely on the individuals concerned. This is not an easy task since individuals have generally received little or no training in this regard. Quite often, role-confusion is not recognized for what it is: it is erroneously seen as an irreconcilable incompatibility. Couples need to discuss matters pertaining to roles prior to marriage (Gerdes, 1976, p. 6).

South African society gives clear evidence of working toward a more equalitarian type of family life. A recent study on white South African women for instance, challenges the following belief as being the dominant one: viz. that the traditional, stay-at-home mother is happy to care for the children while dad acts as the sole breadwinner (Natal Daily News, April 23, 1985). However, not all the communities and subgroups in this country are moving toward this end at the same rate.

2.2 Changing Values and Norms

Today some of the most fundamental values and norms like the sanctity of marriage, premarital chastity and the desirability of marriage and having children, are questioned by many. These attitudes are reflected in questions such as : "Who needs marriage?" or "Is marriage dead?" One school of thought argues that marriage is an imposition of a standard pattern of life on human beings. When individuals find that they have altered and their spouse is no longer a person to whom they can relate, life becomes complicated. Opponents of marriage also claim that it is an encumbrance when the broader task of life is to find one's own identity and reach one's own fulfillment in the world. Moreover, it is argued that marriage encourages all the unhealthy emotions, such as possessiveness, jealousy, competitiveness, and a drawing apart from the great chain of fellowship (Frankel, 1976, p. 357).

The value attached to love and sex in marriage has also changed (Elliott and Merrill, 1950, pp. 352-355). So much is written and said about the importance of sex that it is often seen as virtually the sole determinant of the success or failure of marriage. The reaction against earlier inhibitions seems to have gone too far (Gerdes, 1976, p. 5). Much confusion has also resulted from the assumption that sexual attraction and love are synonymous.

An attitude which appears to be gaining in prominence is one which stresses fun and the immediate gratification of the impulses: "Why wait? Buy now, pay later" is an example of this. Carried over into the field of marriage, this attitude encourages one to neglect long-

term considerations and planning. Certain other aspects which are threatening marital stability are the following: a longer life span which accentuates the problem of monotony in marriage; sexually stimulating material which is being commercially exploited to an increasing extent; and the challenge to the "mystique of motherhood" (Gerdes, 1976, p. 6).

Moreover, the employment of women outside the home increases the number and variety of men-women contacts. Spearheaded by the Women's Liberation Movement, women are being encouraged to free themselves from dependence on men. Important, too, is the declining influence of traditional supporting systems such as religious institutions and schools.

2.3 Industrialisation and Urbanisation

Another factor which has changed the social structure of society is urbanisation. As a result of this process the nuclear family has largely become isolated from the extended family and is now functioning independently and apart from the extended family. This has made the nuclear family financially more vulnerable, for should something untoward happen to the main breadwinner of the family, serious problems could arise. The support of the members of the extended family is no longer readily available.

Large numbers of people live in high density housing in the bigger cities. Although they are in close physical proximity, many of them are, in a psychological sense, widely separated from one another. This often results in loneliness. In this state of loneliness the

individual may turn to the first person who shows a personal interest in him or her and may rush into an ill-advised relationship or marriage with a totally unsuitable partner. The young, inexperienced and lonely newcomer to a strange city is particularly vulnerable in this regard (Gerdes, 1976, p. 4).

Geographic mobility is associated with social mobility and this tends to increase the likelihood of marriage between persons of different backgrounds. These differences which may be of a social, national or educational kind could increase the problems of marital adjustment.

3. Marital Adjustment

No one, says Leslie (1979), has yet succeeded developing a fully adequate theory of marital adjustment. In fact there is scarcely a satisfactory definition of what constitutes marital adjustment though many writers have made attempts which are worth examining (p. 424).

Given the complexity of the roles and role relationships as well as the personalities of different individuals, no marriage is absolutely adjusted or maladjusted. Even in marriages assessed as highly adjusted, some areas of conflict between the partners will exist (Elliott and Merrill, 1961, pp. 357-376). Thus it should not be assumed that happiness in marriage means an absence of conflict although, of course, fewer of those individuals who are happily married tend to report problems in their marriage. A study by Gurin et al. (1960) showed that one third of their sample whose marriages were rated "very happy" reported problems, and so did half of those whose marriages were rated as "above average" (p. 98).

One way of assessing whether or not a marriage is successful is by examining the interaction between the two partners over the time span of their marriage. That is, a marriage is not simply the sum of the two individuals that make it up, but rather it is a unity of two interacting personalities, "neither one of which alone determines the success of the relationship. An outcome which has an extremely low value for the wife married to one partner may have a high value for her if married to another, and vice versa" (Bernard, 1964, p. 730). In other words, there is no type of personality that is a failure in marriage, but rather two individual personalities that have, through interaction with one another, failed in marriage. And while marital failure might not have occurred with a different mate, it is also true "that even happily married people might have been happier if married to someone else" (Bernard, 1964, p. 729).

The ultimate measurement of a successful marriage, according to Bell (1967), is the degree of adjustment achieved by the individuals in their marriage roles and in interaction with each other (p. 297).

Burgess and Locke (1945) define a successful marriage as "a union where the attitudes and the acts of husband and wife are in agreement on the chief issues of marriage, such as handling finances and dealing with in-laws; where they have come to an adjustment upon interests, objectives, and values; where they are in harmony on demonstrations of affection and the sharing of confidences; where they have few or no complaints about their marriage; and where they do not report feeling lonely, miserable and irritable." (p. 443).

The same writer goes on to explain that couples who have similar cultural backgrounds and compatible temperaments often find that they have few adjustments to make either in engagement or in marriage. Other couples with

certain differences in past experience, in temperament, and in philosophy of life may make their adjustment during courtship and engagement. However, a third group of couples find that they still have adjustments to make in marriage and some never succeed in solving the problems upon which they disagree (Burgess and Locke, 1945, p. 444).

In Bernard's view (1964) a marriage may be regarded as being successful to the extent that it provides the highest satisfaction possible, not the highest one imaginable. From this relativistic point of view, he sets up two interesting criteria:

- (a) A marital relationship is successful if the satisfaction is positive, that is, if the rewards to both partners are greater than the costs.
- (b) A marital relationship is successful if it is preferable to any other alternative.

In (a) there is a positive gain, however slight, in the existing relationship. The gain will be slight if the costs are exorbitant and the rewards just barely sufficient to compensate for them; the gain will be great if the costs are slight and the rewards great. In (b) above, the marriage is not likely to be happy - the costs may be greater than the rewards- but the deficit is less than it would be for any other alternative.

An example of the first situation where the margin between costs and rewards is small, would be this : A and B do not like each other; they get on each other's nerves; the costs of remaining married are great in frustration and loneliness. But the rewards are great also; together they can afford a comfortable home, they have high status in the community; the children are

protected from scandal; and the Church approves of them. This relationship is "successful" or "good", not because it is the best imaginable, but only because it is the best possible in the sense that the satisfactions are greater than the costs. At the other extreme is the marriage in which the satisfactions are enormous in appreciation, security, responsiveness, financial success; and the costs, in restrictions on freedom to come and go at will, an independent income, a job, very low.

An example of the second situation, in which a marital relationship is successful only because it is better than any alternative, would be the marriage of a dependent woman to, for example, an alcoholic, in which the costs in misery are much greater than the rewards in security or status; but the spread between costs and satisfactions would be much greater if she left him. She would then be alone; she would not have the protection of the status of marriage; and she would not have even the occasional sober companionship of a husband. Bad as it is, therefore, her marriage seems better to her than any alternative she has (Bernard, p. 732-733).

In brief, the criteria for judging whether a marital relationship is successful or unsuccessful, says Bernard, must not be in terms of the best situation imaginable (i.e. the maximum) but in terms of the best one possible, giving due consideration to the pros and cons of the existing circumstances, i.e. the optimum (Bernard, 1964, p. 732).

4. Length of Marriage and Changes in Interaction between Spouses

Marriage is not a static or mechanical state; rather it is a dynamic process (Williamson, 1967, p.339). Henslin (1980) expresses a similar view: "Being married is not so much a state, as an activity. It is a dynamic relationship worked

out by each couple as they make their own transition to the new reality they have entered" (p. 161).

One very important adjustment that has to be made by many couples in marriage is the redefining of their inexperienced premarital marriage role expectations on the basis of newly experienced reality. There could be some disillusionment as hitherto unnoticed facets of personality reveal themselves and destroy earlier illusions (Waller and Hill 1951, p. 259). Redefinition of the marriage roles is usually required if the couple are to maintain a relationship that is satisfactory to them in light of their new experience. Very often marital adjustment over time is not a conscious or deliberate activity by either spouse. In this connection, Bernard (1964) observes: "People are sometimes surprised when they become aware of the changes which have occurred in their relationship over a period of time; they have been adjusting to one another without even recognizing the fact" (p. 680).

A positive development usually occurs as the disillusionment with the romantic idealism of premarriage dissipates - the increasing number of common experiences as husband and wife. New values are developed in the marriage relationship to replace the disappearing romantic illusions. The very fact of sharing experiences as a husband and wife provides a strong bond for many couples; they can derive satisfaction from the situations they have encountered and resolved jointly. The increasing experience with the other also leads to the ability of many to predict the behaviour of the spouse and, as a result, a kind of intimate behaviour develops which is not found in many other pair-relationships.

One of the realities of marriage is that the couple must face many problem areas, whereas in courtship the emphasis was generally on the pleasurable

areas. The sharing of problems may lead to a closer tie between the pair because they can give aid and support to the other and gain satisfaction in successfully dealing with their problems. One study of husbands and wives found that only 28 percent of the wives seldom or never told their husbands their troubles (Burgess and Wallin, 1953, p. 190). In many marriages, the husband and wife relationship, with time, minimises personal pretence on the part of both partners. Each partner can therefore turn to the other for support and help with a minimum threat to his (or her) ego because of less need to "cover up".

As time goes on, the husband-wife roles undergo change. Most family research has been directed at the early changes in the marriage relationship. The transfer from single to married roles offers the most dramatic change.

4.1 The Early Years of Marriage

In the early stages of marriage there is usually an initial cautiousness or holding back, an extra tolerance for misunderstanding and irritations. This imposes a degree of rigidity and artificiality which cannot last and the small resentments grow into major feelings of hostility and ill-concealed aggression. The couple's first row develops and they have the opportunity to express freely their feelings about each other and as a result of this confrontation can formulate rules to negotiate their future differences. These rules are not made explicit, but by mutual agreement at a verbal and also at a non-verbal level, they become understood as guidelines for future confrontations. Through each episode, individual couples evolve a unique style for themselves and resort to this pattern in future negotiations.

According to Leslie (1967), there are good reasons for the almost universal feeling of disillusionment about marriage. One of them is that individuals are taught to expect too much from it. Most people marry while they are in love. At this time the sexual excitement, the uncertainties and novelties of the new relationship, lift them out of themselves for a time. Such people, explains Leslie, are more intense and more vital than usual. Moreover, they see themselves through the eyes of their beloved. Unconsciously, these individuals match their feelings about themselves with the glorified impression the partner has formed of him or her (p. 465).

However, this excited state of mind cannot endure the protracted association of marriage. The thrilling sexual tension which normally keeps engaged couples in a state of fervid and delighted expectation diminishes with frequent, satisfying intercourse. The element of uncertainty is lost. Sooner or later, when the anticipations of the engagement period give way to the sober satisfaction of marriage, the partners lapse back into their ordinary selves.

Scanzoni (1981) expresses a similar idea: "When the helplessness of falling in love and being swallowed up in a mystery beyond comprehension gives way to the daily routines of living together, a great deal of magic and passion may seem to disappear" (p. 595).

The psychoanalyst Erich Fromm (1956) explains: After the stranger has become an intimately known person there are no more barriers to be overcome, there is no more sudden closeness to be achieved. Thus the exhilaration of falling in love may be sought with someone else, and once again the stranger is transformed into an "intimate" person.

The intensity again becomes less and ends in the desire for a new adventure in romantic love - always with the illusion that the new love will be different from the earlier ones (pp. 44-45).

The modern era is producing an extended early marriage period before the birth of the first child. This has been the result of more effective contraceptive techniques and the advent of the 'pill', and also the changing attitude towards the enjoyment of sexual activity for its own sake. Economic pressures for mortgage and a high material standard of living make the wife's continued earnings a necessity. In addition, the career conscious wife has the opportunity to plan her family and limit its size as she wishes, leaving her more personal freedom to develop her own special interests and talents. This new pattern offers both advantages and disadvantages. It gives the young couple more time to develop their own relationship and to achieve a greater level of understanding and mutual satisfaction, but it may also mean that they evolve a rigid routine which becomes the safe part of their relationship and which will be very disrupted and altered after the first baby's arrival. For economic reasons then the planned first child is tending to arrive later in the woman's life and after the years which are usually described as the biological ones for reproduction.

The birth of a baby leads to major changes in a wife's style of living. She now finds herself committed totally to the demands of a dependent being and has to orientate much more completely to her domestic role. This isolates her from her previous supports and opportunities for fulfilment of her emotional needs and she is confronted for the most part with the reality of turning to her husband as her total source of support and reassurance.

Her own personal resources for adaptation and readjustment are suddenly put to the test. Her capacity to form a warm loving intimate relationship with her baby is exposed and she must learn to deal with any feelings of hostility or rejection when they arise (Dyer, 1963, pp. 196-201). The modern style of living is not very helpful at this point of stress. As a result of social mobility relatives tend to live at a distance. Young husbands tend to be very work orientated either because of their own developing careers or because they are attempting to take on overtime in order to assist the family budget.

For some families it is the arrival of the second child which produces the major strains and problems. The wife suddenly finds herself totally occupied with conflicting demands of a new baby and a changed toddler who is no longer the charming cooperative youngster that she knew before his sibling arrived but has become noisy, demanding and interfering as he works out his own feelings of competition and displacement. It is at this stage that the wife tends to become emotionally depleted and irritable and has little energy left to meet her husband's emotional and sexual needs at the end of the day.

The husband for his part has to be prepared to share his wife with the new arrivals and can no longer expect to gain her individual interest and attention (Bowman, 1974, pp. 227-230). For the selfish, immature and dependent male this poses major problems and, for some, their adaptation may be to dissociate themselves from the family scene, by taking on additional work commitments or by arriving home after the children have been put to bed. Others may share the new responsibilities with their wives. However, this is a very critical adjustment and many marriages begin to flounder at this stage as the wife becomes

increasingly hostile and resentful at her partner's lack of concern and responsibility and withdraws emotionally in order to punish him. It is not long before she is labelled anxious, depressed and frigid and the husband becomes confused, disappointed and sexually frustrated. Their mutual capacity for trust and intimacy becomes very strained and they exist side by side feeling increasingly alienated, tense and bitter at the turn of their fortunes.

4.2 The Later Years of Marriage

With the passage of the years, new attitudes toward marriage develop. For many couples, the happiness ratings of their marriage go down with increasing age and with length of marriage. The happiest years of marriage may be the early years, even though it is generally during those years that most problems of marital adjustment occur. Blood and Wolfe (1960) found that "feelings of inadequacy and problems progressively decrease with age. One might suspect that over time there tends to be an increasing adaptation to the marital partner and to the distresses in the marriage (p. 102). Or as Jessie Bernard (1964) suggests, the "marital relationship that comes with age may reflect resignation rather than happiness" (p. 732).

An important factor to keep in mind is the personal growth that one or both spouses may experience over time. People change, but not always at the same rate or in the same direction. New experiences, new interests, new contacts, new goals, even adopting a whole new philosophy of life may mean that one spouse ceases to be the person the other thought he or she knew and married. Anthropologist Bohannan (1970), an authority on divorce, suggests that an inability to tolerate

change in the spouse often lies at the root of the growing estrangement associated with a marital breakup. As a person changes over the years, the rewards he or she offers to the spouse are likely to change as well. This will require renegotiation if the couple is to continue experiencing joint satisfaction (p. 36).

Because of the generally greater commitment of the woman to the marriage, it is necessary to give some attention to how she is affected and influenced with increased length of marriage. When women enter their late forties their lives usually undergo drastic changes.

First, since their children are growing up and leaving home, many women, especially those who have largely devoted themselves to their children, must make a difficult adjustment. The greater the degree to which the woman has involved and immersed herself in the rearing of her children, the greater loss of function she suffers when they grow up. Some women may be able to adjust to this role-loss by taking on other interests, but for the rest the role-commitment to being mother has been so great that it is very difficult for them to move successfully into new roles. It is a time for interpersonal re-alignments within the family system, an acknowledgement of the weakening bonds between parent and children and a new awareness of the importance of husband-wife bonds. It may also be a time when increased demands are made by the aging members of the previous generation.

Second, as the wife enters her middle years, her husband is often at his occupational peak and very often deeply involved in his career. Earlier in marriage, the wife might have been very helpful to the husband's career, but at this point her assistance is often limited.

Thus, the husband's important occupational role may call for little involvement by the wife.

A third important change is that the wife enters the menopause at about 47 years of age (Davis, 1957, p. 365). This change is associated with an ovarian-hormone decrease which leads to a variety of physical and functional changes. The psychological impact of the menopause is often very strong because it dramatically ends what many women believe to be their most important function - the having of children. It also forces the woman to realise her youth is now over and she is moving toward old age. When these elements of change are combined, the impact on the middle-aged woman may be very great. As a result, she may seek roles outside the family to give new meaning to her life.

The role changes are less severe for the middle-aged male, but exist to some degree. He has his occupational involvement, which may give him his most important role satisfaction (McCary, 1980, p. 312). When a man has reached his late 40's, his occupational success has been pretty well determined. Some men are satisfied with their position and their expectations for the future, but many men may not be satisfied and a sense of occupational failure may force its way into their thinking.

Also at this time, a man's sexual interests and capabilities are often fading. If the male has associated his sense of masculinity with sexual behaviour, he may undergo a drastic role shock. As a further complication, if the wife's sexual interests are still at a relatively high level, the husband may find himself in the highly disturbing position of being sexually inadequate. The sexual drive of

the middle-class male may also be influenced by the occupational role. Foote (1961) raises the question of "what happens to sexual potency when the masculine ego is damaged by being occupationally conquered by a junior" (p. 326).

Such new problems of advancing years may cause a couple to move closer within the marital relationship or to take separate diverging paths and form liaisons with others outside the family group. Both courses may provide a satisfactory end result for the individuals concerned but difficulties arise when there is an emotional stalemate and the individuals become fixed and cling desperately to their old satisfactions and sources of fulfilment. The old roles become a stereotype and there is an inability to adjust to the changing situation. The depressed mother may then manifest a desperate over-protective clinging to her children and an attempt to infantilize them and continue to bind them to herself. She may become increasingly hostile and rejecting of her husband both emotionally and sexually, and yet at the same time exhibit an enormous dependency need for his time and attentions.

It would appear that the couple who are vulnerable to the stresses of later life stages are also those whose personal adjustments at earlier stages of marriage are less than adequate although to outward appearances the relationship may appear to be a stable one. They are unable to redefine their changed relationship and deal with the new needs and readjustments that arise.

5. Predicting Marital Adjustment

All societies recognise the desirability of marital contentment and the need

to avoid the misery that often accompanies unhappy marriages. To this end social scientists have attempted to develop techniques for determining success or adjustment in marriage. Two of the more important aims of these predictive studies are:

- (a) To try to determine beforehand whether certain types of couples are likely to be content in their marriage. Presumably, ill-suited couples would be advised against marriage.
- (b) To contribute to knowledge of human behaviour in marriage.

According to Burgess and Wallin (1953, p. 33), research in the area of marriage was delayed for many years because of two main reasons:

Firstly, before the first World War marriage and sex were thought of as being too personal and intimate to discuss with others.

Secondly, love and marriage were seen as belonging to the field of romance and not amenable to study by scientific methods. It was generally believed that, in some mysterious and mystic way a person was attracted to his or her predestined mate, married and lived happily ever after. In those instances when marriages turned out unhappily, the disillusioned partners often explained the failure as being the result of their having mistaken infatuation for love; others placed the blame on bad luck or fate.

After the War, however, there was a marked change in the climate of public opinion and this made research relating to marriage more feasible. There was, for instance, a new attitude toward the continued increase in the divorce rate. The experts and the public came to realise that the problem

of divorce could not be solved by making it more difficult for couples to separate. They saw unwise mate selection as an important reason for marital conflict. It was often too late to solve marital problems when the husband or wife or both were already determined to secure a divorce. In marriage, as elsewhere, it was accepted that prevention is easier, more economical, and more effective than cure. It was also clear that many of the marriages which did not end in divorce, were unsuccessful and brought unhappiness to husband, wife and children.

Young people in the immediate post-war period also began to express doubts about the merits of romantic love. They could not accept, as completely as their parents did, that "love was all that mattered" to make marriage a success (Burgess and Wallin, 1953, p. 34).

Under these circumstances a need arose for predictive studies relating to success and failure in marriage, particularly since prediction techniques had already been applied in other areas of human behaviour - areas such as school achievement, vocational adjustment, personnel selection, and behaviour upon parole from prison. By considering the past behaviour of a prisoner, for instance, it was found feasible to predict before his release from prison how good a risk he would be in observing parole regulations. It seemed promising, therefore, to find out whether or not it would be possible to predict, during engagement, the marital adjustment of a couple. It was appreciated that success in matrimony might be more difficult to predict than adjustment in these other fields. In school achievement, vocational adjustment, personnel selection, and parole observance, prediction is made for the behaviour of only one person, while marital adjustment, involving as it does the interaction of two persons, is much more complex (Burgess and Wallin, 1953, p. 34).

The basic assumption in predicting human adjustment is that the personality characteristics and past behaviour of the person control his future conduct. The unique feature of the prediction technique is, therefore, the organisation and analysis of past experiences of persons in a particular field and then the use of this organised information to predict the probable future behaviour of others (Burgess and Locke, 1945, p. 451).

In the process of developing instruments with which to measure marital adjustment, a great deal of research was generated (Winch, 1971, pp. 565-569). Some of these studies which are related to, and provide a stimulus for, the present project will now be reviewed. They will serve as a background against which this investigation should be considered. Where relevant, the information that these studies yield, will be used for purposes of comparison, interpretation and appraisal.

The earliest attempts used a *single* criterion, such as happiness with marriage. Ratings were achieved through self-evaluations of marriage or through evaluations by others who were familiar with the couple. The disadvantages of single-criterion evaluation were that the criterion one person might use to make an assessment of marriage might not be used by another, and even if the same criterion were used, the assessment could vary a great deal among different observers.

Later, a score system with several criteria was set up under which the success rating of a marriage was determined by the responses of the married person to a number of items. This led to the use of a composite index that recognized different facets of marital success. However, this technique was criticised because the total score concealed the various contributions made by each of the criteria. An overall success score tells little about the

various parts that make up the whole.

Burgess and Wallin (1953) argue that the *multiple* criteria of marital success measurement meet the objections of the composite index, because each contributing criterion is composed of a number of items. In their method, a total score for overall adjustment can be seen and used, as well as scores for the various categories that make up the total. Burgess and Wallin (1953) suggest that the "multiple criterion" method has been successful as an instrument in differentiating between successful and unsuccessful marriages by the practical test of validation viz., divorce.

After a careful survey of the many research attempts to investigate marital relationships, Bernard (1964) distinguishes a variety of criteria that have been used. The criteria include the following: how well a marriage meets the needs and expectations of society, its permanence or endurance, the degree of unity and/or agreement or consensus developed between the members, the degree to which it facilitates personality development, and the degree of marital satisfaction or happiness it achieves.

Three important American studies published by Terman (1938), by Burgess and Cottrell (1939), and by Locke (1951) uncovered the background factors which appear to be associated with personalities capable of making good marital adjustments. Terman (1938) found that persons with happy family backgrounds were likely to succeed in marriage, success being measured in terms of self-reported happiness. He found that the ten most predictive items for marital success are the following: superior happiness of parents, childhood happiness, lack of conflict with mother, home discipline firm but not harsh, strong attachment to mother, strong attachment to father, lack of conflict with father, parental frankness about sex, infrequency and mildness of child-

hood punishment, and premarital attitudes toward sex which are free from disgust or aversion. In brief, happy homes which produced happy children and happy adults make for happy marriages.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) found that conventional people - as measured by conformity behaviour - are more likely to have good marital relationships than nonconformists. These authors, like Terman, emphasize "a harmonious and understanding family environment" and such traits as optimism, emotional balance and sympathetic attitudes, but they also lay stress on factors such as similarity of cultural backgrounds, a socialised personality, participation in organisations, keeping of religious observances, a job with a high degree of social control, self-confidence, and emotional dependence.

In 1951 Locke published a marital prediction study in which he compared 200 divorced couples with 200 happily married couples. Locke's sample was much more representative than most of the previous samples used in marriage and divorce studies.

Locke's most interesting findings were the following:

- (a) The alienation process is generally a slow cumulation of conflicts and disagreements, accompanied by the psychological withdrawal of one or both spouses. If the course of the alienation process is far advanced, the spouses tend to express derogatory attitudes toward each other, tend to have many complaints about the mate and the marriage, and tend to exaggerate the deficiencies of the mate and the marriage. Thus Locke rejects the theory that marriages crack up suddenly.

- (b) Divorced couples usually have an inadequate courtship, whereas happily married couples actually begin their marital adjustment even before the marriage has taken place.
- (c) The presence or absence of children is not significantly related to marital failure.
- (d) The outside employment of the wife is not a significant factor in divorce.

Locke, like the other writers, has additional data but these will be considered later. He challenges a number of widely held theories or beliefs about divorce. Among these are that children prevent divorce; that divorcees are poor marital risks; that a wife's outside job is a cause of divorce and that religious differences often cause divorce.

Kirkpatrick (1955) has compiled the findings from a large number of empirical studies on different variables related to marriage. A listing of selected variables that have been found in some studies to be related to success in marriage will now be presented. An X in the first column indicates that research has provided some evidence that that variable is favourable to success in marriage, while X in the second column indicates that that variable was found to be unfavourable (pp. 346-354; 599-617).

Premarital factors	Favourable	Unfavourable
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Happiness of parents' marriage (high).... <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parents divorces ... b. Parent or parents deceased ... 2. Personal happiness in childhood 3. Ease of premarital contact with the opposite sex ... 4. Mild, but firm discipline by parents... 5. Lack of conflict with parents... 6. Courtship : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Acquainted under one year b. Acquainted over one year c. Approval of parents d. Similarity of age e. Satisfaction with affection of other 7. Reason for marriage: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Love b. Loneliness c. Escape from one's own family d. Common interests 	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>X</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>
Postmarital factors		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attitudes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Husband more dominant b. Pair equalitarian c. Wife more dominant d. Jealous of spouse e. Feels superior to spouse f. Feels more intelligent than spouse 2. Good relationships with in-laws 3. Not living with in-laws 4. Community of interest 5. Desire for children 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>

The listing in the table above gives an indication of some areas found through research to have a measurable relationship to success in marriage. The findings were based on a variety of different studies with a wide range of methods and samples. An unresolved but very important problem is the inter-relationship of the various items - that is, whether the existence of one variable influences or brings about the existence of others.

While many variables have been shown to have a statistical relationship with adjustment and success in marriage, none of them has been found to be absolute (Kirkpatrick, 1937, p. 384). It cannot be assumed that all successful marriages will be made up of the same variables in the same proportions. The couple who feel that their marriage is good, and honestly see themselves as adjusted, are adjusted within their frame of reference. To say they are not is to imply a predetermined criterion of what marital adjustment is and then applying it to all marriages. If the couple feel that their marriage is good and successful, their attitudes and behaviour will generally reflect that belief (Mangus, 1957, pp. 256-262; Cottrell, 1942, pp. 617-620).

Overall, it can be said that research in marital prediction is promising but it is in a pioneer stage. Increased efficiency in prediction, both by statistical and case study methods, can be expected as research in this field progresses further.

6. Cohesiveness in Marriage

An interesting view of marriage is offered by Levinger (1970, pp. 108-110) who sees the relationship as a two-person group. Inducements for remaining in this, as in any other group, include:

- (a) the attractiveness of the group itself, and
- (b) the strength of the restraints against leaving it.

Inducements for leaving a group include:

- (a) the attractiveness of alternative relationships, and
- (b) the restraints against breaking up existing relationships.

Seen in these terms the strength of a marital relationship would be a direct function of the attractions within the marriage, and an inverse function of the attractions offered by outside relationships.

In marriage, a husband is attracted to his mate because of her intrinsic worth, her love, her charm, her ability to please his wants, or perhaps because she gains him prestige. Barriers against a breakup come from such sources as the emotional, religious, and moral commitments that a partner feels toward his marriage or toward his children, the external pressures of kin and community, of the law, the church, and other associational memberships.

Thus marital strength is a function of barriers as well as bonds. The strength of the barriers, says Levinger, matters little if the partners' attraction is high enough. The spouses' close attachment makes it unlikely that either one would seriously consider breaking the relationship.

However, there are other marriages where the internal attractions are low. In such marriages the barriers are vitally important. There is an absence of positive feelings between the partners; they merely maintain outward signs of marital togetherness. Goode (1966) refers to such a marriage as

an "empty shell" marriage. In such a marriage "the atmosphere is without laughter or fun, and a sullen gloom pervades the household. Members do not discuss their problems or experiences with each other, and communication is kept to a minimum ... Their rationalization for avoiding a divorce is, on the part of one or both, 'sacrifice for the children', 'neighbourhood respectability', and a religious conviction that divorce is morally wrong ... The hostility in such a home is great, but arguments focus on the small issues, not the large ones. Facing the latter would, of course, lead directly to separation or divorce, but the couple has decided that staying together overrides other values, including each other's happiness and the psychological health of their children" (pp. 441-442).

This illustration of an "empty shell" family leads one into contrasting images of "full shell" and "no shell" families. In a "full shell" marriage, says Levinger (1970), not only the boundaries but the attractions as well are strong for both partners. It is a marriage in which there is warm emotional interaction. In contrast, the "no shell" couple is in a state of dissolution. It consists of two disconnected individuals, living separate lives. In this latter instance, boundaries as well as attractions have been eroded by the events over time, until eventually alternatives to the marital state are preferred (p. 109).

High cohesiveness in marriage is, as Levinger (1970) points out, far more difficult to detect than low cohesiveness. The privacy of the marital relationship prevents outsiders from judging how "truly happy" a particular couple might be. Even insiders, the spouses themselves, may not be fully aware of all the attractions and restraints that they feel. On the other hand, the extremes of low cohesiveness result in the dissolution of the relationship. If divorce is the result, it is a public index that can be

studied (p. 110).

Levinger uses research findings to illustrate his conception of marriage. These can be arranged into three sections, as follows:

- (a) Attractions that serve to secure a marriage include love and money. The rewards that spouses receive are linked to their affection for each other, to their income and social position, and to the extent to which the husband and wife share similar characteristics.
- (b) Barriers against a breakup relate to the partners' feelings of obligation to their family, to their moral values, and to the external pressures that serve to maintain the boundaries of their marriage.
- (c) Alternate sources of affectional and financial reward which serve as a contrast to the internal attractions and have a potentially disruptive effect.

6.1 Attractions that Serve to Secure a Marriage

(i) Esteem and affection for spouse

Locke has found that spouses in happy marriages describe their partners' traits in a far more positive way than do divorced persons; the former are far more likely than the latter to report the mate's traits as superior or at least equal to their own. Kelly (1941, pp. 193-198) also has reported that this tendency to see the mate's traits as superior is positively related to marital happiness.

(ii) Desire for companionship

Blood and Wolfe (1960, pp. 172-174) as well as Kirkpatrick (1937, pp. 133-137) found that desire for companionship is strongly related to marital adjustment.

(iii) Sexual enjoyment

Locke (1951, pp. 139-142) has reported that happy and divorced spouses differ significantly, both in their enjoyment of actual intercourse and in their desire for it.

(iv) Husband's income

In Western nations, says Goode (1962, pp. 506-526), divorce rates were greater for high-income than for low-income marriages until the advent of industrialization. However, since the early part of this century, divorce rates have been negatively associated with husband's income. It would appear that the attractions within the marriage are lowest for the poor, and that attractions outside the marriage are relatively greater.

With the reduction of legal obstacles and of economic costs of divorce, there has occurred a large increase in divorce among low-income couples. Locke (1951, pp. 280-282) in his comparison between happily married and divorced spouses, found that an income "adequate for the needs of the family" lessened the likelihood of divorce. Burgess and Cottrell (1939, pp. 136-158) also found a moderate positive relationship between these two variables.

(v) Home ownership

The proportion of couples who obtain a divorce is lower for owners than for non-owners of a home. This finding is reported by Burgess and Cottrell (1939, pp. 254-255) and by Locke (1951, pp. 274-275). Much of the association may be a function of family income and of length of marriage. However, even if the influence of those two variables is controlled, home ownership itself probably contributes to the stability of family life. It would seem that home ownership is not only a source of attraction, but also helps to stabilize the boundaries that hold the marriage together. All else being equal, the mere fact of owning a home probably increases a couple's reluctance to dissolve their relationship.

(vi) Husband's level of education

The level of the husband's education is higher for durable than for dissolved marriages. This is indicated by data reported by Monahan (1961, pp. 253-263). These findings, of course, are linked to variations in other variables, such as husband's income or prestige. His years of education undoubtedly are correlated positively with prestige, with the husband's relative superiority over his wife, and with his ability to maintain a masculine role. If the husband's education is lower than his wife's, there is more likely to be a reversal in the male-female power balance with an ensuing loss of the husband's attractiveness as her marital partner.

(vii) Husband's occupation

Numerous studies have shown that divorce proneness is also inversely related to husband's occupational rank. Thus, Kephart (1955, pp. 456-465), Monahan (1955, pp. 322-324) and Weeks (1943, pp. 334-337) have each shown that couples in which the husband's occupation ranks high have less divorce proneness than those where it ranks low. Part of this result may be attributed to the contribution of income.

(viii) Similarity in social status, education and age

Burgess and Wallin (1944, pp. 475-481) noted that frequency of broken engagements was lower for same-faith couples. Hamilton (1929, p. 513), Kirkpatrick (1955, p. 279) and Williams (1938, p. 98) have indicated that marital attraction is positively related to similarity in education. Burgess and Cottrell (1939, pp. 161-164) and Locke (1951, p. 104) found that it tends to be associated with age similarity, particularly when the husband is older. Blood and Wolfe (1960, pp. 161-164) have found that all three kinds of similarity relate positively to marital satisfaction. Undoubtedly, these are all different aspects of status similarity. Communication between the spouses would tend to be enhanced by relative likeness on these characteristics.

6.2 Barriers Operating Against the Breakup of a Marriage

(i) Obligation to dependent children

It is widely held that as long as there are no children involved, divorce is the couple's own affair. For that reason, one might

expect that husbands and wives with children would feel a greater restraint than those without children - particularly minor children.

Early writings on divorce gave the impression that childless couples have indeed a vastly higher divorce rate, but those studies neglected to adjust divorce rate by duration of marriage. More sophisticated analyses by Jacobson (1950, pp. 235-244) and by Monahan (1955, pp. 446-456) have shown, that if length of marriage is controlled, the difference in separation rate between childless and child-rearing couples is much smaller, but still noticeable. According to Jacobson (1950, pp. 235-244), between 1928 and 1948, this disparity decreased to a ratio of less than 2:1. Even the most skeptical analysis of this difference by Monahan (1955, pp. 446-456) showed some excess of divorce frequency in the childless groups. The real question is, perhaps, what obligations do the parents feel toward their children? To what extent do they feel that divorce of an unattractive marriage would either damage or promote their children's well being? If parents believe the former, then the existence of children will create barrier forces; if they believe the latter, then they would be attracted to an alternative other than the present marriage. Goode (1956) for example, has taken the position that, in a conflict-ridden home, children may actually benefit from the divorce.

(ii) Obligations to the marital bond

In a large proportion of marriages, both partners are firmly

committed to respect the marital contract, and divorce is not considered as a possibility. Each partner has certain qualms against even thinking of such a thing. On the other hand, if one or both have previously experienced a divorce proceeding, then either partner would be more likely to consider divorce. Thus, the barriers against the dissolution of the present marriage would be weaker. A study by Monahan (1952, pp. 280-289) has indeed shown that first marriages are more resistant to dissolution than are second or later marriages. His data were confined to population statistics and did not pertain longitudinally to particular individuals.

(iii) Primary group affiliation

Affiliation with a church or other kinds of organisations is one source of barrier forces. Affiliation with kinfolk is another important source. Ackerman (1963, pp. 12-20) differentiates between "conjective" and "disjunctive" affiliations with kin. He defines the former case as one where husband and wife share a common network of kinfolk and friends; in the latter, their loyalties go in different directions. It is reasonable to expect that a conjective network of affiliations would tend to restrain marital dissolution more than a disjunctive network. Ackerman's analysis of cross-cultural data shows empirical support for this supposition.

(iv) Community stigma

Another source of barrier against divorce is community disapproval. This is particularly the case when both partners are

well known and their behaviour is widely observed. In these instances there are greater restraints against social transgressions such as extramarital affairs.

(v) Legal and economic barriers

Legal and financial considerations exert restraints against a breakup. When considering differences between high and low-income husbands, a high-income husband is likely to pay more to support his ex-wife after separation. This provides an important restraint against going through with a divorce.

6.3 Sources of Alternate Attraction

The alternative environment has to be more attractive than the marital relationship if the partners are to be willing to undergo the costs of divorce. However, it is not necessary that the attraction be "another woman" or "another man". The marital relationship itself may be so unattractive that any alternative condition - with or without another partner - is preferred.

(i) Other sex partner preferred

Preference for an outside sexual partner does play a part in a significant proportion of divorce actions. The proportion may vary anywhere from 15 to 35 percent of all cases (Harmsworth and Minnis (1955, pp. 316-321), Kephart (1954, pp. 241-243) and Locke (1951) . Complaints about external sexual attachments are more frequently reported by wives.

(ii) Disjunctive kin affiliations

Another source of outside attraction would be the loyalty towards one's kin or friends. If these ties are in conflict with those of the spouse, they could lead to strain in the marriage. Ackerman (1963, pp. 12-20) has suggested that competing primary group affiliations are associated with divorce proneness. In cases of disjunctive affiliation, one would expect that the marital bond would be strengthened if the couple increases its physical and psychological distance from both sets of alternate affiliation groups, reducing thereby the disruptive forces. For example, partners in a heterogamous marriage which is experiencing in-law problems would strengthen their relationship by moving away from the locality where either set of parents reside. No systematic evidence to support this hypothesis can be cited, but it does coincide with informal observation.

(iii) Wife's opportunity for independent income

One would expect that the more easily the wife can support herself outside the marital relationship or can be assured of such support through other means, the more ready would she be to break the marriage if such a decision needs to be made. In most cases where the husband's income is extremely low, and where the wife's earnings are a substantial proportion of family income, these conditions would seem to be met. In the upper economic strata, however, income differentials between wife and husband are large, and the wife has more reason to maintain the marriage (Goode 1962, p. 516). In other words,

wives in the lower strata appear to have less to lose and more to gain from a divorce.

Levinger's idea of regarding marital cohesiveness as a special case of group cohesiveness merits closer consideration. This will become even more apparent when the nature and course of marital conflict is considered in the next chapter.

SUMMARY

Marriage has been defined as "a relatively permanent sexual union implying a number of interlocking statuses and roles". It is not a static state; rather it is a dynamic process. People marry for various reasons, both positive and negative. Some may marry to satisfy certain basic needs such as the need for love and security while others may marry in order to escape from an unbearable situation at home or to cover pregnancy.

The question of "who marries whom" is an old one but has still not been answered satisfactorily. Theories have been built around such factors as propinquity, ideal mate, parental image, homogamy, and role play.

Marriage among Hindus is in a transitional stage: the companionship concept of marriage is replacing the earlier notion of marriage as a relation that stresses respect, obedience, authority and duty. Among the factors responsible for this trend are changes in family roles, values and norms, as well as industrialization and urbanisation.

Factors affecting the women, such as the higher educational levels, employment opportunities outside the home, the advent of the nuclear family system,

and the trend toward having fewer children have all brought about changes of perception with regard to the roles and attitudes of spouses, resulting in a more equalitarian relationship in marriage.

All societies recognise the desirability of marital contentment and the need to avoid the misery that often accompanies unhappy marriages. To this end social scientists have attempted to develop instruments for predicting success and adjustment in marriage. Overall, progress in this area is promising but a great deal more still needs to be known and done before predictions can be made with sufficient confidence.

An interesting view of marriage is offered by Levinger who sees the relationship as a two-person group. Inducements for remaining in a marriage are related to the attractiveness of the marriage itself and the strength of the restraints against leaving it. The inducements for leaving a group include the attractiveness of alternative relationships as well as the restraints against breaking up the existing relationship. Seen in these terms the strength of a particular marriage is a function of barriers as well as bonds.

Attractions that serve to secure a marriage relate to factors such as esteem and affection for the spouse, desire for companionship, sexual enjoyment, adequate income for the needs of the family, home ownership, husband's level of education and occupation, and the similarity between the spouses in social status, education and age. Barriers which operate against the break up of a marriage are obligation to dependent children and to the marital bond, primary group affiliations, community stigma and legal and economic bars. The alternative environment has to be more attractive than the marital relationship, if the partners are willing to undergo the cost of divorce. Sources of alternate attraction include preference for some other sex partner,

disjunctive kin affiliations and the wife's ability to earn an independent income.

The ultimate measurement of successful marriage is the degree of adjustment achieved by the individuals in their marriage roles and in interaction with each other.

CHAPTER THREE

CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE

1. Introduction

Marital conflict is neither new nor peculiar to the present time. The breakdown of marriage with provisions for divorce and remarriage was a phenomenon widely recognised in Babylonian, Hebrew, Greek and Roman law (Williamson, 1967, p. 520). Indeed, even before these early times, the nagging wife and the cruel husband were part of the common folklore of all known peoples. Individual disagreements, differences in temperament and the irritations arising from daily contact have always characterised the intimate family group. Biography, history, and literature contain many stories of family conflicts arising from these and even more serious individual differences. Neurotic and psychotic husbands and wives, for instance, have made family life miserable for many a long-suffering spouse, who had no recourse but to suffer in silence. The social expectations of earlier days, however, were based upon marriage as an indissoluble relationship. Hence the comfort, uncertainties, and hazards of marriage were accepted as part of the natural order.

This general situation explains why family conflict has become a social problem in recent decades. While much of the behaviour within the family has not changed significantly, the definition of such behaviour has changed a good deal. Whereas the members of the family formerly viewed their difficulties as inevitable (and hence not as a social problem), many persons today do not accept this element of inevitability and believe that they can do something about their marital frustrations. This action may take the form

of divorce, which is often a dubious solution to marital problems. The point, however, is not whether or not divorce actually does "help" but rather that many people think it does and are willing to try it as a solution to their marital disappointments. According to some social workers there are many who divorce each other for frivolous reasons or for minor annoyances which, in another day, would have been accepted as part of the responsibilities of family life. Family conflict, in short, has become a social problem because of the widespread belief that something can be done about it.

2. Inevitability of Conflict in Marriage

Conflict is an inevitable part of any ongoing social relationship, and as Bowman (1974) explains, marriage is no exception. Some conflict in marriage is normal and to be expected. It is hardly possible for two individuals to live in such an intimate union without conflict unless, of course both of them are "completely apathetic, accepting the relationship with bovine placidity" (p. 267). Fullerton (1977) supports Bowman's view: "Living with someone means living with the whole person, faults as well as virtues, under the best and worst of circumstances ... This being so, even the most loving husband and wife generate some hostile feelings toward each other" (p. 367). Each marriage partner has his or her own values, the things he or she considers important (Kluckhohn, 1958, pp. 63-72; Keeley, 1955, pp. 342-345; Jacobson, 1952, pp. 146-150).

Marriage creates many opportunities for tension, insecurity and stress. These emotions may erupt into open conflict, or they may be channeled or disguised and not fully expressed. Conflict in itself is neither good nor

bad. Indeed, social scientists are now taking the view that conflict may often strengthen the bonds of a social relationship and make it more rewarding (Blau, 1964, p. 301). They point out that it is through conflicts and their solutions that a family sets up and achieves its goals, decides on the division of labour and enables members to subordinate their individual interests to the welfare of the family as a whole.

Where all conflict is lacking family stagnation results. The dynamic progressive family is constantly facing, discussing, and co-operatively solving its problems. Consequently, conflict in this sense may be considered normal and functional. In McCary's view (1980), marriage, in order to have vitality, should have neither too little nor too much quarrelling." He goes on to explain that if there is too much quarrelling and hostility, the intimacy between the couple will be destroyed. If there is too little, then the partners "are being phony and insincere in their efforts to be all-loving and always nice to each other and there is no opportunity for their relationship to be one that is genuine and growth-producing" (p. 323).

Fullerton (1977, pp. 362-365) gives an interesting description of a couple experiencing a "rubber fence" marriage, i.e. a couple who are preoccupied with maintaining harmony and consensus. Such a couple act as if their interlocking conjugal roles form a closed system. The marriage becomes a self-sustaining world protected from the outer (presumably hostile) environment by a continuous boundary with no outlets. This boundary of relationship stretches to enable it to include all those behaviours that are complementary, but compresses to squeeze out all behaviours that are not shared. This elastic boundary is called a "rubber fence".

Such a "rubber-fence" marriage is both limiting and limited but it has the advantage of offering the security of the known and completely predictable. A person with low self-esteem, says Fullerton, is often eager to retreat behind the "rubber fence", into a carefully defined role structure. They feel threatened by novelty. In novel situations there is no clear-cut precedent for what wife or husband is expected to do. The person with low self-esteem, says Fullerton, feels anxious and uncomfortable unless there is a detailed set of instructions. Early in marriage such people agree to live "by the book" and settle on the details of the marital role each is expected to play making no allowance for possible surprises in life.

Couples caught up in such a marriage, continues Fullerton, direct a good deal of their energy toward meshing their behaviour and expectations, one into the other. Any personal characteristic of one partner that does not have a counterpart in the other is stripped away, so that there will be nothing to spoil the smooth fit of their lives.

For all their clinging together, the husband and wife in a "rubber fence" marriage do not enjoy each other. While it is true that there is little overt conflict in such a marriage, it is equally true that there is a lack of intense emotional expression. Such a marriage lacks humour and zest and any deviation from expected marital roles arouses concern.

Given that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of most marital relationships, the issue becomes not how to avoid it but how to resolve it in a constructive and growth-producing manner. As already noted, conflict may strengthen a relationship because, when satisfactorily resolved, it removes injustice. On the other hand, conflict can be divisive and break up relationships. It is the manner in which conflict is managed, says McCary (1980), that

determines whether it adds to the growth and depth of a relationship or whether it eventually leads to the divorce court or to a lifetime of apathetic indifference together (p. 323).

3. Marital Breakup : The Problem of Causation

What specifically causes marital breakup? It is unlikely, as Kephart (1981) points out, that the answer can be found in any single factor for "causes are generally thought of as interrelated links in a sequential chain of events"(p. 499). Thus, while the lawyer may state that sexual maladjustment is the chief cause of divorce, social workers and sociologists are skeptical of such pat explanations. If divorce is really caused by sexual maladjustment, why is it that the divorce rate has increased as sex education programmes have expanded? Similar arguments may be used when other simple, isolated causes of marital breakup are proposed.

For the sake of convenience the factors generally associated with marital discord will be examined from two perspectives - namely, the societal and the individual. Societal refers to those conditions associated with social and institutional structure such as economic and living conditions, disintegration of the extended family system, technological change and so on. Individual factors would include the various physical, intellectual, and personality components that come into play whenever two or more people interact (Elliott and Merrill, 1961, p. 359).

3.1 Societal Factors

3.1.1 Changing Family Functions

In earlier times the economic, educational, protective, religious, and

recreational functions were a built-in part of family life. Over the years, however, such functions have largely been taken over by outside agencies. The family, as a result, is less of a functional unit than formerly. Consequently, the reasons for keeping marriages intact are not as compelling as they once were.

3.1.2 Disintegration of the Extended Family

Resettlement and urban housing, due to its design and nature, can lead to the disintegration of families and communities (Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, p. 30). In the Indian community, this is particularly true as far as the extended family is concerned.

In the nuclear family, the husband and wife and their dependent children form a unit which lives on its own and which in the urban areas, is usually structurally isolated from other relatives who could give them moral support and increase the field of their interaction. They are therefore very dependent on each other with the result that the interaction level between them is very high. This is especially so for the wife who remains at home and does not have a wide circle of friends or relatives with whom she can interact.

Any friction between the members of such a nuclear family becomes magnified because the majority of the individual's intimate primary relationships is disrupted by such friction. In the extended family where there were many additional primary relationships, friction, whether temporary or permanent, was relatively less important since it affected a smaller part of the individual's primary relationships.

3.1.3 Poverty and Poor Living Conditions

Although there are some very wealthy Indian families in the RSA, a significant proportion of the Indian community lives under conditions of extreme poverty. According to the estimates reported by the Committee responsible for drafting a national family programme about 48 000 Indian families had to cope with poor living conditions in 1980 - no reasonable housing, inadequate provision of clean water, poor sanitation and irregular removal of refuse. There was also a housing backlog of 193 000 units. The widespread lack of adequate accommodation is most evident in the urban areas where many families are compelled to share houses with other families. A considerable number of families are forced to live in shacks, garages and out-buildings at unreasonably high rentals while waiting for houses supplied by the Local Municipality. In many areas facilities like police stations, shopping centres, postal services and recreational services hardly exist. (Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, Draft Report, 1984 - Annexure 2, p. 29).

The overcrowding, which is the result of the lack of adequate accommodation, leads to a lack of privacy which is not conducive to a healthy marriage and family life. Tension and friction in the home increases. Members find it difficult if not impossible to withdraw from the group even for short periods in order to relax on their own (Rip, 1978, p. 64).

Lack of sufficient financial resources and/or poor financial planning can also contribute to conflict in marriage and family life. The term "sufficient" is, of course, relative. If the couple are accustomed to a certain standard of living and due to a decrease in income or an increase in expenditure (because perhaps of illness or some or other emergency) they have to adjust

to a new situation, this can, but need not, result in tension between the couple.

Other couples, especially in the lower income group, will always have to choose between what to do with their available income and this, although common to all, is more marked for them. Such constant cent-counting leads to a feeling of frustration and tension in the family. The tension can eventually affect the role performance of the marriage partners. Where a couple, however, expect the position to improve, they do not feel so frustrated about the deprivation. Where there is no hope of improvement, the situation has a more demoralising effect. Unemployment and a cessation of income can have the same effect.

An increasing number of Indian women are entering the open labour market and they are compelled, in cases where the extended family has disintegrated, to leave their children in the care of older siblings and neighbours.

A recent survey of 992 Black women factory workers - African, Indian and Coloured - in the Durban-Pinetown metropolitan area, revealed some of the hardships encountered by this group (Institute of Black Research, 1985, pp. 7-101). One of the interviewees reported as follows: "We almost always live far from the factories, and travel long distances and spend a lot of money and a lot of time to get to work. We sleep very little, we work at least eight hours in the factory and eight hours at home. We do not have the time to read, to listen to the radio, to watch T.V., or go to the cinema. We do not have money or time to take holidays."

Another woman states: "Most of us have not gone beyond primary school. A few of us have never been to school. A few of us have matric. Most of us

had to leave school early because our parents could not afford to keep us there."

The report goes on to indicate that seventy-eight percent of these women earn fifty rand or less, per week. Among the needs which the women express are the following:

- (a) Time to sleep and rest and time to spend with their children;
- (b) Freedom from worry that their children are unsafe while they are at work;
- (c) Sufficient creches and nursery schools for their children;
- (d) More clinics and more doctors close to their homes so that sick children can be attended to in time and before it is too late. The infant mortality rate for Indians is 28,0 per 1000 births. This is considered to be an exceptionally high rate.
- (e) Higher wages;
- (f) Better transport.

Continuing economic worries triggered by the unusual inflation-recession economy of the past few years have, in all likelihood, contributed the failure of many Indian marriages. In September 1981 there were 2 484 registered unemployed Indians compared with 3 855 in September 1982. Living in a minority group, living in poverty, being in a society during turmoil, are all factors accounting for marital instability (Department of Constitutional Development and Planning - Draft Report Annexure, 3, p. 28).

Hopefully, conditions will soon begin to improve. According to projections, the birth rate is declining and can reach 14,4 per 1 000 of the population

by the year 2020. During the period 1970 to 1978 the number of children per family decreased from 4,02 to 2,79. This may be attributed to the socio-economic development of Indians. In 1982 their average earnings increased by 29,7% compared to previous years (Department of Constitutional Development and Planning - Draft Report 1984, Annexure 2, p. 28).

3.1.4 The Changing Status of Women

The upward trend in the divorce statistics has been considered by some observers to be closely related to the changing status of women. They believe that the more freedoms women gain, the less willing they become to accept an unsatisfactory marriage, and as their economic status improves, they have an alternative to continuing with an unhappy marriage.

At one time the great majority of women were financially dependent on their husbands. Unless they could rely on alimony as part of the divorce settlement, they could hardly dare to divorce. Changes in the system of economic production have made divorce a much more practical alternative than it was in past years. In the traditional family a man took a wife and had children in order to strengthen the family economically. In agricultural societies husbands and wives were mutually dependent. The man needed a woman to help with the work, and the woman needed a man with access to some land. In time husbands and wives began working outside the home and mutual dependence decreased. Not so long ago most husbands believed that wives worked only if they "had to work", meaning that they worked only because they had inadequate husbands who could not, or would not, support their families. A working wife whose husband had a good job was considered a greedy opportunist who was taking a job away from a man who needed it to feed his family (Coleman and Cressey, 1980, pp. 126-129).

Today many more women feel themselves able to manage on their own, if they have to. Partly as a result of the various women's rights movements that have developed from time to time and partly as a result of such other developments as the national need for women's labour during, and immediately after, the two world wars, more women have come to feel that it is appropriate for them to work. More job opportunities have also become available to them. The result has been a change in the man-woman relationship which impinges on marriage. Women, generally, are no longer meekly accepting a second-class position (Hacker, 1957, pp. 227-233). Nor are they stifling their protests when they encounter lack of support from their husband in money matters. Often they are unwilling to remain married if there is persistent cruelty, gambling, economic irresponsibility, drinking and physical violence. All women, and indeed men, now expect more from marriage. Attitudes such as "the father is the head of the family" and a "woman's place is in the home" are less true now than they once were (Elliott and Merrill, 1961, p. 342).

The woman with small children may still find it difficult to make the child-care arrangements that would allow her to be self-supporting, and the older woman with little previous work experience may find it hard even to imagine where she might fit into the labour force, but most women now have reason to believe that they can achieve economic independence if they want it. Some married women already make enough money to assure their economic independence. Not only are they working but their incomes approach or exceed the incomes of their husbands. These women, should they decide on a divorce, are probably less likely than others to change their minds. It is not known whether the divorce rate is actually higher in such cases, but it seems evident that the woman's fear of getting a divorce is lessened. Indeed, the woman's new economic independence has made not only the wife, but the husband as well, more

willing to entertain the idea of divorce even where children are present. It has also opened up the prospect of easy remarriage. If the second wife works, it becomes financially easier to support two households.

Women are also acquiring individual aims which make them less single-minded in their devotion to family goals. This on its own is enough to make marriage less stable than it once was. Any group - even if it consists of only a married couple - is weakened when its members have important individual aims that compete with shared goals. Because family goals have decreased in importance, the emotional attachment of the individual members of the family to one another has now become the chief bond which keeps them together. Romantic love between the sexes has thus come to have new and unprecedented value for modern man. However, unless this is supplemented by considerable sharing of common goals and activities, it is unlikely to provide an adequate foundation for stable family life.

3.1.5 The Philosophy of Happiness

Many modern couples have come to think of happiness as the principal goal of marriage (Kephart, 1981, p. 499). If happiness fails to materialise to the degree expected, divorce or separation may result. Individuals want the freedom to end a marriage which they consider is gradually destroying them. In this connection Mead (1949) writes as follows: "... no choice is irrevocable . All persons should be allowed to move if they don't like their present home, change schools, change friends, change political parties, change religious affiliations. With freedom to choose goes the right to change one's mind. If past mistakes are to be reparable in every other field of human relations, why should marriage be the exception?" (p. 334).

3.1.6 Decline in Moral and Religious Sanctions

Another factor which has contributed to the rising divorce rate could be the secularization of western thought, which over the centuries has diminished the claim of all institutions, including marriage, to being sacred and inviolable. Modern man tends not to regard any particular group or institution as having an absolute claim on his loyalty and devotion. It is evident that in present-day Western society people are as committed as they have always been to marriage as a desirable institution. One has only to consider the high rate of remarriage among divorcees in order to note this fact (Glick, 1957, pp. 139-140). However there is weakened commitment to a particular marriage, and there is a willingness to "cut loose" and try again. Attitudes toward divorce have changed. Only fifty years ago divorce was seen as an immoral act, an affront to "decent" people. The divorced woman was stigmatized as a "grass widow" and her virtue exposed to public question. Public sentiment was so strongly against divorce that it was forbidden in some countries, while in many others it was very difficult to obtain one. Today divorce carries less stigma and the consensus seems to be that it is better to separate than to continue in an unhappy marriage.

As attitudes have changed, divorces have become easier to obtain. This for example can be noted in South Africa's new Divorce Act of 1979 (Keech, 1984, pp. 177-179). Under this Act a marriage can be dissolved on two grounds:

- (a) Irretrievable breakdown of the marriage
- (b) The mental illness or the continuous unconsciousness of a spouse.

Organised religion too has become more permissive. The Roman Catholic Church, once immovable in its opposition to divorce, is slowly changing. Some Roman

Catholic priests have proposed increased acceptance of secular divorce in cases in which continuation of the marriage would be intolerable.

Reduction of the various pressures against getting divorced has also been facilitated by a declining veneration of marriage as a kind of calling, a service to society and to God (Weiss, 1975, p. 8).

3.2 Individual Factors

Individual factors which may be associated with marital breakup are many and varied. Some of these include sexual incompatibility, personality problems, infidelity, excessive drinking, financial difficulties, in-law problems and so on.

Since the main focus of the present study relates to factors such as these, they would be discussed in greater detail in the chapters that follow.

There is some indication that the so-called causes of divorce may not be the same for men as for women. There is also evidence to suggest that the types of complaint heard in lower-class divorce cases are different from those voiced in the middle and upper classes. The latter classes, for instance, seem to have more "personality conflicts", while lower-class grievances often include drunkenness and physical abuse.

Serious tensions are likely to arise when persons of different class levels marry (Hollingshead, 1950, pp. 619-627). The sub-culture of each social class is in some respects a world of its own, and persons grow up with different standards on matters ranging from manners to sex behaviour. Wives who expect certain niceties of "good manners" are thus outraged when their husbands pick

their teeth at the table. A woman who has been reared in a middle-class home shrinks when her husband strikes a child. Well educated husbands wince when their less educated wives make glaring grammatical mistakes before company. Religious observances, eating customs, and recreational habits all vary in the different classes. They may intensify marital tensions.

Class difficulties are also often expressed in sexual relations. In marriages between middle-class wives and lower-class husbands, the wife may be disgusted by the sexual advances of her husband and think him crude and vulgar. Where the woman marries a man of a higher social level, she may be the one who seems "crude and vulgar" to her more "refined" spouse. The wife may be ashamed of her spontaneous sexual advances and retreat into a restrained gentility, in which neither she nor her husband can enter fully into the sexual relationship. Persons from different class backgrounds thus interpret the behaviour of their mates differently (Vincent, 1956, pp. 355-356).

Tensions may also arise when the patterns of the parental families are incompatible or conflicting (Ingersoll, 1948, pp. 225-302; Jansen, 1952, pp. 727-733). The husband may have grown up in a family where the father was dominant and the mother submissive. His wife, on the other hand, may have lived in a family where the authority was largely vested in the wife and the husband played a submissive role. Each person incorporated a different pattern of family authority into his personality and brought a different set of role expectations to the marriage. The husband expected the wife to be submissive while the wife expected the same behaviour from him. Both are disappointed and marital tensions result.

4. The Cumulative Nature of Tensions

The process of alienation, say Elliott and Merrill (1961), is cumulative in that "tensions accumulate, piling irritation upon irritation, humiliation upon humiliation, and anger upon anger" (p. 437). The "tempo of bitterness" steadily increases as the mutual affection of the spouses disintegrates. After each episode there occurs a redefinition of the marital relationship but at a level of greater instability. The trend toward permanent separation is periodically interrupted by a conscious attempt on the part of the wife or husband or both to adjust to living together. In a marriage in which unsolved conflicts accumulate, the gulf between husband and wife widens as time goes on. The cumulative nature of these tensions means that a slight incident toward the end of the alienation process could produce a disproportionate outburst (Waller 1952, p. 539-557). Soon individuals and relatives not originally associated with the conflict are drawn in. Members inside the family circle and in-laws tend to line up on one side or the other. As alienation increases still further these outsiders may stir up new tensions and worsen an already bad situation.

5. The Conflict Spiral

Since the focus of this study is on marital conflict, it is essential to examine more closely the various stages through which such conflict passes as it escalates. The following account is based on personal observation, interviews with social workers, and literature studies (Ryder et al., 1971; Sprey 1969; Rosenstock and Kutner 1969; Goode 1976).

5.1 Latent Stage

In this stage the differences between the spouses are not overtly recognised,

discussed, or dealt with realistically. Irritations and resentments slowly accumulate and smoulder and lead to progressive disenchantment. Although this latent stage may persist indefinitely, it frequently evolves into a series of further stages.

5.2 The Trigger

Sooner or later, if a new development intrudes to upset the balance, one or both of the spouses may be overwhelmed. Something felt as threatening suddenly reactivates earlier dissatisfactions and the normal defenses cannot be maintained. One spouse can no longer serve as a need satisfier to the other. The balance is therefore upset. This added stress triggers some dramatic new action - some direct, though perhaps ill-advised, problem-solving effort.

5.3 The Clash

This unexpected, usually sudden action precipitates an open clash or "blowup". Under its impact, the submerged conflict can no longer be kept under control, and long-suppressed emotions burst forth. The sense of threat becomes mutual. To the more unaware partner, this crisis may seem incomprehensible. It is "a bolt out of the blue." To the other, it represents an attempt at solving a smouldering problem. At this point the road appears to fork. Some go one way, others another. The clash itself may set in motion readjustments long overdue or the conflict may stabilize at some intermediate level that seems to meet the particular needs of a couple. Other couples attempt to return to their prior state of avoidance and denial, but the truce is an uneasy one. Some abandon investment in the marriage and seek gratification elsewhere. Some vacillate between open conflict and reconciliation. Others commit their full energies to scoring a victory over their partner.

5.4 Spread of the Conflict

If both partners choose open confrontation and retaliation, the tempo accelerates. Each round of attack and counterattack, each increase in demands, each session of increasingly frank and hostile criticism leaves a residue of smouldering anger and a bitter aftertaste. Increasingly, blame is not shared but mutually projected. The goal becomes victory, not accommodation. Each seeks to restore his own sense of adequacy at the expense of the other. Flexibility is reduced and negative behaviour reinforced. Thus exploration for new solutions is blocked. While some try to retard the spiralling conflict by making repeated attempts to reach out to the spouse, reconciliation is usually temporary. After an interlude, the quarrels begin again. What may have begun as a struggle confined to one area may in time spread to all areas of family living.

5.5 Search for Allies

Eventually, if the couple cannot solve the conflict alone, they reach out for allies. If there are children, they are likely to be drawn in - perhaps as substitute spouses, confidants, or accomplices or, perhaps, as judges, mediators, or bearers of messages. Regardless of the role they adopt, the children are burdened with thankless and hopeless tasks that take a heavy toll. If the conflict persists long enough, the secrecy norms that protect the privacy of the family are eventually violated. Family boundaries are pierced and the fiction of solidarity is broken. The purpose of the move may be constructive - to seek counsel, essential resources, or solace and reassurance from friends. On the other hand, it may be to recruit allies, to enhance power resources, or to confirm the rightness of a cause.

With each expansion in the circle of allies, the positions of the opposing camps become more polarized and less subject to compromise. Eventually, the pile-up of hostility and the erosion of rewards is so great that the marital balance is destroyed and the continuation of the marriage made untenable.

5.6 The Search for Alternate Sources of Gratification

Instead of open conflict, some partners look for vicarious fulfillment through their children or for alternate gratifications in work, social activities, or another love affair. But the more one partner builds an independent life, the more he reduces his emotional investment in the marriage. Eventually, he comes to see his spouse as an encumbrance, if not an active threat.

5.7 The Dissolution of the Marriage

The final stage of the conflict comes when at least one of the partners is sufficiently motivated to take public responsibility for the decision to separate, to pay its price, and to impose it on the partner. At this point, one or both engage a lawyer as a further ally in the conflict. Usually the beginning of formal legal action represents a point of no return. Even before the decree itself is final, it is nearly impossible to reverse the spiral. A mutually satisfying marital balance cannot be rebuilt when nothing remains of the bright promise of courtship except feelings of bitterness and disappointment.

6. The Expression of Conflict

According to McCary (1980) there are two basic types of marital quarrels - one destructive and the other constructive - and the type that characterizes

a couple's interaction will determine the effect of marital conflict on the individuals in the marriage and on the marriage itself. Destructive quarrelling concentrates on the egos of the combatants and is belittling and punishing, and alienating. Productive quarrelling, on the other hand, is directed at the issues on which the couple differ and avoids hitting the sensitive spots of each individual (p. 324).

Conflict may be expressed in different ways. Frequently, manipulative strategies are used. A person may control his marital partner through such devices as the use of sympathy or praise, through comparison with others, and emotional withholding.

Perhaps the most widely recognised forms of emotional withholding in marriage lie in the sexual area. Lack of sexual responsiveness in wives and impotence in husbands are the most obvious examples assuming, of course, these conditions are not the result of some organic or deep-seated psychological factor. What better way, asks Leslie (1967), is there for a spouse, who cannot show his hostility openly, to hurt his partner than by failing to respond to her sexually. The same holds true for the wife. She may claim to be "too tired" to be interested in sex. Although all fatigue obviously cannot be seen to represent covert conflict, Leslie says that whenever the fatigue is recurrent, and cannot be accounted for medically, problems in the relationship cannot be ruled out (p. 476).

There are still other forms of withholding, i.e. ways of making one's partner suffer without appearing to do so. The spouse who is hypochondriacal often unwittingly uses his illness to control his partner and to deny the partner the full joy of living. At less extreme levels, the whole range of psychosomatic symptoms - rashes, allergies, headaches, ulcers, obesity, almost any

unexplained symptom - may represent marital conflict. In very minor forms, such problems may plague all marriages.

One problem here is that one cannot always be certain that the psychosomatic symptoms are the result of problems in the marriage. Among men, the underlying problems may derive more from conditions at work than at home. For women, they may stem from frustrations encountered outside the home; and in both sexes, they may be tied to problems with parents or children. Much overt conflict, says Mowrer (1955), is symbolic of some underlying area of behaviour other than the one in which the overt conflict is manifested (p. 355).

Mental hygienists often state that covert conflict is potentially more damaging to people and to relationships than is open fighting. When people quarrel they are at least aware that they have a problem. The chances are good that they will find some sort of solution to the problem. When the problem is masked as something else, however, it may take its toll without the source of the difficulty ever being discovered. The loss of efficiency and personal dissatisfaction resulting from covert conflict may be greater in some ways than open conflict which leads to marital dissolution.

7. Wife Abuse

A phenomenon that needs to be considered in any study relating to marital breakup is wife abuse. It is difficult to ascertain whether there is more wife abuse today than there was in the past. It may be simply that more cases are now being reported. Whatever the answer, the problem is a serious one and deserves special, in-depth study in its own right. Some impression of the widespread nature of the problem is gained when one considers the

fact that more than 170 shelter homes for abused women have been established in the USA since 1975 (Kephart 1981, p. 500). There is no reason to believe that the need for such shelter homes is any less necessary in South Africa.

When a husband uses violence against his wife, it is not unusual for the wife to stay with him - even though there is the possibility that she will be beaten again. Why do wives facing such a threatening future insist on staying with their husbands? One possible answer is that many wives have no place to go. Gelles (1976) in his classical study "Abused Wives : Why Do They Stay?" writes as follows : "Three major factors influence the actions of abused wives. The less severe and less frequent the violence, the more the wife remains with her husband. Secondly, the more a wife was struck as a child by her parents, the more likely she is to remain with her abusive husband. Lastly, the fewer resources a wife has and the less power she has, the more likely she is to stay with her violent husband. In addition, external constraint influences the actions of abused wives" (p. 659).

Some wives refuse either to get a divorce or to seek outside help because of "loss of face". Such an attitude hampers research, and lack of research information, in turn, handicaps a social action programme. Nevertheless this does not minimise the importance of wife abuse as a factor in marital breakup.

8. Divorce : The Logical Solution in Some Cases

From what has been written up to this point, it should be evident that not all marital conflict can be resolved through honest effort and open communi-

cation. There are some instances in which divorce is the only way by which a couple can achieve individual growth, inspite of honest efforts at compromise and mutual understanding. Not all conflict can be satisfactorily resolved, and a mark of maturity is the ability to accept the fact that there are some areas of disagreement and disappointment in one's marriage that cannot be resolved. If the areas of disagreement far outnumber the areas of agreement, a dissolution of the marriage may be the wisest decision (McCary, 1980, p. 344). Divorce, says Rip (1978), is "the end product of a process of disorganisation which has been growing for a considerable time" (p. 16).

8.1 Divorce

An argument that is often heard in both professional and lay circles is that the increase in divorce rates represents an increase in unhappiness or maladjustment in marriage. It is difficult to verify such an opinion since there is no reliable method for determining the extent to which marital happiness existed in the past. Moreover, divorce is socially and personally more acceptable today than it was in the past. Consequently, the increase in divorce may be influenced by a growing unwillingness to endure unhappiness in marriage.

The divorce rate for Whites in the Republic of South Africa, calculated for 1 000 married couples in the population, has risen from 1.1 in 1913 (the earliest year for which such data is available) to 6,5 in 1961 and to 11,2 in 1975. Thus in sixty-two years the rate increased tenfold. Among Asians the divorce rate has increased from 2,4 in 1978 to 5,2 in 1983 per 1 000 of the population.

An important point to note is that the legal barriers to divorce are not as

formidable as they were in the past. The new divorce legislation introduced in the RSA in 1979 has resulted in a spurt of divorces. It is, as Gerdes (1981), rightly points out, still too early for meaningful comparisons to be made with rates of previous years. It appears to be generally true however, that an easing of the divorce laws results in an immediate increase in the number of divorces, as was the case in England and Wales when the divorce law was liberalised in 1971 (Hart, 1976). The immediate increase might have been caused by couples who had previously been unable, under the old legislation, to find adequate grounds for divorce. The new divorce rates may also be a truer reflection of the extent of marital breakdown. Gerdes (1981) urges caution when interpreting significant changes in the divorce rate, since divorce is a multi-casual phenomenon. Changes in legislation are therefore more likely to reflect prevailing conditions than to cause significant change (p. 202).

8.2 Prejudice Against Divorce

Divorce is often viewed as a social problem. Frequently the assumption is that divorce is destructive to both the personal and social make up of a nation's population. Waller and Hill (1951) points out that divorce prejudice, like other prejudices, shows itself in such common expressions as "the alarming rise in the tide of divorce," "the divorce evil," and "the unhappy children of the divorced" (p. 537). Implied in a great deal of the thinking about divorce is that it is a personal and social problem and should be alleviated or eliminated for the betterment of the individual and society.

Many of the contemporary values against divorce reflects traditional family values that have limited application to today's marriage. Often implied in negative attitudes toward divorce is the assumption that marriage is secon-

dary to the greater family unit and functions. However, present-day marriage is based to a great extent on the ego-needs of the individual, and the individual may feel that his marriage is not successful unless these needs are satisfied. The attitude many have today about divorce, says Koos (1957), is that if the needs, expectations, and values "cannot be met, realized, and adjusted, there seems - for those who can accept the idea of divorce - little reason to continue the marriage" (p. 309). The ego-need factor that is related to divorce is consistent with the ego-need factor which leads to marriage.

An important point about divorce which needs to be emphasized relates to counselling. Some workers believe that when a couple want a divorce they should be given counselling which will help resolve their marital problems so that divorce will no longer be necessary. Davis writes that "those who believe that the incidence of divorce can be greatly reduced through the counselling of couples after they have already sought divorce are probably mistaken. By that time marital discord or ennui has usually grown too deep to be banished by verbal discussion" (Davis, 1957, p. 101). Marriage counselling probably has its greatest potential in the early stages of alienation before the marriage has reached a point of no return. The very fact that a couple have reached a stage in their relationship where divorce has been discussed and seen as a means of resolving their difficulty means that even if they remain married their marriage will often have been altered. Certainly some marriages return from the brink of divorce and become reasonably satisfactory to the individuals, but it is questionable whether this happens in a large number of cases. Some couples are probably misled into maintaining their marriages when they might in the long run be better off divorced.

The overall picture appears to be that divorce among Indians is not yet institutionally accepted, but is in the process of becoming so. There are

still many who believe that an unhappy marriage is preferable to divorce, particularly if children are involved.

8.3 Children and Divorce

Even though life after divorce is a new life, ties with the old life may remain for some time and the most important one, perhaps, is the ongoing tie that exists between the former spouses because of their shared interest in the children born during their marriage. They may no longer be wife and husband, but they are still Mother and Father.

During 1983, the number of children involved in white divorces in South Africa was 20 313. The corresponding figure for Asians was 1 185, an increase of 609 over the figure for 1979. These figures are high enough to justify interest in their welfare (Marriage and Divorces in the RSA, 1979-1983, Department of Statistics).

The basic question often raised is : Is it better for the child when the parents remain together in an unsuccessful marriage, or when they end the marriage and reduce their personal marital frustrations? No simple answer can be given because the questions themselves have so many dimensions and a whole host of factors need to be taken into account.

One common belief is that the couple should put aside their marriage role problems and maintain their parental roles. Implied in this belief is that the marriage roles are secondary to the parental roles. Yet in a society that places great emphasis on personal ego-need satisfaction in marriage, the placing of marriage in a secondary position may be difficult for the married person to accept. The crucial question again is whether children

"gain" by having their parents remain married. A couple who are unhappy in their husband and wife roles are usually going to reflect their feelings for each other in ways which will influence their relationship to their children. One may also question whether a person dissatisfied with one basic role can stop that from negatively influencing another of his basic roles. How can an unhappy wife be a good mother?

There has been much publicity of the fact that children from divorced homes make up an undue proportion of delinquents. As a result of such reports, the public generally blames divorce for these problems. This kind of thinking is questionable when one considers that divorce itself is merely a legal stamp marking the end of a long period of conflict. Seen in this light divorce, far from being the cause of children's problems, may really be the solution. As Landis (1975) rightly points out, the damage to the child was probably done long before the divorce decree was sought and might have been avoided had the divorce come sooner (p. 482). The damage to the child comes from perpetual conflict between parents and from the fact that he is often used as a pawn. Professionals in the field of child welfare have observed that parents in conflict are rarely fair to the child. Each parent will try to influence the child against the other parent. In some cases, one parent will use the child as an excuse for holding the marriage together. Without any regard for his feelings or interest, a parent may pour his miseries and condemnations of the other parent into the innocent child's ears.

The existing evidence suggests that the chances of psychological damage to children resulting from the divorce of their parents is no greater than that in children in unbroken homes marked by continual marital tension (Landis 1960, pp. 7-13). The after-effects depend a great deal on the kind of relationship that preceded the breakup. It is not unlikely in many cases

that the effects on the child might have been more harmful had the divorce not taken place.

A study undertaken by Nye (1957) showed that in many cases children living with the mother who loved them were better adjusted than those living with both parents who wrangled bitterly and continually. In other instances, the child was probably "relieved of a parent unable or unwilling to play the role of parent, and, if the remaining parent remarries, may receive one who can and will play the role satisfactorily" (p. 356-361).

Landis (1960) has found that the effect of divorce on the child varies greatly with the age of the child at the time of divorce - it is less traumatic for younger children and the child who does not perceive the divorce as a form of rejection (pp. 7-13).

8.4 The Effects of Divorce on Husband and Wife

Most divorced persons, say Blood and Blood (1978), feel relieved when their marriages are terminated (p. 581). However, the adjustment is often difficult. Krantzler (1973) speaks of divorce as "the death of a relationship" and suggests that a time of grief is essential for emotional healing just as when an actual person dies. In divorce, the individual is not necessarily mourning the fact that the ex-spouse is gone or wishing that he or she would return. What is happening is grief over the loss of the rewards no longer held out by the relationship, a realization that "the way we were" has ended (p. 85). Feelings of sadness and moments of nostalgia come up. Yet for many couples an unsatisfactory marriage can be more punishing than divorce. Krantzler goes on to point out that divorce sometimes has the advantage of opening the way for a more creative and fulfilling life that would otherwise have been

impossible.

Before proceeding to a study of the factors which underlie marital conflict among Hindus in the Durban metropolitan area, it is essential to discuss the broader aspects of marriage and family life in the Hindu community. Such a discussion will provide the reader with a knowledge of the Hindu view of marriage and its purpose, its link to religion and the modifications which are taking place in response to changing needs and circumstances. These aspects form the subject matter of Chapter Four.

SUMMARY

Conflict is an inevitable part of any ongoing social relationship and marriage is no exception. Conflict in itself is neither good nor bad. Where all conflict is lacking family stagnation results. On the other hand, too much quarrelling and hostility is likely to destroy the intimacy between a couple.

Given that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of most marital relationships, the issue becomes not how to avoid it but how to resolve it in a constructive and growth-producing manner. Conflict has the potential of strengthening a relationship because, when satisfactorily resolved, it removes injustice.

Any discussion relating to the causes of marital breakup generally focuses on two perspectives, viz., societal and individual. Societal factors which operate in the case of a number of Hindu couples include changing family functions, disintegration of the family system, poverty and poor living conditions, the changing status of women and a decline in moral and religious

sanctions.

Individual factors which may be associated with marital breakup are many and varied. Some of these include sexual incompatibility, personality problems, infidelity, excessive drinking, financial difficulties, in-law problems and so on.

The alienation process is generally a slow cumulation of conflicts and disagreements, accompanied by the psychological withdrawal of one or both spouses.

It needs to be noted that not all marital conflict can be resolved through honest effort and open communication. There are some instances in which dissolution of the marriage may be the wisest decision and the only way by which the couple can achieve individual growth.

There is a definite need to encourage many members of the Hindu community to shed their prejudice against divorce. It is necessary to point out to them that divorce sometimes has the advantage of opening the way for a more creative and fulfilling life. Even the children may be better off with one parent than living under daily conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE IN THE HINDU COMMUNITY

1. Hindu Marriage and its Spiritual Idealism

"We take each other to love, and to cherish,
in sickness and health, for better for worse
until death do us part."

The Christian concept of marriage is intended to last for life, whereas under Hindu *Shastric* law marriage is deemed to be a sacramental bond continuing up to heaven (Sanghvi, 1978, pp. 178-179).

Marriage among Hindus has a heavenly prototype in the primordial joining together of the Vedic gods, Soma (who sustains the Earth) and Surya (who sustains the Heavens). This divine couple sanction and participate in human marriage and lay down the rules of truth, fidelity and chastity in harmony with the cosmic laws manifest in heaven and on earth (Muckerjee, 1957, p. 186).

The marital ideal translates itself into action through the aid of many symbols, stereotypes, catchphrases and slogans that are popular in Indian society. Muckerjee (1957) mentions some of the following:

- (i) "Man and woman fuse into the Inseparable One, Siva-Sakti."
- (ii) "Be like Sati-Savitri," a greeting which is exchanged between Indian women.
- (iii) "Be devoted to your parents like the son of the blind hermit couple."

(iv) "Be brothers like Rama and Lakshmana."

(v) "My mother is the goddess Parvati, my father is the god Siva."

These social stereotypes represent abbreviated phrases of popular speech that, through implied ideas and sentiments, quickly define marriage and family situations and also serve as symbols of moral norms in Indian marriage and family life. Beyond and above the human models are the eternally good and perfect couples of gods and goddesses, Siva and Sakti, and Vishnu and Lakshmi, whose biographies are given in the various *Puranas*^(a) The entire moral and spiritual resources of Indian culture are harnessed for the elevation of the marital relationship to the Mother and Father of the universe (p. 186).

Hindu religion and custom rest ultimately upon the *Vedas*^(b) (Abeille, 1974, p. 267). According to the *Rigveda* (the hymn of creation), the aims of Hindu marriage, in order of importance, are *dharma* (the performance of religious rites), *praja* (the raising of children), and *rati* (physical satisfaction) (Reddy, 1978, p. 16; Kapadia, 1966, p. 167).

Thus marriage is desired not so much for sex or progeny, as for obtaining a partner for the fulfillment of one's religious duties.

(a) There are eighteen recognised Puranas developed from Vedic writings and dealing with history, cosmogony, beliefs and rituals. Unlike the Vedas, they are not regarded as of divine origin but as the writings of different *Rishis* (holy men) who expounded, in elaborate detail, religion and social life for the masses.

(b) The Vedas derived from the Sanskrit word "veda", meaning knowledge or sacred lore, are the most ancient of the sacred books of the Hindus. The oldest and the most important of these is the *Rig-Vedas* which was compiled sometime between 1500 and 1200 B.C. It comprises more than one thousand hymns which provide us with valuable glimpses of the rules and customs prevalent in the early Vedic era.

The ancient sages considered marriage to be the most sacred sacrament and one that was irrevocable and indissoluble. This is indeed a very lofty ideal and one which does not seem to provide for the problems which may arise after marriage. This view, however, needs to be seen in the context of the times. Earlier on, marriage was considered to be a social duty toward the family and the community and there was little or no attention given to the interests of the individual (Bannerjee, 1979, p. 158). This is very different from the situation as it exists today.

The ideal of *pativrata* (being devoted to the husband alone) implies not merely fidelity to the husband, but also services to the husband as the only duty of the wife and her main purpose in life (Kapadia, 1966, p. 169). The *puranas* led her to believe that there were thrilling miracles which a woman could perform with her *pativrata*. An instance is quoted where Savitri won back her husband after his death by sheer *pativrata*. The puranic literature also records another instance of a wife's devotion to her husband; he was suffering from leprosy and at his request his wife carried him on her shoulder to the house of a prostitute. In view of the sacredness and permanency of the marriage the wife was obliged to remain with her husband even if he was a person who was cruel, ill-tempered, diseased, consumed an excessive amount of alcohol, or even committed adultery or murder. On the death of her husband she either followed him by immolating herself on his funeral pyre or led a chaste life even if she was still very young. She had to renounce all pleasures in life. A husband, on the other hand, was expected to marry immediately after the death of his wife since it was considered that the company of a wife was essential to enable him to keep the sacred fire of marriage kindled. In accordance with this belief ancient Hindu law did not confer equal status on the two partners of a marriage (Rao, 1978, p.58). The view "*nastre sivatantay marhati*", which means "women do not deserve any freedom and equal

rights with men", held sway in virtually every walk of life (p. 58). According to the ancient law-giver, Manu, who lived about four hundred years before Christ, "The father protects a woman in her childhood, her husband during her youth, and her son in her old age. A woman is never fit for independence." (Abeille, 1974,p. 266).

The social background provided by the authoritarian joint family, provided for and accommodated practices such as child marriage, polygamy, irrevocability of marriage and denial of remarriage to widows. In the ancient Hindu society of peace and plenty, where most of the people were involved mainly in religious and agricultural activities, the older members of the joint family protected the women, who were married into their family on their recommendation, irrespective of whether she was a child wife, a co-wife or a widow. The matrimonial law was laid down by the ancient sages "with an optimistic view unhampered by pessimistic fears and was fitting in only with the ancient set-up" (Komalan, 1978, p. 260). However, as the ancient society began to change, the laws began to lag behind and became inappropriate for newer conditions. Practices such as child marriage, polygamy, the denial of divorce resulted in hardship for women. In essence, they were merely the housekeepers and the child-bearers and were very much at the mercy of men (Rao, 1978, p. 58).

At the beginning of the present century people became more conscious and concerned about the injustices done to women. Individual efforts by social reformers and collective efforts by various movements and missions in India were initiated with the aim of improving the lot of women. Various statutes such as the Hindu Widows Remarriage Act of 1856 and the Child Marriage Act of 1929 were passed. But the culmination of such statutory measures was the passing of the comprehensive Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 which gives Hindu women in

India statutory protection and equality in the marital state. Through the Act marriage, which was previously regarded as an indissoluble religious union of man and wife, was transformed into a union of convenience (Rajaraman, 1978, p. 110). Monogamy was made compulsory and the practice of child marriages was abolished. Moreover, it was stipulated that the parties to be married should not be *sapindas* to each other and should not come within the prohibited degrees of relationship.^(a) This has been done so as to avoid the practice of incestuous and immoral alliances between persons closely related by blood (Chatterjee, 1972, pp. 369-70). Another significant feature of the Hindu Marriage Act is that it provides for new matrimonial remedies such as judicial separation, annulment of marriage, and the right to obtain divorce (Rao, 1978, p. 60). Today the hierarchical and authoritarian structure of the family in India is giving way to a situation of equality and mutual respect between husband and wife (Bagga, 1978, p. 126).

Hinduism in South Africa today is very similar to Hinduism in India (Meer, 1969, p. 145). Much of the cultural content in the way of life of Indian South Africans has been consciously and deliberately derived and selected from traditional Indian sources (Kuper, 1960, xix). The social system of India, particularly caste and village organisation, has been replaced by the social system of their immediate South African milieu with its class structure and competitive individual economy, but many of the more personal values are extraneous and distinct from the values of the dominant white group. Religious rites and forms of worship are predetermined by the linguistic grouping.

(a) Marriage is prohibited between any two persons who have a common ancestor on the father's or on the mother's side, these prohibitions depending primarily on whether the immigrants came from the northern or southern areas of India. South African Hindi speaking families do not, as a general rule, permit marriages between persons related within four to six degrees on the father's side, and three to four on the mother's, and all cousin marriages are forbidden, though occasionally marriages of cousins do occur. The Tamil and Telegu groups, on the other hand, permit close kin marriage. However, these marriages are becoming more rare mainly because of the belief that close in-breeding has detrimental effects on the offspring. (Kuper, H. : Indian People in Natal, Natal University Press, Durban 1960, p. 96).

The Hindu faith still draws its inspiration from the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita and the great epics.

2. Early History and Development of Indian South Africans

Indians in South Africa were first brought to this country as indentured labourers in the 1860's. British settlers in Natal began to cultivate sugar cane and when they found they could not obtain enough Zulu labour to work the plantations, they turned to India (Govt. publication, 1975, p. 3; Official Year Book, 1984, p. 82). Many of these labourers stayed on after they had served their indentures, either as free labourers, or as independent small farmers, shopkeepers, traders, or domestic servants. From 1913 onwards, Indian immigration was progressively restricted with the result that, with few exceptions, Indian South Africans are today South African citizens by birth (Palmer, 1957, p. 10). According to Kuper, Watts and Davies (1958) less than 5 percent of Durban Indians were born outside South Africa (p. 81). A scheme initiated during the 1920's to repatriate Indians on a voluntary basis at government expense failed. Very few availed themselves of the offer. Today Indians have strong roots in their new fatherland. They identify themselves with their South African home and share many interests with the other population groups (Tyack, 1976, p. 153).

According to the latest census data South Africa had 821 320 Asians in 1980. This group is mainly of Indian origin (Official Year Book, 1984, p.83). With the exception of the Indians in Sri Lanka, the Indian population of South Africa is the largest group of people of Indian origin outside India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. There are more Indians in this country than on the rest of the African continent (Official Year Book, 1984, p. 88).

In 1980 about 698 122 Indians (85% of the total number) were living in Natal. Of these about 85% were living within a radius of about 150km of Durban (Official Year Book, 1984, p. 83).

The Indians in South Africa are not culturally homogenous. Two broad religious groups can be identified, viz., the Hindus and the Moslems. The majority of Indians in South Africa are Hindus (70% in 1980)(Official Year Book, p. 85).

Language and religion are closely associated. In 1960 approximately 90% of all Hindus were Tamil-,Hindi-and Telegu-speaking (Sabra, 1975, p. 5). However, most of the Indians speak English to overcome language barriers in their business dealings with their fellows who speak other Indian languages and also to facilitate contact with the White community. English has in fact become the medium for social communication, and many young Indians hardly speak their mother tongue at all (Tyack 1976, p. 54). According to the Year Book, 1984/85, 1 per cent of the Asians indicated that English was their home language (p. 31).

English also dominates the field of education. However, a number of Indian languages are offered as part of the Arts curriculum at the University of Durban-Westville to ensure that the cultural traditions enshrined in these languages are not lost. The local vernacular societies also work toward this end.

Socio-economically, Indians in South Africa range from those who possess great wealth to those who live in extreme poverty, most people being at the lower end of the scale (Naidoo 1969, p. 17).

A 1974 study relating to the potential Indian labour force in the Pietermaritzburg-Durban region revealed that the average male monthly income from all sources

was R143-00. The average female income was R60-00 (Sugden 1978). According to the same report the average basic-family size was found to be 4,63 for Hindus (p. 35). It is reasonable to assume that these incomes have increased in recent years though probably not so significantly as to result in a dramatic rise in the standard of living of the greater part of the Indian population in the Durban area. In a survey undertaken in September 1983, Potgieter calculated that the Household Subsistence Level (HSL) for an Indian household of six members in Durban was R310-10. This represents "a fairly high increase of 8,5% over the March figure and 9,3% over the last twelve months (p. 10).

Culturally, ever since their arrival in South Africa, Indians have moved, especially in more recent times, toward the acceptance and adoption of western concepts and modes of living (McCrystal 1967, pp. 1-11 ; Ramasar, 1967, p. 23). This phenomenon is largely due to exposure to western education and ideology, urbanisation, increased educational opportunities for boys and girls, and a widespread use of the mass media. Even the casual observer, however, will notice that the transformation to a western way of life is still incomplete for, as Kuper (1960) has found, many of their more personal values are distinct from the values of the White dominant group. Much of their cultural contact is still based on traditional Indian sources (pp. 65-72). In this connection Dickie - Clark (1964) notes that Indians are very selective in their acceptance of western ways. They have not abandoned their culture whole-heartedly and indiscriminately. At the moment the South African Indian is neither a typical Indian by the standards of India nor a typical westerner by European standards. He cannot, for instance, speak, read and write his own language as well as his brothers in India, nor can he speak, read and write English as well as the South African English-speaking European. He is in the midst of change, with himself as one of the changing elements, neither truly one nor truly the other

(Ramphal 1960, p. 118).

3. Family Network And Kinship Behaviour Among Hindus In South Africa :
The Old And The New

Indian family life is characterised by close kinship bonds, and the traditional family organization has been that of the extended or joint family system, a system that finds sanction in many of the epics such as the Ramayana^(a) and the Mahabharata^(b) as well as in the popular traditions of family form in the villages of India (Benedict 1961, p. 67).

An extended family may be defined as one which consists of "large family units with two or more nuclear families which are affiliated through an extension of the parent-child relationship rather than the husband-wife relationship (Anderson et al., 1983, p. 4). Thus the nuclear family of a married adult is joined to that of his parents thereby producing residential units of three or more generations possibly with grandparents, parents and children. Anderson et al., illustrate the structure of the extended family system in the following way:

(a) The accounts of family life described in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata show that even in 1000 B.C. the joint family system existed. The Ramayana tells of a struggle between Aryans and the Southerners which occurred around 1400 B.C. (Karve, I. : Kinship Organization in India. Deccan College, Poona, 1953, pp. 21-33).

(b) The Mahabharata relates the story of a battle fought near Delhi in which a whole line of kings are supposed to have been destroyed bringing their era to a close. The Mahabharata family is found in many parts of India and a Mahabharata battle is being fought in most joint families. The ideas of status, duties and rights of members of the joint family are those inherited from and deeply rooted in the traditions of these epics (Karve, I. op.cit., pp. 21-33).

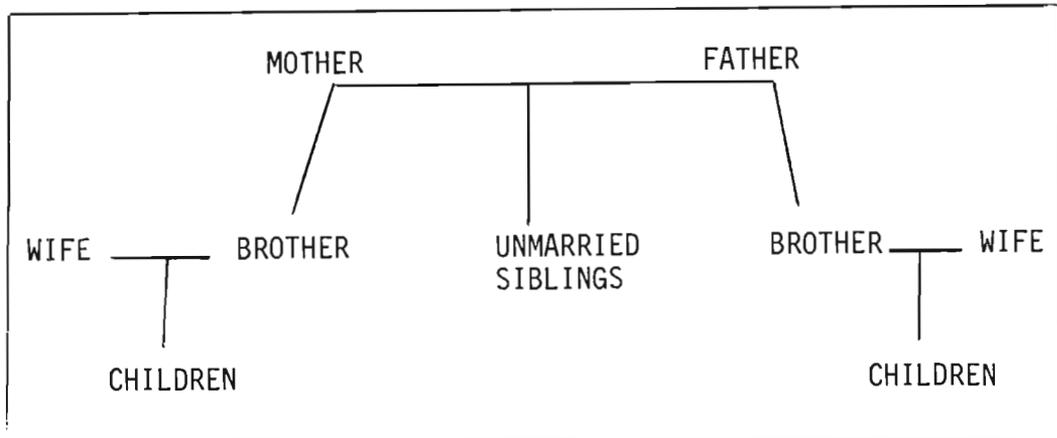


FIGURE 4.1 : A GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF AN EXTENDED FAMILY SYSTEM

Family affairs are conducted on a joint basis and each member is expected to hand over his income to the head of the family and it goes into a common pool. In turn, he receives food and clothing and a small grant of spending money. Major family decisions are made by the "pater familias", and there is a clear-cut hierarchy of intra-familial relations in terms of dominance-submission patterns. Obedience to family members, respect for them and pursuit of family-centred goals rather than individualistic ones are the norm in the joint family system (Kumar, 1974, pp. 43-53).

The joint family provides a haven for all - the able as well as the not-so-able members of the family. Every member is part of a whole and the family as a whole takes responsibility for the welfare of each member. The feeling of unity which exists in a typical joint family is illustrated in the following quotation from one of the classics, *Ten Tamil Ethics* (Krishnaswami, 1936): "They are not kinsmen who, like birds in a tank, forsake it when the water dries up; they are real kinsmen who, like the lily and the water plants in the tank suffer with it" (p. 25). The structure is tight and only minor deviations that do not threaten the family structure are tolerated. In

Ramanujam's view (1975) this tightly-bound structural organisation is well equipped to withstand the stresses and strains of life. In the nuclear family, on the other hand, the members have to rely on their own resources in times of stress (p. 495).

In the orthodox joint family situation, the daughter-in-law comes under the authority of the mother-in-law who is the female head of the family and the one who assigns the household duties of cooking and cleaning to the other female members of the family. If the marriage has been an arranged one, the daughter-in-law comes into her new home suddenly and has no one but her husband to protect her. The mother-in-law's direct and complete authority over the young bride results from a desire to integrate the new wife into the female side of the family (Mehta 1970, pp. 12-15).

For many years, the life of the Hindu wife is characterized by feelings of isolation and by numerous frustrations and tensions which she learns to bear as she continues to perform her roles as a kitchen robot, domestic servant, a sex-fulfilling partner, and a reproductive agent. Failure to perform as expected in any of these roles, adds to her many difficulties. In the orthodox Hindu family she is exposed to the cultural ideal of *Sati* symbolizing life long self-sacrifice, complete submergence of her own individuality within the family, acceptance of a subservient position, commitment to her major task of gratifying her husband's needs, and complete conformity to the standards traditionally imposed upon her (Khatri, 1970, p. 32).

Constraint characterises the relationship between men and women. Husband and wife, for instance, should not show much affection toward each other, unless they are alone.

The major stresses in the joint family mainly occurs after the marriage of the sons. Tensions develop chiefly between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and between father and son. The son wants more independence and the retention of his earnings and a greater voice in the management of the household budget and investment. This brings him into conflict with his father. The daughter-in-law wants her husband's undivided loyalty and his earnings for her own and her children's maintenance. She wishes to manage the household in the manner she learned from her own mother. This brings her into conflict with her mother-in-law (Bannerjee, 1979, p. 173).

A common source of conflict between marital partners in some joint-families is the desire of the husband to continue living with his family in the home of his parents and the opposing desire of the wife to set up an independent household. In earlier times, the wife had accepted the idea of becoming a part of the husband's household even to the point of losing her own identity. With changes in the social climate, however, women appear to be resisting the passive role assigned to them traditionally (Oosthuizen and Hofmeyer, 1981, p. 19).

The reluctance of some Indian husbands to leave the parental home is understandable when looked at in terms of *Sanskara* an abstract bond that exists between the individual and his cultural milieu (Ramanujam, 1975, p. 495). From birth the child is taught to be a dutiful son. Thoughts about departing from his ageing parents therefore may arouse feelings of guilt in him. In some cases the husband reluctantly agrees, on his wife's insistence, to set up an independent household though he himself may not be emotionally ready for such a move. He may still be too strongly attached to his mother. What adds to his dilemma, says an informant, is the fact that the western family "offers freedom without security." The Indian(joint) family "offers security

without freedom." In this connection the following comment by one of Kuper's informants is interesting: "The Indian man is always so fond of his mother because she spoilt him when he was young, and he has never grown up. The wife has a hard time to make him independent" (Kuper, 1960, p. 135). Under such circumstances tensions may arise. There may be spoken and unspoken differences between the couple. Sometimes silent battles are fought. At other times the conflict comes out in the open. Sometimes the tensions and stresses between husband and wife are resolved and the joint family remains intact. At other times the problems lead to fission and the married son sets up his own household, thereby establishing a basic nuclear family.

The nuclear type of family comprises "at least two adults of opposite sex living together in a socially approved sexual relationship with their own or adopted children, maintaining an economically independent household" (Anderson et al., 1983, pp. 5-6). These writers go on to explain that a basic nuclear family comprises of residential units of two generations, i.e. parents and children, and may be represented diagrammatically in the following manner:

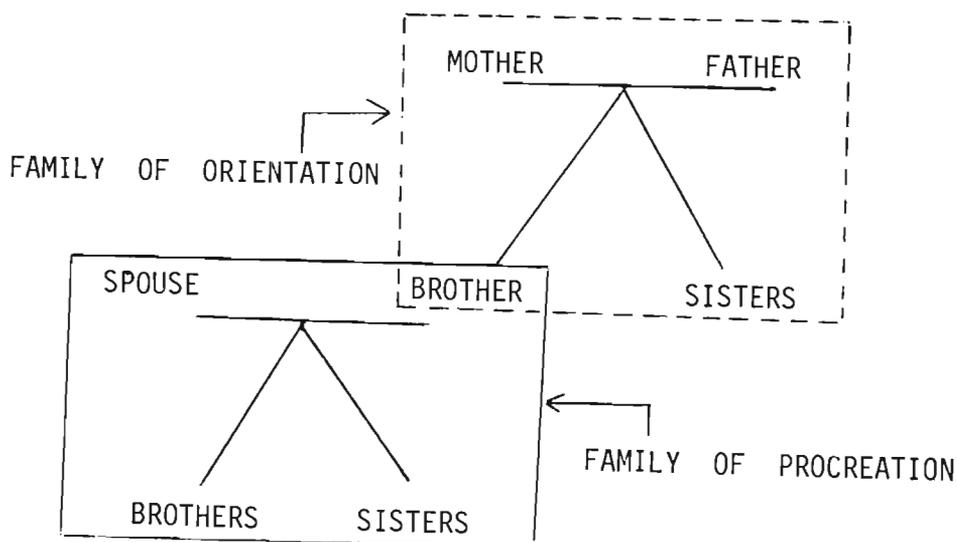


FIGURE 4.2 : A GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF A NUCLEAR FAMILY SYSTEM

Living in a separate home, however, does not guarantee the daughter-in-law protection since the mother-in-law can still exert a considerable amount of control and influence over her son from a distance. It is also possible that a mother-in-law would visit her son's home for prolonged periods of time or make regular visits and during these times tensions may increase and problems arise. Or, perhaps the mother-in-law insists that her son visits her very regularly.

Two important factors have increased the potential tension between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Firstly, the daughter-in-law is no longer a child when she marries but a young woman who is more self-confident and has more knowledge and experience than the daughters-in-law of earlier times. In view of her greater maturity her mother-in-law is not able to bend her will and mould her to the traditional family customs as easily as she formerly did.

Secondly, daughters-in-law nowadays usually have more education than their mothers-in-law. They have acquired up-to-date information on child care, housekeeping and personal behaviour. They also know more about happenings in the outside world. All this challenges the mother-in-law's previous supreme position as adult adviser and source of knowledge, and increases the possibility of friction between them, particularly if they live in the same home.

The more sophisticated young women of today often openly express their desire to marry men who either live far away from their families or can afford to set up a separate home on marriage. This enables them to become more independent of their mothers-in-law. Present day mothers often sympathise with this attitude, and even try to find husbands of this sort for their daughters. On the other hand, their affection for, and dependence on their own sons some-

times make them still want to have them live on in the parental home after marriage. This arrangement provides the mother-in-law with the assistance of a daughter-in-law in the housework, and keeps her son close to her. Sons are often desirous of fitting in with his arrangement because of their own warm relations with their mothers, and because they sometimes fear shouldering the responsibilities of a separate family by themselves. Some also wish to ensure that they receive what they consider to be a fair share of the family property.

In the opinion of several informants the growing strength of the husband-wife relationship in smaller family units has the effect of weakening the close tie between mother and son. The daughter-in-law now retains closer ties with her own family because of her late age of marriage. They generally become her counsellors. As a result of this the mother-in-law loses her position as trainer and consultant. She also has to share her grandchildren with her daughter-in-law's family. Indeed in some cases the changes have been so great that there is a complete reversal of the mother-in-law's position in the nuclear family as compared to the one she held in the traditional family. It is not unusual to hear a daughter-in-law mention "My mother-in-law is *living with us*" or "My mother-in-law *helps me* to look after my children".

Considered in overall terms, it would appear that the main problems of young Indian women would continue to revolve around marriage and in-laws for some time to come. Another trend that may be discerned is that girls are increasingly being encouraged to obtain higher education. More and more parents are adopting the view that a good education is one way of assisting their daughters to find suitable husbands. It is also being increasingly realised that, in the event of some mishap, women in the nuclear type of family no longer enjoy the protection afforded by the joint family. They could, for instance, find them-

selves in financial trouble and the possibility that they may have to earn their own living cannot be ruled out.

Indeed, it is possible that they may even be called upon to support other members of the family. Going hand in hand with this move towards higher education for females, is the incentive of new employment opportunities that are being created for them.

As women become increasingly self-sufficient, financially and psychologically, it is not unlikely that more of them would steer away from marriage rather than risk unhappiness through union with a less than satisfactory mate. From the reports received many of them would prefer instead to channel their efforts toward their careers or some other area in which they happen to be interested.

Important changes have also taken place in the position of the mother in the household. In earlier times the male head of the household made the main family decisions and had such control over all members that he was the hub of the large family group. It was his function to ensure that all these individuals fitted into the total family set-up smoothly and comfortably. Thus he was the chief medium through whom domestic harmony and overall organisation was maintained. In modern and complex urban families, on the other hand, the responsibilities of family peace-keeper and overall organiser, certainly in Hindu homes, fall mainly on the mother. To add to her difficulties, the mother in the nuclear family needs to be more self-reliant and perform her tasks without the helpful advice and guidance of other, perhaps more experienced, female members normally found in a joint family. She also has to acquire a new circle of women friends and learn the intricacies of behaviour necessary for a mixed social life. On the positive side, she now enjoys, to a greater extent, the companionship of her husband and her daughters, who by

and large, tend to marry at a later age. This, helps to compensate for the loss of close relationship she enjoyed with the female members in the extended family.

Another point worth noting is that the geographical separation of families in nuclear units has increased the rate of change. Formerly, the early marriage of women and their incorporation into their husband's household at a very impressionable age meant that family behaviour could be transmitted in detail, through them, to the next generation. Now that Hindu women marry at a much later age and are generally establishing separate homes of their own, they escape the hitherto rigorous training in their husband's home. This gives them the opportunity of exercising their own initiative to a greater extent and establishing unique family patterns congruent with the needs of a rapidly changing society.

Significant changes occur in the role of the husband as well when he becomes head of a nuclear family. His wife no longer has a group of women to help her with the housework and children, and when the pressure on her becomes too great, he generally has to assist. This is very different from the days when the roles of men and women were distinctive and when the rendering of such assistance would have exposed the husband to the risk of being ridiculed. Some husbands understandably experience difficulty in adjusting to their new roles since they are so often called upon to perform tasks for which they have not been trained. This situation has potential for marital conflict.

The new roles of the husband and wife in the nuclear family entail important personality changes. The submissive self-sacrificing attitude of the "ideal" mother and wife in the joint family and the strict, authoritarian, distant "ideal" of the father are no longer functional in the modern urban family.

One change that is becoming obvious is that distant relatives are less important to the present generation than they were to the parents and the grandparents. They may be present on ritual occasions, such as weddings, but the sentimental feeling for them has lost much of its intensity. Even uncles, aunts, and grandparents are often so separate in their interests and outlook and sometimes live so far away that there remains little common ground to serve as a basis for affection. Thus even close relatives cannot be counted on in times of trouble.

Relatives also appear to be exerting far less influence over the younger set than they did over the parents of the youngsters. At the same time friends are becoming increasingly important and influential in the lives of the new generation. The smaller nuclear family is not large enough to supply a satisfactory social life and its members are impelled to seek friendships outside the family circle. These normally include members of the opposite sex.

Formerly, social life and recreation were largely confined to the members and relatives of the joint family. There were enough of them in each house to share mutual interests and provide emotional support. Men, for instance, had brothers, uncles and cousins close at hand to share their interests and with whom they could relax. Children, too, normally had many cousins, as well as siblings, to play with, and their similar family background made for congenial companionship. In this way the joint family provided a ready-made social life for all ages and both sexes. Visits from distant relatives for weddings and other family festivals kept the wider kinship group in touch with one another.

The nature of weddings have also changed in the past few decades. Not only have some of the elaborate rituals been eliminated, but the length of the ceremonies has been shortened to a few days. New types of recreation and relaxation for both men and women now take the place of the social functions which weddings formerly served. One possible outcome of this change is that weddings will no longer serve the function of reuniting the large kinship group, and so one more important means of keeping the larger family unit together is disappearing.

Conservative Hindus feel unhappy about the inclination of the younger generation to grow away from the folkways of the "kutum" (i.e. the extended or multiple family). To many of them a nuclear family household is an incomplete household. Jithoo (1975) reports that in a survey involving 75 Indian students, comprising of 45 males and 30 females, only 8 of them favoured the continuation of the joint family system. Of these 18, three were females. The main objection expressed by the females against the continuation of the joint-family system was the clash in the values and attitudes of the traditionally-oriented mothers-in-law and those of the more western-oriented daughter-in-law (p. 55).

When the family structure changes from the joint pattern to the nuclear type, the problem of adjustment to new patterns of authority are probably greatest for father and son, husband and wife, and mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. All these relationships become more equalitarian although initially there may be attempts on the part of the older generation to carry over the old patterns of domination.

The father's main problem in a changing society is to gradually relinquish his position of dominant authority as his children grow older. This is most

difficult for a father who has only ruled by virtue of his position, and has not gained the genuine co-operation and respect of his children. Conflict between them is most likely to occur if the father tries to retain his power while the son insists on his freedom.

Younger Indians, by and large, are becoming more individualistic in respect of certain activities and in certain sectors of their lives (Rajaraman, 1978, p. 108). An example of such independence is mate selection. In this regard, Lötter and Du Plessis (1974) found that 80% of Indian males younger than 30 years of age had selected their marriage partners on their own. The corresponding percentage for Indian males who were 45 years and older was 40 (p.7).

In the traditional joint family it was the duty of the parents to find mates for their children and the duty of the children to accept their request. As the marriage contract was looked upon as an agreement between two families rather than between two young people, love was not necessary as a basis for marriage selection, nor was courtship a necessary prelude for testing the relationship. The Hindu ideal had no place for individual taste, and in fact, rather feared it, as it might upset the adjustment of the bride to her new household. Thus marital choice was subordinate to group ends. Love between husband and wife in the Hindu view was the result of marriage, not the prelude to it.

In the nuclear family situation, on the other hand, it is no longer necessary for the husband to marry a wife who will fit in with the many and varied relationships of the joint family. He is more at liberty to select one who fits in with his own personality. In fact, because of its importance to the whole family structure, it is imperative in the nuclear family that their personalities be sufficiently compatible. It is also important for them to

have strong feelings of affection for each other, for these will be the main cementing elements of the whole family unit. Romantic love is increasingly becoming a basis for marriage.

Couples are also expressing a greater desire to see more of their prospective partners during the engagement period. In traditional practice the engagement period was short and seemed to serve the function of giving the parents time to prepare for the wedding and acquire a trousseau. It was not thought of as a time in which to test the relationship so that the couple would be able to judge whether they were suited to each other in personality and interest. When the couples did meet, they generally did so under the strict supervision of relatives. Modern parents often allow them to go out together on their own.

It must be emphasised that arranged marriages have not entirely disappeared from the scene. Several highly educated parents are known, in recent times, to have selected marriage partners for their sons and daughters.

According to several informants, caste still plays some role, although a small one, in the choice of marriage partners. This practice, however, is decreasing in importance. Socio-economic and educational factors are now becoming more influential in determining choice, and ambitious young men and women show signs of preferring to marry out of linguistic, religious and caste boundaries as long as their prospective mates have the desired personal and educational qualifications and offer prospects of financial security. However, as the traditional boundaries for marriage are still firmly set, and as going beyond them upsets other aspects of married life, it is not likely that they will lose their total significance in the near future.

As far as the aged members of the family are concerned the indications are that further modernisation and westernisation would have an adverse impact on their position in the family (Ramasar, 1967, p. 30). Atomisation of the family and the emergence of nuclear families on a large scale would lead to a progressive segregation of the old from the young, resulting in the social isolation of the aged with accompanying pathological developments. Previously, in traditional Indian society, the oldest members of the family were accepted as the leaders and were treated with reverence and respect and had important positions in the household (Reddy, 1978, p. 1).

But in industrialised society the knowledge, experience, and skill of the older people no longer relate to the present, for it is impossible for them to keep pace with a dynamically changing society. The importance of their functional position thus declines, and with it their authority and much of the respect and prestige that formerly went with it. These changes bring older people many frustrations and anxieties. They experience a loss of self-esteem, and may even feel intense social isolation. They may find it difficult to understand the revolts of their children and their grandchildren against them (Ross, 1962, p. 290).

Perhaps the most prominent feature with respect to the Indian youth of today is the considerable extent of their westernisation. They display relatively little interest in Indian music and cultural and religious festivals, and events of such a nature are relatively poorly patronised (Maasdorp, 1968, p. 132). The cinema, western popular music and sport all have their adherents. In many of the homes colour photographs of film stars, current "pop" singing idols and soccer teams occupy prominent positions on the walls of the living rooms. This is in marked contrast to earlier times when Indian prints and statuettes of temples and deities were commonly displayed. New values are also

reflected in clothing, with teenagers being quick to adopt the latest fashions.

Further evidence of rapid changes which are taking place in the Indian way of life is provided by the marked increase in the number of people calling for help at the Family and Marriage Society of Durban and other welfare agencies. According to an article appearing in a local morning newspaper, the number of new Indian cases seen by the Durban Society for Marriage and Family Life increased from 25 in 1975 to 122 in 1976 to 320 in 1977. According to the Society's Annual Report the number of interviews rose to 1032 in 1983. More and more people (44% of the Indian cases in 1983-1984) were approaching the Society in the first five years of marriage (FAMSA, p. 11). The majority of these couples fell in the 20-30 year age group. This concentration of cases in this group could be due to the stresses that result when, in the early years of marriage, the couples have to adjust to each other, as well as to their partner's family. Added to this are the further adjustments which have to be made when the young people become parents.

Reports from several other societies show similar trends. The Durban Indian Child and Family Welfare Society, for instance, notes that marriage and related problems constituted 45 percent of its total case load in 1983-1984 (p. 17). The 1985 Annual Report of the same Society presents the following breakdown of the common features of its marital discord cases (p. 18):

Alcoholism	53%
Communication problems	45%
Non support	44%
Financial problems	25%
Infidelity	24%
In-Law interference	23%
Drug addiction	18%
Wife battering	18%
Sexual incompatibility	11%
Unemployment	2%

FIGURE 4.3 : COMMON FEATURES IN MARITAL DISCORD

The Report goes on to state : "One third of couples who called for assistance had no children or had just their first baby. It was also noted that couples were marrying at a much earlier age, hence the inability to cope with the responsibilities of marriage. A noticeable feature was that the male marriage partner called more often at the Society for assistance. This could be ascribed to the more dominant role the female has assumed in the home. The increasing infidelity of the female in marriage may also account for the fact that more often men are calling for services rather than their wives" (p. 18).

Generally, young people from poorer groups are more vulnerable to the hazards of untraditional unions, and their unplanned passions frequently lead to unmarried pregnancies and all the complications that follow.

The usual hazards of marriage are, in such cases, aggravated further by open disapproval of the elders and their very reluctant acceptance of the situation if it all. Young people, despite their apparent air of rebelliousness, are very dependent on parental support, and when such support is withheld, or

when continued criticism is directed against the one partner by the respective families, bonds, insecurely formed at the first instance, weaken and reach breaking point (Meer, p. 73).

The types of problems related to marital difficulties include violence, alcohol abuse, infidelity, in-law problems, non-support and financial problems, communication problems and desertion. A tone of disappointment and despair appears to underlie the following statement which appears in the Year Book of South Africa, 1984: "The divorce rate amongst Indians used to be exceptionally low, but the irresistible tide of modernism is making inroads even into the erstwhile even tenor of Indian domestic life" (Official Year Book, p.83). A study of the factors which underlie this disruptive phenomenon is the main purpose of the present study and will be closely examined in the next three chapters.

SUMMARY

According to Hindu Shastric law marriage is deemed to be a sacred bond continuing up to heaven. The entire moral and spiritual resources of Indian culture are harnessed for the elevation of the marital relationship to the Mother and Father of the universe. The divine couple, Soma (who sustains the Earth) and Surya (who sustains the Heavens) are responsible for sanctioning and participating in every Hindu marriage.

The ancient sages considered marriage to be irrevocable and indissoluble and a social duty toward the family and the community. Little or no attention was given to the interest of the individual. Indeed a couple were supposed to marry not so much for sex or progeny as for obtaining a partner for the

fulfillment of one's religious duties.

The ideal of *pativrata* (being devoted to the husband alone) implied not merely fidelity to the husband, but also services to the husband as the only duty of the wife and her main purpose in life. The social background provided by the authoritarian joint family made it possible to accommodate practices such as child marriages, polygamy, irrevocability of marriage and denial of remarriage to widows. Women were essentially housekeepers and child-bearers and were very much at the mercy of their husbands.

At the beginning of the present century social reformers acted against the injustices done to women and as a result of their efforts legislation was passed in India over a period of time so that the abuses against women were swept away. Today the hierarchical and authoritarian structure of the family in India is giving way to a situation of equality and mutual respect between husband and wife.

Hinduism in South Africa today is very similar to Hinduism in India. Indian South Africans, like their brothers in India, draw their inspiration from the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita and the great epics.

In 1980 South Africa had 821 320 Asians and 85% of them were living in Natal. Of these 85% were living within a radius of 150km of Durban. The Hindus, the group on which the present study is focussed, made up 70% of the Indian population in South Africa in 1980.

Culturally, ever since their arrival in South Africa, Indians have moved, especially in more recent times, toward the acceptance and adoption of western concepts and modes of living. This phenomenon is largely due to

exposure to western education and ideology, urbanisation, increased educational opportunities for boys and girls, and a widespread use of the mass media. There has also been a corresponding change in family structure, i.e. from the joint to the nuclear type. This change has had far-reaching effects on husband-wife relationships and the result has been interaction on a more equalitarian basis. The submissive self-sacrificing attitude of the "ideal" mother and wife in the joint family and the strict authoritarian, distant "ideal" of the father are no longer functional in the modern urban family.

Perhaps the clearest evidence of the rapid changes which are taking place in the Indian way of life is provided by the marked increase in the number of people calling for help at welfare agencies on account of marital problems. The types of problems related to marital difficulties include violence, alcohol abuse, infidelity, in-law problems, non-support and financial problems, communication problems and desertion.

FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY : AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The aim of this research is to gather objective and scientific information relating to the factors involved in marital conflict between Hindu couples in the Durban metropolitan area. More specifically, the aim is to determine whether, and in what respects, couples enjoying a stable marital relationship differ from those who are experiencing serious marital problems.

In order to accomplish this purpose, two groups of couples were interviewed: one group whose marriages have been generally stable and happy (i.e. the SM group comprising fifty couples) and the other group whose marriages have been showing obvious signs of strain and instability over a period of at least six months (i.e. the UM group comprising one hundred couples).

The relevant information was obtained through the use of a comprehensive interview schedule (see Appendix A). The findings, based on an analysis of this information, will be presented in the next three chapters under the following twelve broad headings which appear in the schedule:

- I Biographical Data
- II Economic Factors
- III Courtship and Engagement
- IV Children and Marital Adjustment
- V Parental Influences on Marital Adjustment
- VI General Personality Traits
- VII Companionship and Compatibility between Spouses
- VIII Personality Traits as Perceived by Spouse
- IX Communication
- X Marital Disagreements and Conflicts
- XI Sexual Behaviour
- XII Potential Conflict Areas between Spouses

Since marriage is a many-sided, interactional phenomenon, a good deal of common ground is covered in the various sections. The emphasis in each of them, however, differs.

The number of sections which have been assigned to each of the following chapters has been determined by the length of the chapter. The aim was to keep the length of each of the chapters more or less uniform.

For the sake of easy reference, the numbers given to each of the items in the interview schedule have been retained. In those instances where two or more items are closely related, they have been combined so as to preserve their unity in the discussion and avoid repetition.

In the analysis of the data, a combined qualitative-quantitative approach has been used, the one supplementing and supporting the other. In this way it becomes possible to give a more complete description of particular situations and to capture more of the richness that exists when husbands and wives interact.

Consideration was originally given to establishing precise criteria by which the responses of the interviews could be classified. However, this idea was abandoned when it was realised that the perception of a situation by a husband or wife is the main factor for determining his (or her) attitudes and behaviour toward the spouse. For instance, one person considered twenty friends as being "a few" while another regarded the same number of friends as "many". Criteria are relative in nature and operate differently in different persons.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This chapter deals with the results pertaining to the following sections which appear in the Marital Study Questionnaire:

- I Biographical Data Pertaining to Husband and Wife
- II Economic Factors
- III Courtship and Engagement

I BIOGRAPHICAL DATA PERTAINING TO HUSBAND AND WIFE

In searching for correlates of marital stability, social scientists have often employed the incidence of divorce as an index. While the incidence of divorce may be influenced by a number of factors in addition to marital stability, it is nevertheless highly visible and easily measured.

Age at present (Item 1)

Data pertaining to this item have already been presented in Chapter One, Section 6.2.3.

Age at marriage (Item 2a)

It has been found that marriages entered into by very young persons tend to be less stable than marriages between older persons.

In Strydom's study (1974), Bartz and Nye's definition of youthfulness was

used - viz. a man 20 years or younger and a woman 18 years or younger. Strydom found that divorces were most frequent where both partners were youthful, and least frequent where neither were youthful. Where only one partner was youthful the frequency of divorce was midway between the frequency where both or neither was youthful.

The importance of this factor in divorce can be expected to increase since the age of males at time of first marriage has now decreased from 26,6 in 1936 to 24,1 years in 1966. In the case of women marrying for the first time, the corresponding decrease has been from 22,8 to 21,2 years (Rip, 1978, p. 17).

Similar trends are evident in overseas countries. Raab and Sleznick (1959) for instance, report that the median age for American men and women at first marriage in 1920 was 24,6 and 21,2 respectively. In 1960 these figures came down to 22,8 and 20,3. Moreover, the rate of divorce for women who marry between the ages of 18 and 19 has been consistently more than twice as high as that of women who marry between the ages of 25 and 29. For those who marry even younger, i.e. between the ages of 14 and 17, the divorce rate almost doubles again (p. 319). Verster (1979) in a study of youthful marriages in South Africa states that in a sample of marriages entered into during 1965, one out of five marriages involved at least one youthful person.

The marriages of persons who marry before reaching the age of 20 are over-represented in divorce statistics. (Ency. of Social Work, p. 374). The higher breakdown rates of youthful marriages appear to be linked to several factors. Rather than age itself being important, age is believed to be a reflection of other disadvantages such as emotional immaturity, not finishing

high school, low income of husband, low prestige of husband's occupation and low social class (Winch, 1971, p. 600). Youthful marriages are more likely to involve some degree of rebellion against parental authority. Such marriages are quite likely to be complicated by premarital pregnancy Bacon, 1974, pp. 333-341. They are also more likely to be opposed by parents and are more likely to face financial and accommodation problems. Sharing accommodation with relatives, friends or strangers as well as frequent changes of accommodation, is disturbing at a time when they need to establish their relationship. One or both partners may show an inability to handle money. They may waste their money on drink and gambling or clothes and make-up. In cases where one of the partners is anxious about money, conflict may start at the very beginning of the relationship (Burchinal, 1959, pp. 378-384; Eshleman, 1965, pp. 255-262; Moss and Gingles, 1959, pp. 373-377).

Psychologically there may be a feeling of being trapped at a time when life offers unlimited opportunities for exploration. There is conflict between continuing a style of living which belongs to single state and that of marriage. The husband may persist in going out with the boys and the wife with her friends. In their everyday life the husband may have promised to help with the household chores and the food-shopping and then leaves most of it to his wife even though she may have a full-time job to cope with as much as he has. The couple may find that apart from sex they have little in common with each other.

According to Terman (1938) age at marriage may be a selective factor.

Those who are willing to defy custom by marrying exceptionally young are probably more often head-strong or lacking in emotional control. This type of person is more likely, than the average, to be unhappy regardless

of the age at which he happens to marry (p. 182).

According to Kephart (1972) a great proportion of all causes of divorce emerge in the first two years of marriage even though most couples do not dissolve their marriages until years later (p. 567). Goode (1956) found that sexual problems and personality clashes lead to particularly quick dissolutions.

In order to determine whether there is any relationship between age at marriage and marital adjustment in the present study, it is necessary to examine the data in Figure 5.1.

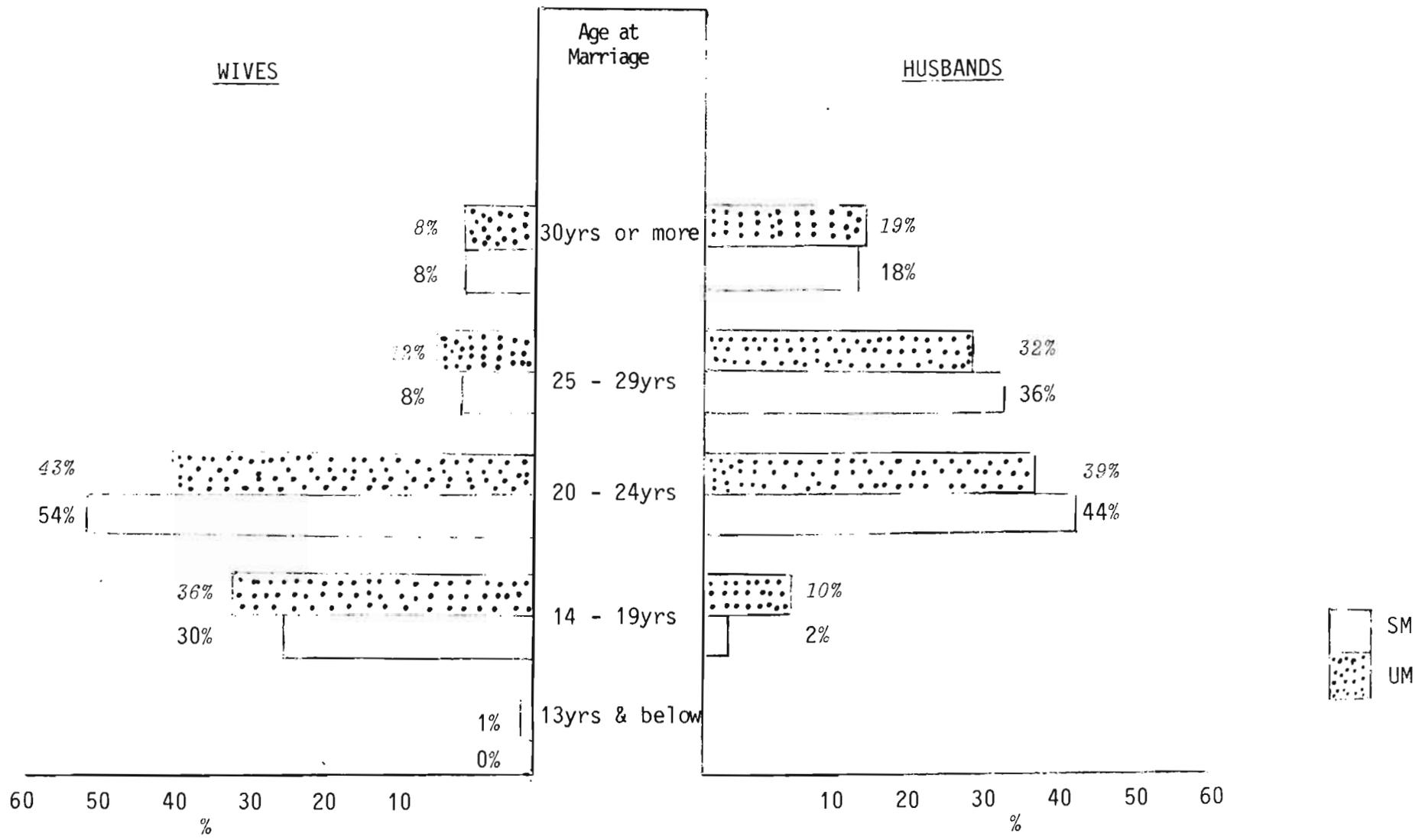


FIG. 5.1 : DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY AGE AT MARRIAGE

Figure 5.1 shows that the percentages in the various age categories for both husbands and wives did not differ significantly for the two groups. However, there is a trend towards marriage at an earlier age in the case of couples experiencing marital difficulties (Husbands' \bar{X} 's : SM 25,44 vs UM 24,90: Wives \bar{X} 's : SM 22,20 vs UM 21,62). This is especially evident in the 14 to 19-year age group (Husbands : SM 2% vs UM 10%: Wives : SM 30% vs UM 36%).

Using Bartz and Nye's definition of "youthfulness" - i.e. when the husband is 20 years or younger and the wife 18 years or younger - an analysis of the raw data shows that 4% of the SM couples and 10% of the UM ones qualified for this label. Many of these marriages, particularly in the UM group, were hasty unions, often after short acquaintance and against the wishes of one or both sets of parents. In two cases at least, it was obvious that the wife was unprepared for the duties of managing a household and the husband could barely support a wife. Moreover, 4% of the SM wives and 14% of the UM wives were pregnant at the time of their marriage. Some of these wives were pressurised into marriage by their parents so as to "save the family name" and legitimise the child.

On the basis of the data gathered in this study it was not possible to state conclusively that there is a relationship between age at marriage and marital adjustment.

The data which were collected for the present investigation enabled the researcher to study another aspect relating to age, viz., the relationship between marital happiness and age differences between spouses.

Rip (1978) refers to these marriages where the husband is five or more years older than the wife or where he is one year (or more) younger than his wife as "heterogamous marriages" (p. 17). Earlier investigations have found that the rate of divorce is lower when husband and wife are approximately the same age than when there is a large age difference between them (Christensen, 1953, pp. 641-644; Day, 1964, pp. 509-522).

According to a country-wide investigation which was undertaken by the Centre for Child and Adult Guidance of the Institute for Psychological and Edumetric Research of the Human Sciences Research Council, involving Whites, Indians and Coloureds of both sexes, men generally preferred to marry younger women and they were against marriage with women older than themselves. The women, on the other hand, preferred their husbands to be older than themselves and were also somewhat against marriage with men younger than themselves (HSRC Newsletter, No. 155, 1984). Blood and Wolfe (1960) also found that women experienced more marital satisfaction where their husbands were older, than where their husbands were younger, than they were (pp. 256-257).

The problems in heterogamous marriages, according to Blood and Blood (1978), are more severe in wife-older marriages, just as they are in "wife high" interclass marriages. "Mother-son" marriages have significantly higher divorce rates than "father-daughter" marriages with the same age difference. Presumably, this reflects the bias of the traditionally held view that men should be either the same age or older than their wives, but not younger (p. 145). Similarly, persons tend to expect that the husband will be the taller, more educated, and have the better occupation of the pair. All of this is symbolic of a phenomenon which sociologists refer to as "the marriage gradient", i.e. the expectation that the male partner will have

slightly superior status as compared to the female partner when marriage choices are made. This pattern stems from the traditional notions of sex roles in which men are considered leaders and protectors, and women the followers who look up to men (Scanzoni, 1968, p. 150).

Significant differences in age between the marriage partners need not at first lead to maladjustment, but as the couple grow older it can result in a drifting apart of the marriage partners (Rip, 1978, p. 11). Presumably the greater the age difference, the greater is likely to be the disparity in the couple's patterns of behaviour. More specifically, problems related to the following areas may arise (Bowman, 1974, p. 150):

- (1) There is likely to be a difference in degree of "habit set" : The younger person will probably be more flexible and adaptable than the older person. This may necessitate more adjustment on the part of the younger person, because the older one persists in his habitual ways.
- (2) An older husband may assume a paternal attitude towards his wife : If there are plans or decisions to be made, he makes them because "she is too inexperienced" and he feels that he knows what is good for her. He may be impatient with her because of her inexperience. He is not seeking a wife who will be a partner in all respects. He expects her to fulfil only part of the wifely role. Sharing is incomplete. Consequently, he does not anticipate her taking responsibility for financial matters. In some cases she is, in a measure, an outsider who steps into an already functioning establishment and is accepted partly as wife and partly as a permanent guest. Some

women find this situation difficult to adjust to; they do not want to be patronised.

- (3) An older person may have reduced physical capacity : an older husband may be unable to meet the sexual expectations of a young wife. Moreover, if the younger person is interested in active sport, the older one may not be able to keep up. While still in the prime of life the younger person may have to care for a senile spouse. On the average, women live longer than men; wives tend to outlive their husbands. In a marriage in which the wife is considerably younger than the husband, she is almost sure to face years of widowhood.
- (4) If the husband is considerably younger than the wife, their problem of adjustment during the wife's menopause may be accentuated : at that period some women become nervous, change in appearance, and put on weight. With the traditional masculine preference for feminine youthfulness, it is possible that adjustment in such cases might become complicated.
- (5) The family of each spouse may have difficulty in accepting the other spouse : if, for example, a girl of twenty marries a widower of fifty, it could give the parents a son-in-law older than themselves and give the girl step-children older than she is. When the couple have a child, it would be younger than its nieces and nephews.
- (6) There may be a problem with regard to common friends. The very young wife trying to assume a matronly role in order to fit into a group of women of her husband's age may have difficulty because the older women

do not readily accept her as one of their company. She may appear younger and more inexperienced than is actually the case. The older husband trying to keep pace with the friends of a very young wife may have an equally difficult problem. They can scarcely accept him as one of their own companions, and he must often force upon himself interest in their recreations. Instead of his appearing more youthful, this accentuates his age. In many cases there is no group into which both husband and wife readily fit as a couple.

- (7) Since tradition is more favourable to the marriage of an older man and a younger woman than to one in which the age difference is reversed, an older wife and a younger husband have the problem of adjusting to an attitude that places their marriage in the category of the unusual. People look curiously at them and wonder why they did it.

The data pertaining to the present study are presented in Figure 5.2 and need to be considered against the background given above.

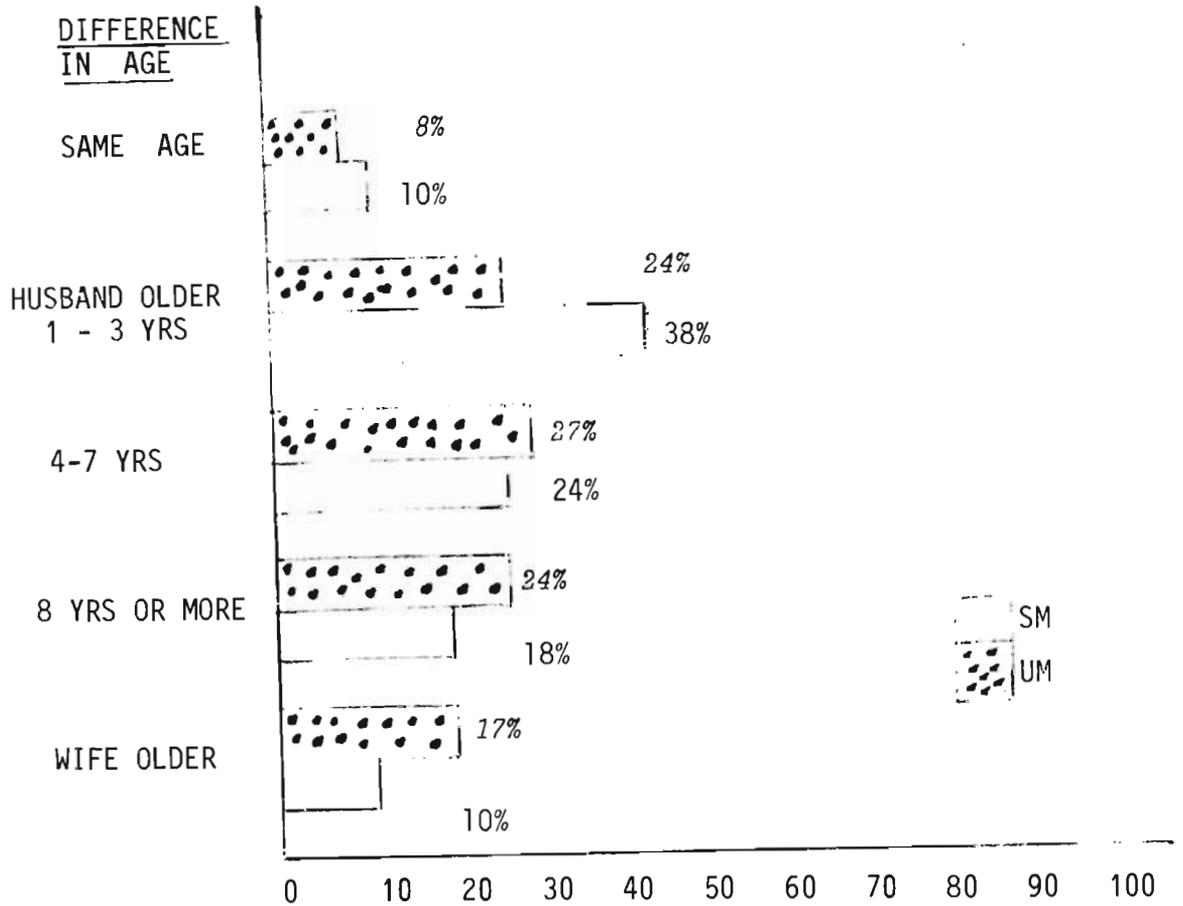


FIGURE 5.2 : DIFFERENCE IN AGES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY TYPE OF MARRIAGE

It will be noticed that there is a greater proportion of SM couples in both the "same age" and the "husband older by 1-3 years" categories than UM couples (SM 10% : UM 8% and SM 38% : UM 24%, respectively). When these two categories are combined, the ratio becomes SM 48% : UM 32%. Conversely, the UM couples outnumber the SM couples in the "4-7 years" and "8 years or more" brackets in which the husbands are older than their wives. The ratio is UM 51% : SM 42%. These findings are consistent with those of Christensen

and Meissner 1953, viz., the greater the age difference between the mates, the greater the likelihood of problems in the marriage(pp. 641-644).

It is also interesting to note that in 17% of the UM group the wives were older than their husbands, as opposed to 10% in the SM group. This result lends support to the observation made by Blood and Blood : that the problems in the intergenerational marriages are more likely in wife-older than in husband-older marriages.

Number of years married (Item 2b)

The average number of years for which the two sets of couples in the sample were married is almost the same (SM \bar{X} = 8,3 years; UM \bar{X} = 8,7 years). In the UM group, 13% sought professional assistance in their first year of marriage and 67% by their fifth year. Twenty percent were seeking assistance after being married for ten years or more. Several of the couples who fell in this category reported that they had already sought assistance before the tenth year of their marriage.

Linguistic affiliation (Item 3)

The distribution of the SM and UM husbands and wives by linguistic affiliation are depicted in Figure 5.3

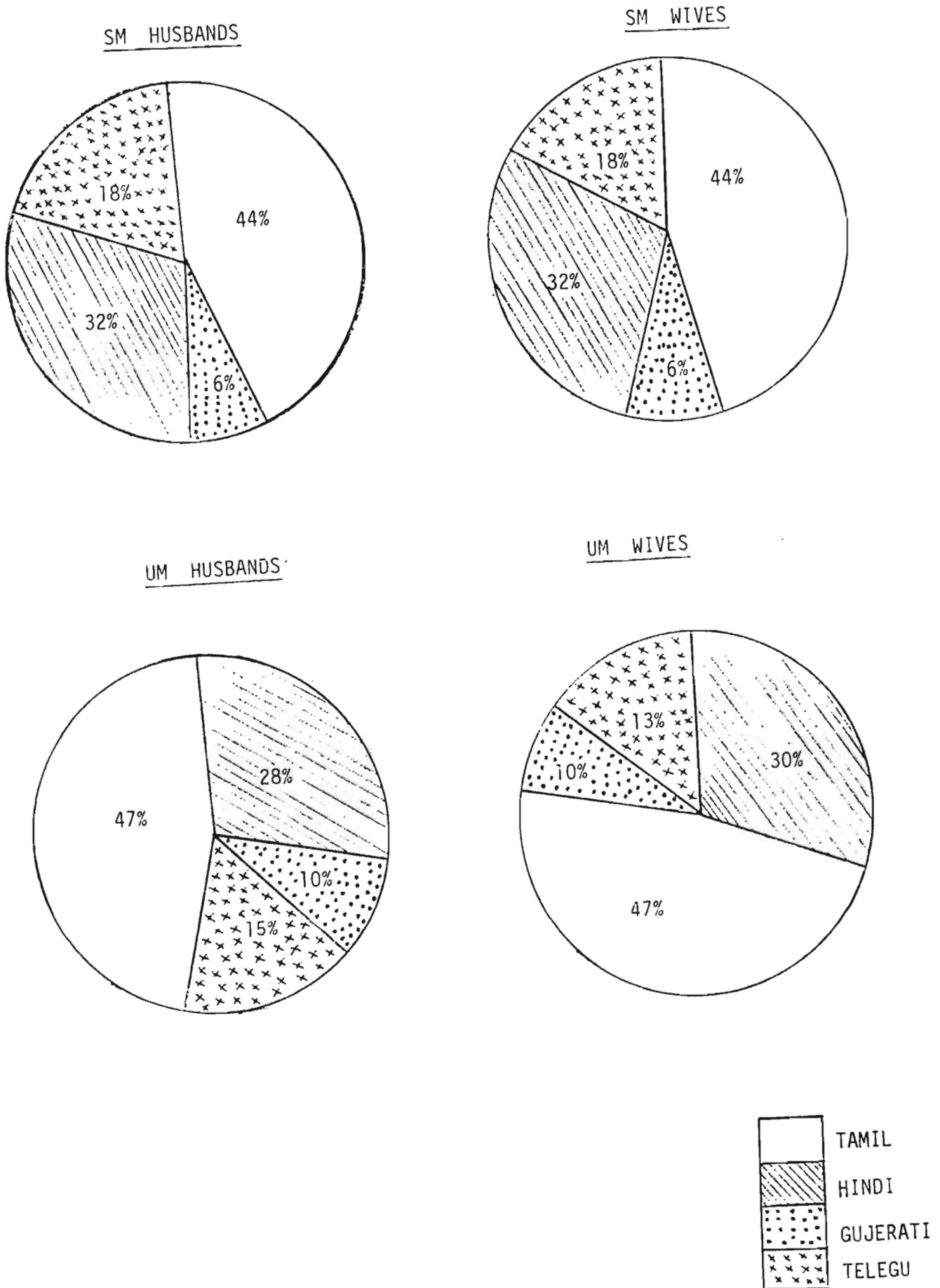


FIG. 5.3 : DISTRIBUTION OF SM AND UM SAMPLES BY LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

The most striking feature is the virtual absence of marriages across linguistic lines. Two UM Hindi-speaking husbands married two UM Telegu-speaking wives. In contrast, there were no cross-linguistic marriages among the SM couples.

Educational Level (Item 4)

Because educational attainment is generally correlated with occupational status and economic success, marital stability also varies with educational level (Ogburn, 1948, pp. 474-476).

Numerous studies going as far back as the basic researches of Burgess and Cottrell (1939) and those of Terman (1938), have found a relationship between years of schooling and happiness and duration of marriage. More recently Luckey (1966) found marital satisfaction positively related to years of schooling (pp. 44-48). Barry (1970) in a review of factors associated with marital breakdown, noted that those characteristics generally considered to lead to a stable male identity are also associated with marital stability, and he cites a high educational level as one of these characteristics (pp. 41-54).

There is also some evidence from Komarovsky's work (1967) which suggests first, that the higher the husband's educational level, with its connotations of increased verbal communication skills, the more self-disclosure, empathy and sympathy there is likely to be between him and his wife; the second, that the husband in higher occupational levels is apparently less rigid in his role playing within marriage; he has more confidence within himself, and is able to swap roles when necessary, for instance, in respect of child care and domestic chores; also, since he is highly educated, he is likely

to be associated with a financially rewarding job which may well confer high status in the community. It may be this status, combined with job satisfaction, and a feeling of being a success (at least in his wife's eyes) which enables highly educated husbands to be more understanding towards their wives. Thus schooling which is the pathway to a stable income-producing occupation, gives the kind of economic foundation associated with stable marriages. The highly educated group moves into professional positions, and the marriage is protected by more social pressures such as reputation, respectability and social expectation.

It is also likely that those with higher levels of schooling marry later and have more maturity of judgement, perhaps in mate choice by virtue of more extensive dating and exposure to a wider range of choice. Schooling in itself is a maturing experience. Greater tolerance for others and greater ease in making adjustments may be required. Perhaps those with more education develop superior problem-solving techniques. Certainly the way a couple approaches problems in their marriage is of prime importance to its success (Goode, 1956, p. 40).

It is interesting to note that in a study undertaken by the HSRC, involving Whites, Indians and Coloureds of both sexes, the finding was that "men (irrespective of population group) apparently did not really care what their wives' level of academic training was. The women, on the other hand, throughout preferred their husbands to be better educated than themselves" (p. 3). The mens' response is surprising since it is generally expected that men would tend to marry females whose amount of education is more or less similar to their own. Such women are likely to hold similar values, goals and outlooks on life, and thus have more in common than is generally true in cases

where wide gaps exist in educational background. The women's response, on the other hand, is in the expected direction. The young woman who can associate herself by marriage with a person of higher education and training is bargaining for a better standard of living than she could expect as a result of her own training and skills.

Cuber and Harrof (1962) offer an interesting and down-to-earth explanation about why some highly educated men and women strive to keep their marriages stable : these couples have a vested interest in an intact marriage because so much is invested in joint property and possessions. After divorce, both husband and wife are likely to be poorer, he because of alimony costs, she because she is unlikely either to earn the equivalent of her pre-divorce income or to receive as much in alimony. For less educated men, in lower status occupations, the financial effects of divorce are not so devastating, since both husband and wife generally have less to lose (pp. 140-145).

The distribution of husbands and wives in this study, according to their level of education, is shown in Figure 5.4.

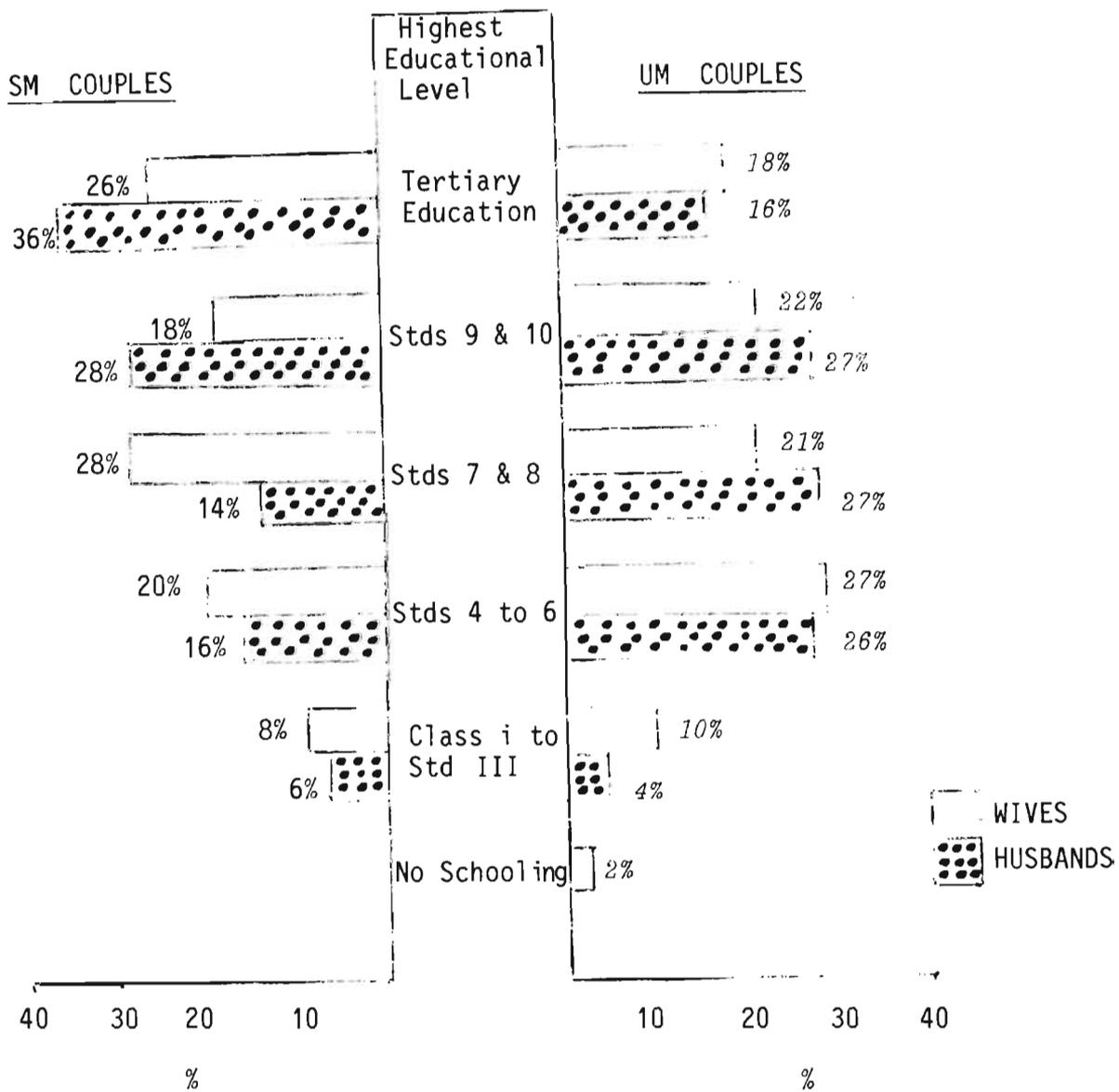


FIG. 5.4 : HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY TYPE OF MARRIAGE

Figure 5.4 shows that higher percentages of UM males than of SM males are concentrated at an educational level of Std. 8 and below (SM 36% : UM 57%). The same is true of females though the difference here is less conspicuous (SM 56% : UM 60%). At the upper end of the educational ladder the reverse occurs : there is a higher percentage of SM males as well as SM females when compared to their counterparts in the UM groups (SM 64% : UM 43% for males and SM 44% : UM 40% for females). Once again the gap between the SM and UM females was smaller than that amongst the males.

Further examination of Figure 5.4 shows that 20% more females in the SM group, and 3% more in the UM group, compared to SM and UM males respectively, had an educational level of standard 8 and below. Correspondingly, at the upper levels, 20% more SM males and 3% more UM males had an educational level of standard 9 or higher compared to the females of their respective groups.

The belief in the intellectual and educational superiority of the male has so long been a part of Indian thinking that few men, and for that matter few women, are comfortable in a relationship where the female is obviously more outstanding. A marriage having this relationship frequently brings feelings of resentment, inadequacy, and frustration to the household. Few men wish to have their position of authority in the family threatened by the superior educational qualifications of their wives. Some social workers who participated in the field work believed that the educated Indian man wants a wife who will flatter his ego. Women reared in the popular tradition wish to feel that their husbands actually are superior persons to whom they can look up. Although one might think that females at universities would hold different views in this regard, the writer's class discussions indicate that a

significant proportion of university females also hold the same view.

The in-depth interviews revealed that Indian men are not particularly attracted to women highly qualified in one or other of the professions inspite of the obvious financial benefits that would flow from such a union. This view was supported by the typical response : "There is more to a marriage than money". This finding is in conflict to the HSRC finding mentioned earlier.

Relating the findings of this study to marital adjustment, the happily married couples, both husbands and wives, in the SM group were, on the average, better educated than their counterparts who were experiencing problems. This advantage, together with its accompanying benefits, apparently made life less stressful for the SM couples and aided their adjustment in marriage.

Occupation (Item 5); Monthly salary (Item 6)

Economic resources, and worries about such resources, play an important part in the material and psychological well-being of the individual and the family. There is considerable evidence that certainty and regularity of income are favourably related to success in marriage. Burgess and Cottrell reported this relationship as far back as 1938. Parke and Glick (1967) cite the elimination of poverty as one of the two factors which will probably reduce the divorce rate of the future, for they found stability of marriage related to stability and amount of income. Bernard's study (1966) related income to marital stability. Rainwater (1965, p. 82) found that economic problems pile up in the lower socio-economic classes and bring with them problems in the marital relationships. This, of course, is inevitable in a society where so much in the way of escape from monotony is dependent on cash expenditures.

Scanzoni (1968) found that the divorce rate is higher for women married to husbands in a lower socioeconomic position than that of their fathers. Presumably, such women expect more than their husbands can give, thereby making marital agreements difficult (pp. 452-461).

In addition to such attitudinal correlates, the divorce rate has been shown to vary with the category of occupation for both men and women. Contrary to the picture presented by the television soap operas, the work of Glick and Carter (1970) indicates that the highest divorce rates for men are among craftsmen, service workers and labourers. The lowest divorce rates for men are among farmers, professional workers, managers and salesworkers. For women, they found that the highest rate includes clerical workers and service workers, while the lowest rate includes farmers, professional women and salesworkers.

From such findings, it can be seen that marital stability is associated with a number of aspects of occupation and economic level. Such job-related factors may be a continuing source of strain on the family's ability to maintain stable relations.

In the present study the distribution of the SM and UM spouses by occupation is shown in Figure 5.5

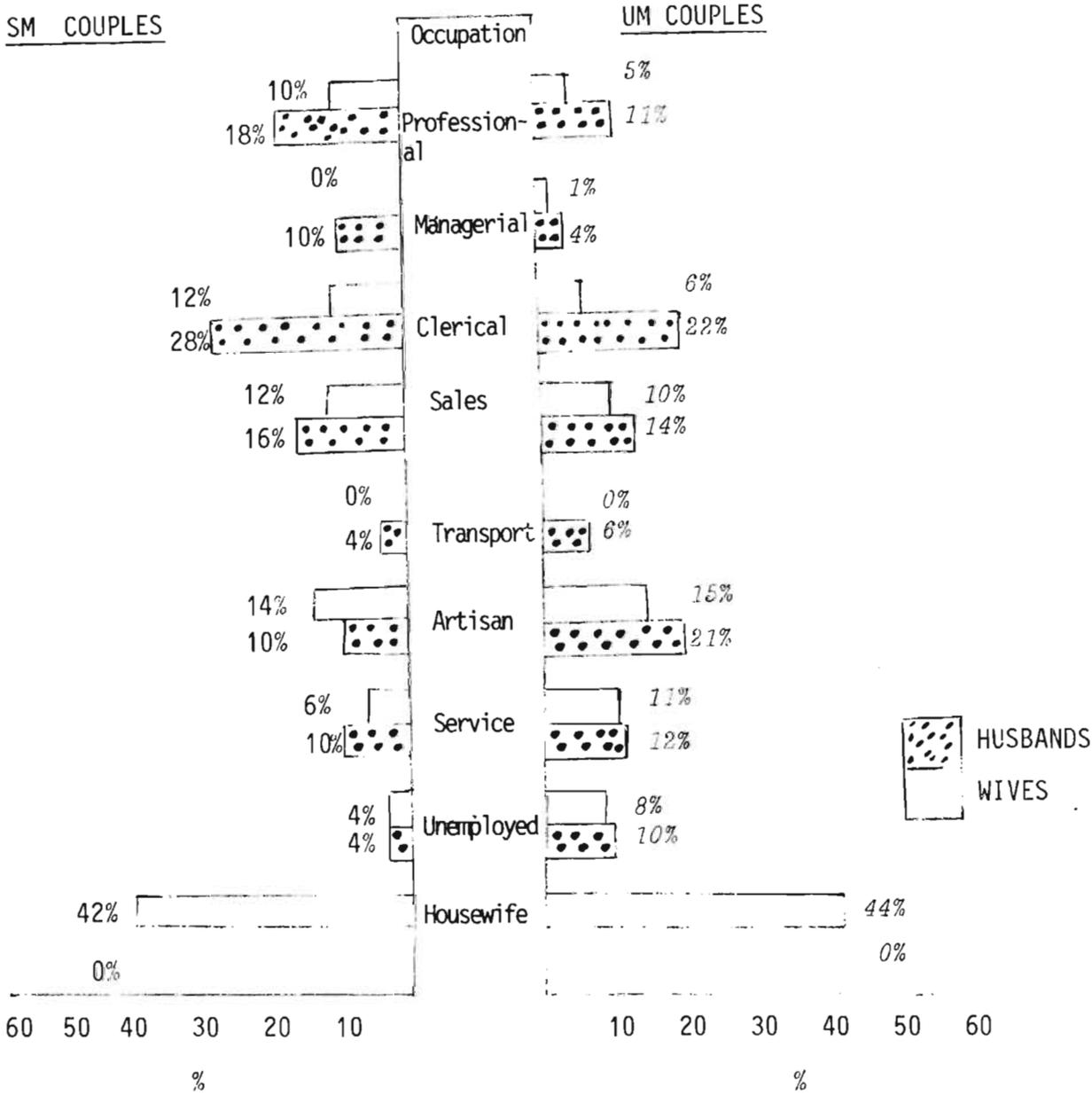


FIG. 5.5 : OCCUPATION OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY TYPE OF MARRIAGE

An examination of the data shows that the occupations of the spouses in the total sample are spread over various categories as follows:

Professional	: Teachers, lawyers, social workers, doctors, insurance personnel and nurses
Managerial/ Administrative	: Business proprietors, building contractors, supervisors in factories, managers in firms and bus owners
Clerical	: clerks, book-keepers and typists
Sales	: shop assistants, hawkers, insurance agents, commercial travellers and salesmen
Transport	: bus drivers, truck drivers and taxi drivers
Artisan	: clothing machinists, machine operators, tailors, motor mechanics, carpenters and bricklayers, plumbers, electricians and painters
Service	: waiters, barmen, odd-job-men, labourers, caretakers and municipal cleaners and drivers.

Further examination of Figure 5.5 shows that a greater percentage of UM males (SM 20% : UM 33%) and a greater percentage of UM females, than their SM counterparts (SM 20% : UM 26%), fall in the two lower categories, viz., artisan and service. During the course of the interviews it was established that a number of those who were unemployed, both amongst men and women, in the SM and UM groups, belonged to the artisan category. They were mainly the victims of the serious recession that was prevalent throughout the country at the time of the research. More than twice the number of individuals who were unemployed belonged to the UM group.

At the other end of the occupational ladder, the concentration of the SM males in the professional and managerial ranks was more marked when compared to their UM counterparts (SM 28% : UM 15%). A similar, but less clear-cut trend, was discernible among the two groups of females (SM 10% : UM 6%).

In the middle categories comprising clerical, sales and transport, the SM males have a 6% advantage over the UM males (SM 48% : UM 42%). A similar trend prevails among the females (SM 24% : UM 16%).

It is also noteworthy that the number of housewives in both categories are almost identical (SM 42% : UM 44%).

Overall, the SM group have a clear advantage over the UM group in the various combinations of job categories mentioned above, taking into account the status attached to them. This is true for husbands and wives. From this it would appear that those occupations with high community control tend to be more stable. Conversely, at the lower levels there were those whose occupations entailed little community control. Among these were clothing machinists, motor mechanics, bricklayers, waiters and labourers. Social networks in the upper social strata are larger and more closely-knit, so that the social consequences of marital discord are likely to be greater. Women are also much less likely to want a divorce at higher levels, because the discrepancy between their possible or real income and their husband's income is much greater than it is toward the lower social strata; their loss in the event of a divorce would be greater. Thus the motivation to keep the marriage intact is greater in the upper levels of occupation (Goode 1982, p. 157).

The mean monthly salaries of the SM males exceed that of the UM males by R156-00 while the mean of the SM females was R186-00 higher than that of their UM counterparts. It is inevitable that the differences in the incomes of the various couples would be reflected in their living standards. As a group, the UM couples would experience greater financial hardship and this, in turn, could be expected to place them at a disadvantage in their marital relationships.

State of physical health (Item 7)

The state of one's health is significant in personal relations and in the role of the individual in the family. For this reason the researcher considered it essential to obtain an impressionistic judgement of each individual's state of health. This was based upon the informant's own description, occasionally supplemented by medical reports. Physical health was rated "poor" if the person was suffering from some definite disorder or was generally ailing. No actual checklist of diseases was used, but such conditions as epileptic fits, recurrent peptic ulcers, asthmatic attacks or chronic heart ailment earned a rating of "poor" health. Past illnesses, if a person had recovered fully and apparently permanently, were not classified as being in a poor state of health. The interviewer and her assistants used their discretion in determining the dividing line between "good" and "average" health on the basis of the nature of the complaints and their observations.

The distribution by state of physical health of the SM and UM husbands and wives is given in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1

DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY STATE OF PHYSICAL HEALTH (in percentages)

State of Physical Health	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Good	80	88	78	79
Average	16	10	12	15
Poor	4	2	10	6
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

The table shows that both husbands and wives of the SM group enjoyed better physical health than the husbands and wives of the UM group. A close examination of the data in the "good" and "poor" categories provides statistical support for this observation. The relatively high percentage of the UM husbands (10%) who have poor health is particularly significant since it proved to be an economic handicap in several families. When the figure is combined with the "average" category (12%) it will be noted that almost one-quarter of the husbands in the UM group fail to come up to the standards of physical health generally associated with proper role functioning.

Only child (Item 8)

In lay circles it is often asserted that since "only children" have no brother or sister contacts upon which to base their marital relationships, they make poor husbands and wives. It is claimed that they are the "favoured and spoilt ones". If this were true, it is reasonable to expect that a greater number of "only children" would be found in the UM category. An examination of the data in the present study do not support this belief.

The distribution of the sample on this item was fairly even for both groups and both sexes : 2% of the SM husbands, 2% of the SM wives, 3% of UM husbands, and 1% of the UM wives were only children.

Eldest/youngest among brothers and sisters (Item 9)

More significant, perhaps, than the mere size of the family is the place of the person within it. The different positions of the eldest, middle and youngest children in the family constellation might very well produce or influence certain personality traits which might affect social adjustments, including

those of the marriage relationship.

The findings in the study show that "eldest" and "youngest" children are found in larger numbers among the UM group, more especially among the UM husbands. The figures for all the groups are given in the table below.

TABLE 5.2

DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY
"ELDEST"/"YOUNGEST" BIRTH ORDER (in percentages)

Birth Order	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Eldest	6	6	12	8
Youngest	8	6	14	10

Although the trend appears to be in the direction of poorer marital adjustment in the case of the first-and last-born children, this conclusion must remain very tentative until it is confirmed by future studies involving larger samples.

Rather than simply relating order of birth to marital adjustment for husbands and wives independently, future research workers in this area should correlate marriage adjustment with the different combinations of birth order, such as an oldest child mated with an only child, an oldest with an oldest, an oldest with a middle, an oldest with a youngest, a middle with an only, a middle with a middle, and so on. The number of cases in the present group of 150 marriages was too small to work out the ten combinations required.

Additional information pertaining to biographical data (Items 10-13)

The data pertaining to these items are presented in a composite table, Table 5.3.

TABLE 5.3

RESPONSES OF SM AND UM HUSBANDS AND WIVES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO THEIR PARENTS, SIBLINGS AND PREVIOUS MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Item No.	Personal Information Question	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
		Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
10	Mother still alive	76	72	68	70
11	Father still alive	52	54	49	59
12	If yes, marriage ended by:				
	death	2	0	1	0
	divorce	0	0	2	0
	desertion	0	0	3	0
13	Serious marital problems among brothers and/or sisters	20	26	35	42

Items 10, 11 and 12 hardly reveal any reliable trends which differentiate the happily married and unhappily married couples.

Item 13, on the other hand, clearly indicates that there is a higher incidence of serious marital problems among the siblings of UM husbands and wives than among siblings of their SM counterparts. This is not unexpected. Early experiences and environmental conditions probably play an important part in shaping individuals into the kind of marriage partners they eventually become. Because

of its importance this item will be discussed at greater length.

Happiness of parents' and of respondents' marriages

A relationship between the marital happiness of the respondents in this study and that of their parents can be expected for the following two reasons:

- (1) the probability that happy temperaments are in part a matter of heredity, and
- (2) the equally strong probability that long exposure of the child to an atmosphere charged with tension and conflict between parents conditions the immature personality in ways which makes any kind of social adjustment difficult.

The foundations of a good marriage, says Kirkpatrick (1955), go back to the early years of the life of the partners. Marriage is "the second act in a two-act play in which the first act is the background experience of the individual". It is generally accepted that the child is profoundly shaped by his early emotional relationships as well as the example the parents have provided and the attitudes and training they transmit to their children (p. 63).

The young person witnesses a recurring cycle of transactions and frequently incorporates his parents' rules for dealing with the situation to such an extent that he involuntarily responds in a similar way when confronted by the same kind of problems in his own marriage. When his partner brings a different set of rules and expectations there can be some confusion and misunderstanding of the other's underlying messages and rules. Success in adapting will depend on their individual capacity to be flexible and to change (Hinchcliffe et al., 1978, p.38).

In lay circles, one often hears the statement that marriage happiness runs in families - and so do unhappiness and divorce. It is obviously incorrect to

The parents' marriages (Item 13)

A large percentage of the UM wives (38%), as opposed to the SM wives (8%), regarded their parents' marriages as being either "unhappy" or "very unhappy". A similar trend was evident in the ratings of the males (SM 8% : UM 30%). At the other end of the scale, a much bigger proportion of SM wives (70%), compared to UM wives (39%), and SM husbands (72%) compared to UM husbands (39%), perceived their parents' marriages as being "happy" or "very happy".

These responses, taken together, indicate that the domestic happiness of the parents is correlated with the marital adjustment of their children.

It needs to be pointed out, however, that the happiness of the parental marriage is not in itself all-important. Even where both sets of parents were "very happily" married, some couples reported marital disagreements and dissatisfactions. And where parents of both husband and wife have been "unhappy" or "very unhappy" in their marriage, a significant proportion of couples live in agreement and contentment. Moreover, in a particular case, the unhappy marriage of both sets of parents may actually operate to make for the happiness of the couple in marriage. This outcome is most probable if the partners are intelligent and adaptable, and if this fact of their parents' marital unhappiness makes them all the more determined to achieve success by seeking more information, knowledge and advice, and putting more actual effort into making a success of their marriage.

The respondents' marriages (Item 13)

A greater proportion of the husbands, compared to the wives, in the SM group rated their marriages "very happy" (Husbands 56% : Wives 42%). A similar trend was evident in the case of the UM couples (Husbands 9% : Wives 0%). When

the "very happy" and "happy" ratings are combined, in Table 5.4 the SM husbands still out-number the SM wives (SM Husbands 96% : SM Wives 94%). This tendency is even more marked in the UM group (UM Husbands 23% : UM Wives 8%).

At the other end of the scale no husband or wife in the SM category was rated "unhappy" or "very unhappy". This is not surprising since the social workers who recommended them for inclusion in the study were asked specifically to choose only happily married couples for the SM sample. A noteworthy feature is that six of these wives and four of these husbands gave their own marriages a rating of "average". Obviously there is a difference in the way the marriages of these ten individuals are perceived by an outsider on the one hand, and by themselves on the other. In the case of 94% of the SM wives and 96% of the SM husbands, however, the perceptions of both the social workers who made their recommendations and the couples themselves, coincided. Such a high incidence of agreement is an indication of the accuracy with which the present sample has been selected.

In the UM group 67% of the wives and 41% of the husbands regarded their marriages as being "unhappy" or "very unhappy".

It is interesting to note that eight UM wives saw their marriages as being "happy". However, this was conditional to their being left to solve their problems on their own. Unhappiness arose when in-laws and other relatives interfered in their personal affairs.

Overall, the results indicate that husbands tend to perceive and rate their marriages as being happier than their wives do. This suggests that women are more alert than men are to tensions within the marital relationships. Moreover,

it is possible that women are more likely than men to be dissatisfied within marriage since marriage offers fewer immediate personal benefits for them. It is the wife who must make the greater adjustment to marriage since the transition from the single to the married state presumably requires less adjustment for men. The greater part of the husband's day continues to be spent much as it was before his marriage, whereas this is rarely so for the wife, for, if she continues to work, she is likely to have to combine the job of housewife with that of full-time worker outside the home. This may well produce conflicting requirements between her work outside and inside the home. Additionally, women who work full-time outside the home undertake far more household tasks than do men. This, in itself, may be a source of stress, partly because of the fatigue ensuing from the additional workload, but also, partly because it means that she will have less opportunity for relaxation. Setting aside the particular problems faced by the working wife, even if the wife does not work following marriage, there may be adjustment difficulties for her since she has to learn to adopt a completely new life-style, and the absence of colleagues, work mates and the loss of an independent income, will require varying degrees of adaptation which may all contribute to a sense of increasing isolation (Young and Willmott, pp. 55-58, p. 973).

Another noteworthy feature is that the parents of the respondents had married lives that in many respects were not too different from the marital experiences of their offspring. Compatibility in marriage for most of the parents was a tenuous affair at best. This was also true for the respondents. Most of the conflicts in the respondents' parents' marriages emerged, it appears, as a result of specific concerns, such as a reaction by the wife against her husband's drinking and other outside activities, as well as a rather vague instability which resulted from a lack of ability to resolve conflicts in the home. One

area of disagreement gradually led on to a general set of conflicts between the parents that eventually took on a tone of bitterness and over-all reluctance to reduce the conflict. Although some of the parents withdrew from marriage (which can be taken as one way of resolving the problem), other parents "stuck it out" even though one or both were clearly unhappy : "My father always drank and spent money carelessly. There were a lot of arguments and mother threatened often to leave him but she never did".

Events which upset or disturbed respondent in childhood (Item 14)

More than twice the number of UM husbands and wives, compared to SM husbands and wives, reported traumatic episodes in their childhood years (Husbands SM 8% UM 22%; Wives SM 12% : UM 29%).

Some of the events mentioned by the respondents are as follows: "I had a nervous breakdown after the death of my mother". "Our father deserted us when we were still very young". "I witnessed my mother's adulterous behaviour" "Our mother deserted us". "My mother and father quarrelled violently". "I had a major heart operation". "My parents separated from each other".

These results indicate that there is a fairly close association between disturbing experiences in childhood and marital adjustment.

SUMMARY

The association between marital adjustment and certain biographical factors pertaining to the samples in this study, may be summarised as follows:

Couples who are experiencing marital problems tended to marry at an earlier age. Many of these marriages were hasty unions, often of short acquaintance

and against the wishes of one or both parents. Such wives were generally unprepared for the duties of managing a household; nor were their husbands always ready, materially and psychologically, to support a wife. Moreover, a greater proportion of unhappy wives, compared to happy ones, were pregnant at the time of their marriage. Some of these were pressurised into marriage by their parents in order to "save the family name" or legitimise the child.

In spite of these findings, this study has not been able to establish conclusively that there is a relationship between age at marriage and marital adjustment since significant numbers of couples in the younger age groups were happily married.

Wide differences in age between the spouses was associated with marital unhappiness.

The average number of years for which the two sets of couples in the samples were married is almost the same. Moreover, all the marriages except two were between couples who belonged to the same linguistic group.

Couples who were happily married as a group, tended to have a higher educational level than those who were experiencing problems in their marriages.

Distribution by occupation shows that a greater proportion of couples belonging to the maritally maladjusted group fell in the lower occupational categories while those who were more successful in their marriages tended to come from the middle and, to a greater extent, from the upper occupational strata.

Families in which marital problems were present were handicapped to a greater extent by poor physical health on the part of husbands and wives.

The commonly held assumption that "only children" are poor marital risks has not been supported in this study.

Although there is a suggestion that poor marital adjustment is more prevalent in the case of the first and the last born children, this finding is very tentative. It needs to be confirmed by future studies involving larger samples.

There is a higher incidence of serious marital problems among siblings of the unhappily married individuals than among siblings of happily married ones.

There is a relationship between the domestic happiness of parents and that of their offspring. A greater percentage of individuals who were enjoying marital happiness indicated that their parents also enjoyed domestic bliss. The converse was true in the case of those who were experiencing marital disharmony. Moreover, those who reported problems in marriage also reported a higher incidence of disturbing episodes in their childhood years.

II ECONOMIC FACTORS

It is generally accepted that economic factors have a pervasive influence on the relationship between spouses. For this reason they are of primary importance in marital adjustment. Complaints in this area relate not only to money itself but to employment and working conditions as well. The complaints connected with the money aspect may, for instance, be that the husband withholds too much of his earnings from the family coffers or that his income is insufficient to meet what the wife considers to be the essential needs of the family and the maintenance of an acceptable standard of living. In the employment area, an important source of conflict relates to the working wife.

In a broad sense, says Landis (1975), the real problem of the modern marriage is not merely how money should be earned or how it should be spent, but rather the kind of values in life which the couple seek to obtain through its use (p.359). Seen in this light, differences in ideas concerning the use of money in the marriage are symbolic of the basic differences in personal values and aspirations. The ends which the individual pursues with money reflects his total value system. Thus, according to Nimkoff (1953), economic items such as as regularity and continuity of employment, a steady income, savings and occupations characterised by stability and social control, may all be taken as indicating "a stabilised and socialised personality which readily adjusts to the marriage situation" (p. 184).

Regularity of employment since marriage (Items 15, 16, 17, 18)

The conventional expectation among Indians is that the husband will be the chief breadwinner, and that he will be regular in his employment, stay in the same place of employment (except, perhaps, when a change of job means advancement for him), and provide for the needs of his family. Items 15, 16, 17 and 18, taken as a unit, indicate the extent to which the SM and UM couples were alike, or perhaps different, in these respects.

Table 5.5 shows the regularity with which the chief breadwinner was employed.

TABLE 5.5

REGULARITY OF EMPLOYMENT BY CHIEF BREADWINNER (in percentages)

Reasons for unemployment	Stable Marriages	Unstable Marriages
Irregularly employed	4	33
Always employed but constantly changing place of work	12	19
Regularly employed	84	48
Total	100%	100%

ability which might, particularly in the case of the husband, reduce the probabilities of success in marriage.

Savings : A high ratio of savings to earnings is likely to be associated with good marital adjustment. The prudent, thrifty, and stable young man or woman is obviously a better matrimonial risk than is the reckless, extravagant, and mobile individual. The researcher found that the sheer amount of savings was not a satisfactory indicator of economic security. The sense of security in many cases appeared to be relative to the given standard of living, which was largely dependent upon the income level. In the case of several SM couples, the cash savings were very small since the greater proportion of their resources had been channelled into fixed property, self-improvement programmes and investments, such as insurance policies and retirement annuities. It is advisable for future researchers who may be seeking information on "savings" to ensure that the questions relating to this item are sufficiently refined so that more precise responses can be obtained.

Approval/Disapproval of husbands whose wives were employed outside the home
(Item 19)

The traditional concept of marriage among Hindus - that it is a sacrament joining together two human beings in eternal and indissoluble union was an important factor in inducing individuals, especially wives, to accept their marital situation without complaint. After marriage, husbands and wives were left with little choice but to make efforts so that they could adjust to each other's roles and temperaments by subordinating personal gratification and making compromises between themselves rather than breaking with each other in the event of differences and dissimilarities. In this connection, Kapadia (1958) writes: "Marriage was a social duty toward the family and the community, and there was

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little concern for individual interest. The social background provided by the authoritarian joint-family afforded no scope for the recognition of any personal factor, individual interests, and aspirations, in the relations between husband and wife " (p.169). Under such a dispensation, room for conflict between the spouses was minimal. "Dharma Sastras" - the sacred writings of the Hindus - are full of references to a wife's duties and obligations. Complete obedience and devotion to her husband was expected. These practices and views originated in India but were carried over to South Africa (Kuper, 1960, p. 116).

With the passage of time and as a result of increasing westernisation, changes began to take place in the attitudes and values of Indian South Africans. The traditional was no longer adhered to rigidly and, as the level of education amongst females increased, the "working-wife family" concept arose. Changes in women's roles also implied alterations in the related roles of husbands and children.

Interviews with informed colleagues and leaders in the Hindu community suggest that today's working wives and their husbands are not yet sure about their roles. One informant expressed this view thus : "The confusion arises because of the absence of fit between the old role and the new role". Another said : "There are more chances of conflicts nowadays because the roles of the members of the working-wife families have not yet been redefined. Each one does not seem to be clear about his or her duties and responsibilities".

Unlike her traditional sister who was a helpmate to her husband and was secondary to him, the Hindu wife of today seeks a relationship of near-equality and wants to be viewed, not as a helpmate, but as a partner. When a woman believes in her general equality to the man, it is difficult for her to accept a traditional

definition of the marriage role based upon female inferiority. She is now less inclined to suppress her own wishes and aspirations relating to occupational achievement. In the course of the interviews, the researcher found that many women openly expressed dissatisfaction with a life style which confined her opportunities for personal advancement to home and family. This does not necessarily mean that she loves her husband, children and home any less. Rather, she believes that, provided there is a spirit of "give-and-take", a satisfactory accommodation of roles is possible.

Earlier empirical studies - those reported in the 1960's - generally found that marital satisfaction tended to be less for employed wives than for non-employed wives. The differences, however, were small (Bahr & Day, 1978, pp. 53-67),

More recent studies - all reported in the late 1970's - have been contradictory. Ferree (1976, pp. 431-441) found that employed wives reported greater marital satisfaction than non-employed wives. Glenn and Weaver (1978, pp. 269-282), working with data from three national surveys, found no statistical difference between employed and non-employed wives with respect to marital happiness.

Seen as a whole, the findings are contradictory. As Wright (1978) correctly points out, two conflicting forces are at work : "Working women enjoy an outside income and some increase in independence as a result of it; they get out of the house, and so on. But they also pay for these benefits in reduced free time for themselves, a more hectic pace, and a more complicated life. The life of the housewife, in contrast, is somewhat easier (at least, for the middle-class housewife) and is almost certainly less hectic in pace; but then their work (that is, housework) is possibly somewhat less satisfying than the tasks of their employed counterparts", p. 312).

It is likely, also, that the wife's satisfaction with her outside employment depends a good deal on the nature of the employment. Some jobs are certainly more interesting and challenging than others. As Wright puts it: "For every successful woman professional, there is another woman whose 'labour-force participation' consists of running a punch press eight hours a day" (p. 312).

In view of the conflicting research findings it would be unwise to generalise regarding the benefits or non-benefits of outside employment per se. More likely, these benefits hinge on such factors as the specific nature of the employment, the attitudes of both spouses toward the employment, and the extent to which the wife must also involve herself in routine household chores.

It is against this background that the effect of the wife's employment on marital adjustment as well as the husband's attitude towards his working wife need to be considered. It will be recalled from Figure 5.5 that 58% of the SM, and 56% of the UM wives were gainfully employed.

An overwhelming proportion of the husbands in both categories (SM 94% : UM 84%) approved of the fact that their wives worked. Of those husbands who objected, almost two-thirds belonged to the UM category (SM 6% : UM 16%). Some of the reasons given by the husbands in support of their objection were the following: "There is no one to take good care of the children", "There is no need for her to work because I earn enough", "I think it is her duty to take care of my sick mother".

The interviews revealed that tensions about work sometimes surfaced in disputes about the household duties. Although most men agreed that, as a result of the wife's full-time employment outside the home, more of the household chores should be

shared, they often resisted taking full responsibility for half the work. Frequently, they would insist on doing only those tasks that appealed to them or those which they considered could reasonably be undertaken by men.

Unsuitable working hours also proved detrimental to marital harmony especially if the husband was too demanding or intolerant of his wife's inability to pay him and the home the needed attention or when he could not accept the minor inconveniences caused to him on that account.

In some cases, attitudes about the desirability of the wife working fluctuated over time. Men who began the marriage not wanting their wives to work changed their minds as the children grew older and financial burdens increased.

The overall clinical impression gained was that major conflicts arose when wives worked against their husbands' wishes. In these cases the job was a source of constant friction. On the other hand, the husband's wanting his wife to work led to problems only when the wife herself preferred not to go to work. This was perceived as coercion on the husband's part. In the majority of cases however, the wives went to work willingly and with the full support of their husbands. The wives employment in these cases appeared to create fewer work-centered problems.

Residence of the couple (Items 20, 21)

Housing may be broadly defined as "that combination of physical factors consisting of the family shelter and the immediate neighbourhood in which the home is located (Bacon, 1943 , pp. 128-137). Housing thus comprises not only the actual living space of the family but its social setting in the neighbourhood and community. The housing of the underprivileged presents the most obvious situation capable of

producing family conflict, either directly or indirectly. The slum induces or exacerbates such diverse family problems as infant mortality, epidemic illness, sexual immorality, juvenile delinquency, and desertion. Inadequate housing, growing largely out of insufficient income, thus intensifies many family conflicts.

However, as Merrill et al., (1950) point out, not all problems of family housing are the product of inadequate income. Many families of the middle and upper-classes live under conditions which, in the matter of overcrowding at least, might be described as "upper-class slums". Family quarters are often as cramped in relatively expensive apartments as in older tenements. Tensions between husbands, wives and children who have inadequate space are thus not uncommon where the amount of the rent is not the primary consideration. Tempers may be frayed, harsh words exchanged, and the physical tranquility, so necessary to contented family life, may be difficult under these conditions (p. 315).

According to Burgess and Cottrell (1939), home ownership is positively correlated with marital adjustment (p. 539). This finding was subsequently confirmed by Locke (1951, p. 275). The researchers found that significantly higher proportions of happily married persons, than of unhappily married ones, were homeowners.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) point out that owning a home has a double significance for marriage. First, its location, type of structure, and rental or ownership status are expressions of the personal and social aspirations of the couple. Second, these same factors may have an effect upon the marriage, contributing to its success or failure. The tenant is proverbially mobile, while the homeowner is rooted locally. The latter has a more vital interest and takes a more active part in neighbourhood affairs. He becomes a member of the organizations and institutions of the community. He participates in the formation of public

opinion and finds his conduct controlled more and more by the attitudes and opinions of his neighbours (p. 539).

In the present study, 64% of the SM group, as compared to 39% of the UM group, owned the home in which they were living. In so far as satisfaction with their living/housing conditions were concerned, 50% of the UM group felt that they needed to improve on the existing state of affairs. In contrast, 20% of the SM group expressed dissatisfaction with their living/housing conditions. These findings are consistent with those of Burgess and Cottrell (1939, p. 539) and of Locke (1951, p. 275). Couples owning a home constitute a higher proportion of those whose marriages were relatively stable. From the interviews it became apparent that these husbands and wives saw the acquisition of a home as a common objective and a joint project, which has helped to integrate and unify them as a couple. This view is supported by Levinger who surveyed American literature on factors associated with divorce. He concluded that divorce was negatively associated with home ownership. The possession of a home seemed to provide an additional element of stability in the relationship. He also notes that the security provided by a home is particularly important for the wife, especially if she has children (Levinger, pp. 101-115, 1965).

Some typical replies which were received when the interviewees were requested to furnish reasons for their dissatisfaction with their living/housing conditions included the following : "Our living conditions are overcrowded and congested". "We are living with relatives at present because my husband is irregularly employed and the house is so cramped that we don't have any privacy". "We are living with my wife's parents and my mother-in-law's bossiness causes a great deal of conflict". "The rental that we pay for our present place is too high". "We live too far away from the bus-stop and railway station and this makes it difficult for us to go to work or to visit our people".

An assessment of the data gained in the course of the interviews also revealed that the frequency of change of residence was much higher in the case of UM couples. The SM couples, in comparison, tended to have a more stable history of marital accommodation. Several couples in the group reported that this initial accommodation after marriage was only a temporary measure. They used the period during which they rented as the time to save for more suitable, longer-term accommodation. In these cases a move to a second accommodation within the first year or two of marriage was part of a careful plan rather than a hasty change made necessary by unsatisfactory living conditions. Proof of such forward planning was less evident among the UM couples. The reasons for their having to leave one place of residence for another included the following : "Being in arrears with the rental"; "being asked to leave because of the husband's drinking and violence"; "being asked to 'get out' by the landlady"; "my mother couldn't get on with my husband and so she asked us to leave".

Adequacy of Income (Item 22)

Failure to earn sufficient money is an oft-heard complaint at welfare agencies. This is not surprising since money is ultimately connected with other aspects of family life. The ability to be financially viable is a matter that is rarely raised realistically ahead of marriage because at the time of courtship both partners are generally working. However, there is a need to look ahead and examine their likely financial resources when the wife no longer works for a period of years while she is looking after the children.

The wives in the present sample rated their feelings about the extent to which the total income accruing to the family met its economic needs. Their responses are distributed in the following way:

TABLE 5.6

WIVES' RATINGS OF THE ADEQUACY OF THE FAMILY'S TOTAL INCOME IN
RELATION TO ITS NEEDS (in percentages)

Type of marriage	Very Adequately	Adequately	Inadequately	Very Inadequately	Total
Stable marriages	24	60	14	2	100%
Unstable marriages	2	48	28	22	100%

A decidedly larger percentage of those who enjoyed a harmonious marital relationship gave ratings of "very adequately" and "adequately" as compared to the unstable group (SM : 24% vs UM : 2% and SM : 60% vs UM : 48%). On the other hand, 50% of the unhappy wives, as compared to only 16% of the happy ones rated the total income as being "inadequate" or "very inadequate" in meeting the economic needs of their families. Such marked differences in the ratings between the two groups suggests a relationship between the wives' perception of the adequacy of the family's income and marital adjustment. However, experienced social workers point out that while low income is undoubtedly a cause of family discord in many cases, there are other instances when deficiency in this area is blamed for the conflict when, in reality, other factors would appear to be more blameworthy. In such marriages, economic hardship may be an additional burden but it is likely that problems would still have arisen even if the economic path had been a smooth one. The substandard income makes it more difficult for husband and wife to tolerate each other's inadequacies.

There were certain families in the sample who were from a somewhat low economic level. Yet they appeared very contented. The explanation for this may lie in

the cooperation that existed between the spouses in meeting the minimum needs of the family. Feeling that one's income is adequate, says Goode (1956), is positively related to marital adjustment (p. 40). There were other families, on the other hand, where the income level was relatively high but there was little agreement between the spouses on the manner in which it should be spent.

Husband's efforts to provide for the economic needs of the family (Item 23)

As is the case in most societies, the Hindu father is expected to provide for his family by working and to see that financial obligations are honoured. According to experienced social workers women with marital difficulties often complain that their husbands are irresponsible or "tight-fisted" with money. In other instances, men are accused of spending a disproportionate share of their money on themselves. Perhaps they drink or gamble heavily or become involved with other women. These activities are a drain on family finances. Item 23 was designed to test this hypothesis that marital unhappiness is associated with failure on the husband's part to provide for the economic needs of the family.

TABLE 5.7

WIVES' RATINGS OF THEIR HUSBANDS' EFFORTS TO PROVIDE FOR THE ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE FAMILY (in percentages)

Type of marriage	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory	Total
Stable Marriages	38	48	12	2	100%
Unstable Marriages	4	33	29	34	100%

The differences between the ratings of the SM and UM wives is particularly marked at the opposite ends of the scale (SM : 38% vs UM : 4% and SM : 2% vs UM : 34%). When the "unsatisfactory" and "very unsatisfactory" categories are combined, 63% of the UM wives believed that their husbands' efforts to provide for the economic needs of the family fell below expected levels. Only 14% of the happily married wives held a similar view. This finding supports the observations made by social workers that irresponsibility on the part of husbands with regard to money leads to marital conflict. While the UM wives probably had genuine grievances about the **manner** in which their husbands spent money, the wives' eagerness to cast the blame for marital difficulties mainly on the spouses should not be overlooked.

The women with marital difficulties lodged a variety of complaints. Some mentioned that their husbands were irresponsible or mean with money, while others saw drinking and gambling as siphoning off a large part of the family budget. Conflict relating to money spent on drinking and gambling was particularly intense in those cases where men were married to women for whom economic security was paramount. Some wives indicated that they had recognised these deficiencies in their partners before marriage but they were convinced that they could change these habits after marriage. Some wives, particularly in the SM group, reported that they were successful, but these were very much in the minority, compared to those who reported failure.

In those cases where the husband complained, his complaint centred mainly around the wife's lavish spending. Often he accused her of being a bad manager and spending money on non-essentials or running up unnecessary debts.

SUMMARY

The main findings of the present study are highlighted in this section. The chief breadwinner in well adjusted families generally had more regular employment records. This offered their families a greater sense of security. Moreover, when they did change jobs, they often did so because of promotion or other forms of advancement. When the breadwinner in the unhappy families changed jobs, they often did so because it was necessary for their employers to dispense with their services for some reason or other.

The findings relating to the amount of savings and marital adjustment are inconclusive since the question used in this study to elicit data in this regard was not sufficiently refined.

Most husbands in both happy and unhappy marriages approved of their wives being employed outside the home. However the unhappy husbands tended to show a lesser amount of consideration with the inconveniences which the wife's employment necessitated.

Couples who were happily married more often owned their own homes compared to couples who were unhappily married. Ownership of home thus proved to be an index of marital stability.

An "adequate" income which made it possible for the family's basic needs to be met was more prominently found among happily married couples.

III COURTSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

The nature of the courtship may be full of clues about the future relationship. According to Le Masters (1957) almost all the studies to date support the theoretical proposition that marital adjustment can be predicted with reasonable accuracy for some during the engagement period. The assumption here is that marriage is a continuation of the interpersonal relationship begun earlier on (p. 169).

First meeting with future spouse (Item 24)

The couples in this study first became acquainted with each other in a variety of ways. These can be grouped under three main headings : introduction by a third person; informally, by the male introducing himself to the female; and an acquaintanceship that extended to their childhood and high school days. Table 5.8 provides more specific information on the ways in which the couples in this study met each other.

TABLE 5.8

NATURE OF MEETING AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT (in percentages)

Nature of Meeting	Stable Marriages	Unstable Marriages
Introduced by parents	22	18
Introduced by a relative (other than the parents)	28	31
Introduced by a friend	10	15
Met at work	10	8
Met at school	8	5
Other (specify)	22	23
TOTAL	100%	100%

TABLE 5.9

DURATION OF ACQUAINTANCE AND COURTSHIP (in percentages)

Duration of Acquaintance and Courtship	Stable Marriages	Unstable Marriages
Less than six months	2	37
About a year	58	28
About two years or more	32	21
Since childhood	8	14
TOTAL	100%	100%

A striking feature is that 37% of those who were experiencing marital problems knew each other for less than six months before marriage. A similar situation existed in only 2% of the SM group. The trend towards a longer period of acquaintance among the happily married couples was apparent in the next two categories: in Item 25, viz., "about a year" (SM 58% : UM 28%) and "about two years or more" (SM 32% : UM 21%). Contrary to expectations "knowing one's spouse since childhood" is apparently not associated with marital adjustment. Bowman (1981) writes as follows in this regard: "The marriage of childhood sweethearts does not always turn out so satisfactorily as storybooks lead one to suppose. The common assumption is that, if persons have liked each other since childhood, they must know each other well enough to marry successfully. In some cases this is true. The couple have developed long parallel paths and, in spite of contacts with other persons, they find each other most attractive.

In other cases, however, childhood sweethearts marry because they have been afraid of people and have lacked social experience. They cling to their earlier choice because their fear or lack of contacts prevents their making another.

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In other cases, however, childhood sweethearts marry because they have been afraid of people and have lacked social experience. They cling to their earlier choice because their fear or lack of contacts prevents their making another.

Such persons are emotionally immature and, in a sense, theirs is a child marriage. Since marriage is for adults rather than children and should be the outgrowth of adult experience, and since it succeeds or fails to the degree to which it can survive in an adult world, the marriage of such childhood sweethearts is sometimes a precarious one. It may not fail in the sense of ending in divorce, but it may fail in the sense of falling short of the possibilities of which marriage is capable" (p. 15).

In general, this study confirms that the following Burgess and Cottrell (1939) hypothesis "Companionship tested by time appears to be a better basis for successful marriage than the emotional feeling of certainty inspired by short-lived romantic love" (p. 168).

Length of engagement (Item 26)

The line of demarcation between the courtship and the engagement periods is somewhat vague. Many of the functions traditionally associated with the engagement period are now fulfilled during the courtship period. Thus many of the intimacies, confidences, and plans once deferred to engagement, are shared prior to engagement. Today, when young people associate so closely and when considerable physical contact is customary, many parents are inclined to look upon an engagement period of more than a year as producing too much sex tension. Viewpoints, however, differ on this point.

It needs to be emphasised that engagements do not automatically establish marital adjustment; they have to be functional or realistic to accomplish this purpose (Le Masters, 1957, p. 169). This means that during the engagement period the couple have to explore differences and potential areas of conflict, that they have to face issues instead of avoiding them. The presence of marked rigidity,

jealousy, dependence, moodiness, bad temper, with or without a tendency to excessive drinking, gambling and aggression needs to be noted. Often those who are in love may be confident of changing their partner after marriage. As mentioned earlier, this sometimes happens but it is a risky proposition. It is preferable to see whether change can occur before marriage.

If a short acquaintance period is a risky proposition so too are unduly long ones, says Dominian (1981). A couple may stay together year after year without getting married, their explanation being that they need to save money for a house or work a little longer. While these reasons may be very valid ones, it is possible, says Dominian, that they could be unconscious excuses: the couple need each other's friendship but not the implications of marriage. Sexual fears, the lack of desire for children, and the danger of losing one's independence, are some of the features that may be present in this situation (p. 13).

Table 5.10 provides data on the length of time which elapsed since the couples agreed to marry each other and the time they actually did so.

TABLE 5.10

LENGTH OF TIME BETWEEN ENGAGEMENT AND MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Length of time between Engagement and Marriage	Stable Marriages	Unstable Marriages
Less than six months	14	55
About a year	52	29
About two years	24	12
Three years or more	10	4
Total	100%	100%

There is a great deal of consistency in the responses to Items 25 and 26. In the UM group 55% of the couples married within six months or less after their initial agreement to settle down. This was true of only 14% of the SM sample. By far a greater proportion of the SM group married about a year or two after the initial time of agreement (76%); the same applied to 41% of the UM couples. This finding suggests that the extra period of time enabled couples to get to know their prospective spouses even better and to discover the differences between what the loved one was imagined to be and what he actually was.

The fact that some marriages are successful inspite of a short period of acquaintance and/or engagement while others are unsuccessful inspite of a long period of acquaintance and/or engagement suggests that "knowing" one's partner thoroughly before marriage is not an absolute prerequisite. However, having a reasonably good knowledge of the weaknesses of one's prospective mate puts the individual on his/her guard and either delays, postpones or changes his/her mind about the marriage. If it is decided to proceed with the marriage, the couple can be on the alert for difficulties and seek assistance early.

Frequency of seeing mate during courtship (Item 27)

The possible link between "frequency of seeing each other during the courtship period" and "marital adjustment" was investigated. The results are presented in the table below:

TABLE 5.11

FREQUENCY OF SEEING MATE DURING COURTSHIP (in percentages)

Frequency of seeing mate during courtship	Stable Marriages	Unstable Marriages
Once a month	8	10
Twice a month	10	11
Once a week	12	14
Twice a week	32	29
Almost everyday	38	36
TOTAL	100%	100%

The small differences between the two groups in each of the categories in Item 27 indicates that there is hardly any link between the two variables. It is interesting to note that 70% of the well-adjusted couples and 65% of the mal-adjusted ones saw each other as frequently as, at least, twice a week. The finding in this study is consistent with that of Locke's (1951, p. 90).

Conflict before marriage (Item 28)

It is recognised that the amount of conflict between husband and wife before marriage is not necessarily a reliable indicator of the amount of conflict that will occur after marriage. Indeed, it may be that the confrontation and the resolution of difficulties in the premarital period may decrease future points of conflict and result in easier marital adjustment. What appears to be a more likely source of future serious marital conflict are unresolved areas of conflict in the courtship which could recur during the marriage particularly at times of

stress.

The extent of conflict between the spouses in the sample prior to marriage are given in the table below.

TABLE 5.12

EXTENT OF CONFLICT BETWEEN SPOUSES BEFORE MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Extent of conflict between spouses before marriage	Stable Marriages	Unstable Marriages
None	28	22
A little	48	29
Moderate	16	39
A good deal	8	10
Very great	0	0
Total	100%	100%

In the SM group 28% of the couples reported that there were no serious conflicts between themselves and their spouses before marriage; a small percentage (22%) of the UM couples reported similarly. These statistics, taken together with those in the "moderate" (SM 16% : UM 39%) and "a good deal" (SM 8% : UM 10%) categories, indicate that there was decidedly greater conflict between the couples who were presently seeking assistance on account of marital problems . It must be pointed out that the higher incidence of conflict among the UM's after marriage could be exaggerated in view of the bitterness that arose as a result of the conflicts after marriage. Similarly, the extent of conflict among the SM's before marriage could be an under-estimate of the true situation. The relative harmony within marriage could have influenced the SM spouses to, unconsciously, view their earlier quarrels with greater leniency.

Some of the reasons given by informants for their premarital difficulties included the following: "He was double-crossing me. He was going out with other girls but denied it."

"She kept going out with other boys inspite of my repeated warnings".

"His drinking was a big problem. He became aggressive when he was drunk".

"He used to keep criticising and ridiculing my parents".

"She tried to control my life".

"He was stubborn and pig-headed and could never admit that he was wrong."

"She was very possessive."

The conflict among the UM's appeared to be much more intensified and focused mainly upon the male's behaviour. Despite continuous arguments and physical violence some couples stayed together throughout the acquaintanceship period, going from one argument to another. In some cases the arguments caused a break up in the relationship, but the separation was usually of short duration.

Reasons for marrying spouse (Items 28 a and b)

The General Pattern: Table 5.13 gives the percentages of SM wives, UM wives, SM husbands and UM husbands, who checked items in a list of reasons for marrying. Persons were to check as many reasons as they thought applied to their marriage. The table shows that the order of reported reasons for marrying, particularly in the first six, are approximately the same for SM wives, SM husbands, UM wives and UM husbands.

TABLE 5.13

PERCENT AND RATINGS OF SPOUSES CHECKING REASONS FOR MARRYING

Reasons for Marrying	Stable Marriages				Unstable Marriages			
	Wives		Husbands		Wives		Husbands	
	% of Res- ponses	Rating						
Love	74	1	70	1	66	1	73	1
To have a home	66	2	54	2	57	2	48	2
Common interests	38	3	40	3	31	5	33	5
To have children	36	4	32	5	33	4	34	4
To please parents	18	5	10	6	30	6	18	6
To satisfy sex desires	32	6	38	4	34	3	43	3
Economic security	22	7	2	9	22	8	5	10
Loneliness	8	8	8	7	12	10	16	7
To escape from your own family	6	9	0	10	28	7	2	12
Pregnancy	4	10	4	8	14	9	10	8
To take care of children	4	10	0	10	8	11	6	9
Other	0	10	0	10	0	12	4	11

The six most frequently checked items were "love", "to have a home", "common interests", "to have children", "to satisfy sex desires", and "to please parents".

Some of the more important variations in the general pattern of reasons for marrying were the following:

- (a) the SM wives rated "to satisfy sex desires" sixth, which was low compared to the rating of three given by both the UM wives and husbands and the rating of four given by the SM husbands.
- (b) The overall pattern suggests that there was a relatively close correspondence between the responses of the two sets of wives. A similar pattern was evident in the responses of the two sets of husbands.

In terms of the number of responses, six SM wives checked "to escape from your own family" as a reason for marrying. Over four times the number of UM wives gave this as one of their reasons.

Another reason given more frequently by the UM wives was pregnancy (14). A relatively low number of 4 SM wives reported this as one of the reasons for marrying.

The "other" category comprised 4 UM husbands. They married for the following reasons : two in order to have someone to take care of their aged parents; the other two were employed far away from home and, on their parents' insistence, married in order to have someone take care of their needs.

SUMMARY

Since marriage is a continuation of the interpersonal relationship begun earlier the period of courtship and engagement offers important pointers relating to the success or otherwise of a particular marriage.

The present study found that happily married couples, on the average, knew each other for a longer period of time before they married. This suggests that

companionship tested by the time is a better basis for successful marriage than the emotional feeling of certainty inspired by short-lived romantic love.

By far a greater proportion of the SM group in this study married about a year or two after their initial decision to share their lives. It is possible that the extra period of time enabled these couples to get to know their prospective partners even better and to discover the differences between what the loved one was imagined to be and what he actually is.

Another finding of this study was that there was a greater amount of conflict prior to marriage among unhappily married couples than among happily married ones. Two important reasons for marrying which were given by more UM wives were to escape from their parental home and pregnancy.

There were two areas in which no significant differences were found between the happily married and unhappily married groups. These were the circumstances under which individuals met their partners and the frequency with which the partners saw each other during the courtship period.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY (CONTINUED)

This chapter deals with the results pertaining to the following sections which appear in the Marital Study Questionnaire:

- IV Children and Marital Adjustment
- V Parental Influences on Marital Adjustment
- VI General Personality Traits
- VII Companionship and Compatibility between Spouses
- VIII Personality Traits as Perceived by Spouse

IV Children and Marital Adjustment

Introduction

Although the precise reason for any couple having children may vary, there appears to be a general belief that the presence of children in a family increases the chances of marital happiness. Among Indians, the failure of a wife to bear children is a common source of acute unhappiness. A woman who has difficulty in conceiving, says Kuper (1960), is often held responsible by her husband's family. Her affliction may be regarded as punishment for sin in her previous life and, accompanied by one of her own kin, she will try to expiate by devotions at the temple or vows of penance to her home gods (p. 118).

In the case of most Indian women, children and marriage go together. Indeed, marriage and children are what most young girls look forward to as the two

great chapters in their lives. Despite the headaches, the hard work, the expenses and the confinement which children bring, it is a rare mother who wishes she had not started a family and who would not do so again if she had to begin life afresh.

The view that children, on the whole are perceived as sources of gratification is supported by the research undertaken by Freedman and his associates (1959, pp. 48-56). These workers found that the majority of parents do not regret having had children: only one percent of their interviewees said that they would prefer not to have any children if they had the opportunity of living their lives again. Typical answers given by wives when asked about the advantages of having children include the following:

"Children are a joy."

"Children make you happy."

"I enjoy watching them grow and I relive my own childhood through them."

"I will have someone to care for me in my old age."

"There will be someone to take care of my husband when I am dead."

"Children give us a purpose in life through providing something to work for, to plan for and to look forward to."

Some mothers reported that they valued the contribution child rearing has made to their own development. They felt that the experience helped them to settle down and become more responsible as persons, less self-centred and more considerate of others.

Notwithstanding the benefit which both parenthood and parenting brings to a couple, the marital relationship is inevitably affected by the arrival of children, and in particular by the arrival of the first child. There is

consistent research evidence which indicates that couples with children in the home have lower marital happiness levels than those who have children. Couples with children also tend to have more financial problems and interpersonal stress (Burr 1970, pp. 26-37 ; Rollins and Cannon 1974, pp. 271-282; Campbell 1975, pp. 37-43).

Freedman et al., (1959, pp. 48-56) found that the presence of the first child changes people's views about the size of the family they would like. They observed that the number of children wanted a year after the birth of the first child was considerably lower than the number the couple stated they wanted at the time of their marriage. This change of heart could be due, at least partially, to the stresses generated by the first child. Freedman et al., support this view: the depressive effect which the first child has upon people's intended family size, is the result of the wives' first experiencing the cares of motherhood. Le Masters (1957) attributes the adverse affect which the first child has upon the marital relationship to poor preparation for the parental, and especially the maternal role (pp. 352-355).

It is now clear that parenthood changes the life situation of a couple. During the early years particularly, the child is potentially a source of strain for both parents. The sleeping patterns of the parents may be badly disrupted; their sex relationship may suffer; their social activities may frequently need to be modified; and they may quarrel over the manner in which the children should be raised. The wife's energy and patience may be taxed by the continuous demands of child care and housework. The husband's customary routine of relaxation each evening may be upset and his monopoly on his wife's attentions is reduced.

Given a satisfactory marital relationship, the potential stresses of parenthood can be absorbed and can even serve to strengthen the union of the couple. This happens when husband and wife participate co-operatively in this vital enterprise and show their consideration and understanding of each other by a fair division of labour. The reverse is likely to happen in the case of couples whose preparental relationship, to begin with, was unsatisfactory: the stresses of parenthood are likely to aggravate existing weaknesses in their marriage.

This weakness is sometimes foreshadowed by the lack of agreement between husband and wife on the critical question of whether they should have a child in the first place. When the child does come, the couple may have conflicts about issues connected with its rearing. The greater burden of parental responsibilities is, of course, borne by the mother. Mothers who report that they find their duties too much for them, may be expressing indirectly, dissatisfaction with the extent to which their husbands are assuming their share of the responsibility. Even if this dissatisfaction is not present, the irritability of harassed mothers with their children may manifest itself in their marital relationship (Burgess & Wallin, 1953, p. 713).

According to Dominian (1968) the earlier into the marriage pregnancy and birth of a child occurs, then the more likely it will be that these events will have a disorientating effect upon the marital relationship. This is because marital roles and responsibilities take time to learn and adjust to, and for the majority of couples it will probably be at least one year before anything like a stable equilibrium will have developed. The physical, emotional and financial needs of a pregnant wife, new mother and infant, and the re-orientation required by the father, may constitute stresses both for the partners individually, and for the marital relationship at any stage in

the marriage, but more especially if they occur during the very early stages of the marriage (p. 97).

After reviewing a number of studies dealing with the relationship between marital success and children, Burgess and Wallin (1953) conclude that it is the attitude toward having children rather than the number born to couples that is associated with marital success. The desire for children is positively correlated with marital success. It needs to be stressed, however, that there are some couples who voluntarily decide against having children and this reality should be accepted. The important point is that the decision should be mutual. Couples who are infertile need to decide jointly whether they should adopt children or not (p. 713).

In the light of the foregoing discussion it is interesting to examine the relationship between children and marital adjustment among the Hindu couples who participated in this study. These findings will now be presented.

Number of children (Item 29)

The question was raised whether marital adjustment varies with the number of children in the family. In each of the groups, the SM and UM, 8% of the couples did not have children. The average number of children for the SM group was 2,25 while that of the UM group was 2,98. Although this indicates that the couples experiencing marital problems had slightly larger families, the difference is not large enough to lead one to conclude that there is a definite association between marital adjustment and the number of children in the family.

None of the wives in either group was married previously and consequently

brought no legitimate children into their marriage. However, there were two UM wives, each one of whom brought a child, born out of wedlock, into the present marriage.

Among the husbands, 6% of the UM and 2% of the SM group, had married previously. One SM and one UM husband each brought two children into their new marriages. Owing to the small numbers, it was not possible to proceed further in order to find out whether there is any relationship between marital adjustment and the number of children brought into a union from a previous marriage.

Husbands' and wives' desire for children (Items 30, 31 and 32)

Burgess and Cottrell (1939), felt that the presence or absence of children, or their number, might not be as important as the attitude of the couple toward having them. They reported that their findings on this question showed a more marked relationship to marital adjustment than any other item included in the study. Couples having no children but desiring them had the highest marital adjustment score, and those having one or more and desiring them had the next highest. The lowest marital adjustment was for marriages having unwanted children, and the next to the lowest was for couples having no children and not wanting any (pp. 260-261).

The present study attempted to test the hypothesis of Burgess and Cottrell, and, consequently, each person was asked the following questions : Did the husband want the child or children in question? Did the wife want the child or children? In those cases where there were no children, the question was asked whether the husband wanted children; and whether the wife wanted children.

In those families which already had children, all the parents reported that they desired children. However, eleven of the UM husbands, one SM husband and five UM wives said that they did not plan for as many children as they had. As a group the SM wives were the only ones who unanimously expressed full satisfaction with the size of their present families.

In the four SM and six UM families in which there were no children at the time of the interview, all the persons expressed a desire to have children. Two of the UM wives, however, expressed this willingness on condition that their husbands mended their ways. One UM husband believed that the arrival of a child would help improve the relationship between himself and his wife.

Two of the UM husbands stated that their wives had difficulty in conceiving and this was perceived as the basic cause of the conflict between them. The rest of the UM couples were married for a relatively short period of time.

A few of the SM couples elected not to have any children up to the time of the interview because they first wished to secure themselves financially and/or in their careers before starting a family. In overall terms, the findings of the present study tends to be consistent with those of Burgess and Cottrell.

Acceptance/rejection of stepchildren (Item 33 and 34)

Except for one UM husband, the other parents who had stepchildren accepted them and reported having good relationships with them. Although one cannot draw firm conclusions on the basis of six stepchildren, the indications are that the presence of stepchildren is not necessarily a retarding factor in the establishment of good marital relations. Future studies involving bigger samples are required before this tentative observation can be confirmed or

rejected.

The writer's cumulative impression from the information that was gathered in the course of the interviews can now be stated briefly: in the majority of cases a child may help promote the attachment of husband and wife and deepen their mutual regard and affection only if their earlier relationship is characterised by love and harmony. Where these qualities are absent, it would appear that the advent of a child puts further strain on the husband-wife relationship.

Some young wives confided that they were frightened at the thought of caring for a baby and the newness of the experience made them feel anxious. Many of the husbands, particularly in the SM group, assisted in the care of the baby either directly, or indirectly, by taking over other household chores when the wife was busy with the child. In the case of those husbands and wives who had more children than they had originally wanted, failure in planning occurred either because they did not practise birth control or because they practised it erratically. Some couples did not take the necessary precautions even when they were aware that children could seriously disrupt their plans.

On the whole children were received positively; the couple made efforts to control conception on a more permanent basis only after they felt that their family was complete. These couples accepted children as a necessary and inevitable part of marriage and family life.

For women in the unplanned family situations, the arrival of the child increased the pressures they were already experiencing. In most cases they were not ready for pregnancy. In contrast, those couples with planned

pregnancies reported relatively less stress following the birth of the child. These couples took the birth "in their stride." They did complain of some loss of sleep and some inefficiency in meals and housekeeping, but by and large, life moved along at a more or less even tenor.

SUMMARY

This section of the study was concerned with the relationship between marital adjustment and such issues as the presence or absence of children, size of family and desire for children. The main conclusions may be summarised as follows:

There is no conclusive evidence of an association between marital adjustment and the number of children in the family. The same holds true for the number of children brought into a union from a previous marriage. There are indications, however, that the presence of step children is not necessarily a retarding factor in good marital relations.

Children, if wanted by both parents, are a markedly integrating influence. Where they are not wanted by one or both parents, children may be a disruptive factor. Parents may have conflicts over the rearing of a child.

In the unplanned family situation the arrival of a baby generally increases the pressures that the young couple are already experiencing. On the other hand, in those families in which the pregnancy is planned relatively less stress is experienced.

V Parental Influences on Marital Adjustment

The clinical observation and theorizing of Freud began focusing attention on the role of family relationships as a major factor in psychological development. In his view, interpersonal conflicts within the family became internalised in the child and played a dominant role in his emotional adjustment throughout life, including his marital adjustment.

Within professional circles, this approach held away for several decades until a growing number of investigators such as Horney (1939) and Sullivan (1953) began to recognise its limits and to appreciate more fully the impact of social and situational factors on the psychological well-being of the individual. Such a realisation, however, in no way minimised the importance that has been given to interpreting and treating the behaviour of men and women in the marriage situation in terms of early childhood attachments to one or the other parent. The realisation merely indicated that Freudian theory alone was insufficient. It seemed more reasonable to view a person's behaviour as the product of both his past experiences and the current situation.

According to the Freudian theory continuous and satisfactory relationships in the home during the infancy and childhood years are important for both healthy emotional development and integration, as well as learning to deal with conflicts in constructive ways (Medinnus and Johnson, 1969, pp. 328-336). Favourable influences in childhood also promote the development of a healthy self image, a sense of worth and a capacity for loving. Such assets enable the individual to venture forth with confidence. With time his horizon widens to include relationships with others outside the immediate family circle. He also learns to sustain most of these relationships inspite of the elements of aggression they contain.

In contrast, when the individual's primary relationships are intensely painful or difficult, or fail to give him opportunities of learning how to manage his own feelings, he tends to withdraw from relationships with others time and time again, or risk them only on his own terms, at a level of childish dependence (Medinnus and Johnson, 1969, pp. 360-365). This makes adaptation to others in later life more difficult. His happiness in marriage and the stability of the union will depend very much on his partner's need or willingness to conform to his particular expectations and demands. The kinds of emotional satisfaction he will seek in marriage, his sexual activity, the ways in which he seeks approval or recognition from spouse or neighbours or demonstrates his affection, and the things he will find difficult or intolerable thus reflect his unconscious memories of the satisfactions and frustrations he experienced in childhood. The husband who storms and shouts if his dinner is not ready when he comes home, and whose contentment depends on his wife's immediate response to his sexual approach; the inordinately houseproud wife whose incessant scurry of polishing and tidying drives her husband out; the wife who judges her husband's love for her in terms of the flowers and sweets and dresses he buys her, and refuses him children with whom she would have to share his gifts, are all people whose relationships, in terms of psychoanalytic theory, have remained partly at infantile or childhood levels. For such individuals marriage represents a further stage in the evolution of their relationship with their own parents - except, of course, it is now their spouses who have to bear the brunt of the inconvenience that arises.

The present investigation, while not geared directly to testing the theory that early parent-child attachments determine the degree of marital adjustment, does throw light on this and related questions.

Discipline in the parental home (Items 35(a) and (b))

Mental hygienists are constantly stressing the fact that the type of discipline to which the child is subjected is an important determinant of his later happiness. According to Kirkpatrick (1955) there is a direct relationship between kindly but firm childhood discipline and marital adjustment (p. 386). Terman's study (1938) supports Kirkpatrick's finding, i.e. "firm but not harsh" discipline in the home tends to be associated with marital happiness (p. 323).

In this study the subjects were asked the following questions: Do you feel that in your parental home you: never had your own way about anything; usually had your own way; had your own way about everything. The responses of the SM and UM couples are given in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1

DISCIPLINE IN THE PARENTAL HOME (in percentages)

Respondents' Feelings	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Reports	Wives' Reports	Husbands' Reports	Wives' Reports
Never had your own way about anything	18	38	23	45
Usually had your own way	58	56	45	47
Had your own way about everything	24	6	32	8
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

In the UM group 23% of the males and 45% of the females reported that they never had their own way in the parental home. In contrast, a lower percentage of the husbands (18%) and wives (38%) in the SM group gave the same reply.

"Usually had your own way" was reported by 58% of the SM males and 45% of the UM males. In the case of the wives, too, there was a higher incidence in this category among the SM's (56%) than among the UM's (47%). These distributions seem to indicate that the happily married individuals come mainly from homes where the parents are considerate of the desires of the children, and the unhappily married persons come mainly from homes where the parents are inclined to dominate their children.

Also noteworthy is the fact that in both groups a significantly larger percentage of males, compared to females, reported that "they had their own way about everything". Correspondingly, in the "never had your own way" category there were more females than males. While this trend may be evident in most cultures, it is particularly marked among Indians. Male children are allowed greater freedom of movement, sometimes almost to the point where parental indulgence is carried too far. Daughters, on the other hand, are more "home-bound" and are subjected to stricter codes of conduct so that their reputations are not tarnished thereby making it difficult for them to find suitable marriage partners.

With regard to the form of discipline in the parental home and its relationship to marital adjustment, one is faced with the cause or effect dilemma. Does severe and frequent punishment in childhood spoil the child's disposition and make him (or her) a risky partner in marriage, or is it the other way round

- viz., that the child with an undesirable disposition draws more punishment upon himself and because of his same disposition is more likely to be mal-adjusted in marriage.

No clear answer can be given but the writer's cumulative impression gained from the interviews is that individuals who report frequent punishment, in the form of physical and/or verbal abuse, are more likely to experience marital problems. Some of the specific kinds of punishment meted out to individuals in the present sample included the following: reprimanding or scolding, corporal punishment, listening to "lectures", warnings and threats such as: "I will rub chilli powder around your eyes". Some respondents reported that their punishment took the form of deprivations. These included having to do without a meal or being prevented from participating in a favourite pastime. Still others, though very much in the minority, recalled being locked in the bathroom or some other such place.

The fact that a greater number of those who reported frequent and/or severe punishment belonged to the UM group suggests a possible association between these variables and marital unhappiness. Cognisance must be taken however, of the impact of a whole host of other factors as well.

Degree of conflict before marriage (Items 36(a) and (b))

It seems reasonable to assume that the child who is emotionally well-adjusted is the one most likely to become a well-adjusted wife or husband. A favourable disposition should be an asset in any period of life, including marriage. Such a person, moreover, is the one who is most likely to be fond of his parents and to escape serious conflict with them. A home in which the insecurities of the parents cause them to quarrel severely, says Stott (1962), is more likely to

produce delinquent children than the home in which normal disagreements are worked out more peacefully among the family members (pp. 79-91).

Previous studies have found that close attachment to the mother and father before marriage and little or no conflict with either parent are associated with marital adjustment. Burgess and Cottrell (1939) state their conclusions on parent-child attachments and conflicts on the one hand and marital adjustment on the other, thus:

"Closeness of attachment and absence of conflict in the association of parents and son show a consistent although small positive relation to marital adjustment. No such consistent pattern appears in the association between parents and daughter, although 'no' attachment to the father and 'little' or 'no' attachment to the mother appear to work against a high marital-adjustment score" (p. 98).

Terman (1938) found correlations between marital adjustment and attachment to father, attachment to mother, lack of conflict with father, and lack of conflict with mother. He summarises his findings as follows:

"The happiness of both spouses is positively correlated with attachment and also with lack of conflict. The correlations are highly reliable and are consistent in direction ... The highest means (happiness scores) are for subjects reporting greatest attachment or least conflict, and they drop with considerable regularity as attachment decreases or conflict increases" (p. 215).

Degrees of conflict between the parents, between self and father, between self and mother and between self and spouse were measured on a five-point scale ranging from no conflict to a very great deal of conflict.

TABLE 6.2

DEGREE OF CONFLICT WITH ONE'S PARENTS AND SPOUSE BEFORE MARRIAGE (in percentages)

	W i f e ' s R e p l y								Degree of Conflict	H u s b a n d ' s R e p l y							
	Your father and mother		You and your father		You and your mother		You and your Husband			Your father and mother		You and your father		You and your mother		You and your wife	
	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM		SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM
18	20	32	24	12	26	24	23	None	16	10	14	18	22	26	20	16	
34	21	42	27	42	22	52	24	Very Little	38	24	40	33	48	23	52	26	
36	15	18	27	38	27	18	41	Moderate	30	29	38	31	20	27	18	44	
10	28	6	12	4	15	6	12	A good deal	10	27	6	14	6	14	10	14	
2	16	2	10	4	10	0	0	Very great	6	10	2	4	4	10	0	0	
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Conflict between parents

An examination of the data in Table 6.2 shows that the SM husbands and wives consistently reported a more favourable relationship between their mothers and fathers than did the UM husbands and wives, the only exception appeared in the "none" category where 20% of the UM wives, as compared to 18% of the SM wives, reported that there were no conflicts between their fathers and mothers.

As expected, significantly greater percentages of UM husbands and wives reported "a good deal" and "very great" conflict between their parents than did the SM husbands and wives. When these two categories were combined, 44% of the UM wives, as compared to only 12% of the SM wives, indicated that there was a high level of discord between their parents. A similar report was given by 37% of the UM husbands compared to 16% in the SM category. These findings support Kirkpatrick's observation that there is strong evidence that happiness of the parents' marriage is favourable to the marital adjustment of the offspring.

Conflict between self and father

Both the father-daughter and father-son relationships appeared to be characterised by "no conflict" or "very little conflict" in the case of the SM group compared to those in the UM group. The percentages of the first two categories, when combined, are SM 74% : UM 51% (for wives) and SM 54% : UM 51% (for husbands). At the other end of the scale, 22% of the UM wives compared to 8% of the SM wives, reported that they had a "good deal" or a "very great" amount of conflict with their fathers. The corresponding percentages for husbands were : 18% for the UM group and 8% for the SM group. Overall, conflict between self and fathers tends to be associated with marital

unhappiness.

Conflict between self and mother

A bigger percentage of UM husbands and wives, compared to SM husbands and wives, reported having no conflict with their mothers (Husbands : SM 22% vs UM 26%; Wives : SM 12% vs UM 26%). However, there is a sharp increase in the percentages of SM husbands and wives, compared to UM husbands and wives, in the next two categories : when "very little" and "moderate" are combined the following percentages are obtained : SM 80% and UM 49% (for wives) and SM 68% and UM 50% (for husbands). Consistent with the findings mentioned earlier, i.e. conflict between father and mother and conflict between self and father, the existence and severity of conflict is more marked in the UM group between self and mother. This becomes clear when one compares the combined figures for "a good deal" and "very great" conflict with the mother: UM 25% : SM 8% (for wives); and UM 24% : SM 10% (for husbands).

Taken together, the findings relating to this item (i.e. Item 36) suggest that marital adjustment is associated with the spouse's degree of happiness in childhood.

Conflict between self and spouse

While there was hardly any difference in the percentages between the SM and UM wives who reported that there was "no conflict" between themselves and their husbands before marriage (SM 24% : UM 23%), marked differences appeared between the groups in the "very little" (SM 52% : UM 24%) and the "moderate" (SM 18% : UM 41%) ratings. Neither group reported having had great conflict with their spouses prior to marriage although twice as many UM, than SM wives, stated that there was a "good deal" of conflict (UM 12% : SM 6%).

A similar trend was evident in the reports of the husbands. It is noteworthy that the difference between the SM and UM husbands who reported a good deal of conflict with their wives prior to marriage was only 4%.

The clearest indication that there was a greater amount of conflict in the UM group is obtained when one combines the "moderate" and the "good deal" ratings. The percentages become : SM wives 24% compared to UM wives 53%; SM husbands 28% compared to UM husbands 58%.

The findings in this section suggest that marital happiness is more likely when the couple have grown up in a harmonious and understanding family environment.

Main reasons for conflict

Some of the main sources of conflict with the persons mentioned in Items 36(a) were the following:

"Father was an alcoholic."

"Mother was very possessive."

"Husband wanted spouse to leave work and remain at home."

"Wife not acceptable to his parents."

"Wife must refrain from talking to members of the opposite sex."

"Wife is too preoccupied with her father's business."

"Wife was 'too dumb' at times."

Degree of attachment before marriage (Items 37(a) and (b))

Degrees of attachment or affection between the parents, between self and father, between self and mother, and between self and spouse were measured on a five-point scale ranging from no affection to a very great deal of affection.

TABLE 6.3

DEGREE OF ATTACHMENT WITH ONE'S PARENTS AND SPOUSE BEFORE MARRIAGE (in percentages)

	Wife's Reply								Degree of Attachment	Husband's Reply							
	Your father and mother		You and your father		You and your mother		You and your Husband			Your father and mother		You and your father		You and your mother		You and your wife	
	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM		SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM
	4	16	4	10	0	8	0	2	None	2	12	6	6	0	4	0	0
	6	24	8	16	8	10	0	6	Very little	12	18	12	18	2	10	0	8
	28	24	24	33	18	28	20	35	Moderate	26	27	28	37	12	27	14	25
	34	24	32	25	32	40	22	23	A good deal	35	25	38	25	38	37	50	25
	28	12	32	16	42	14	58	34	Very great	25	18	16	14	48	22	36	42
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Attachment between parents

An examination of Table 6.3 shows that there was very little or no attachment between the parents of 40% of the UM wives. The same situation existed among only 10 percent of the parents of the SM wives. Evidence of greater attachment between the parents of the SM wives, comes from the other end of the scale as well : 62% of the parents of SM wives as compared to 36% of the parents of the UM wives displayed a degree of attachment which could gain a rating of a "good deal" or "very great".

Similar trends can be noticed in the husband's ratings of their parents' degree of attachment to each other. The parents of 60% of the SM husbands were seen by their sons as having a "good deal" or a "very great" degree of attachment for each other. Forty-three percent of the UM sons gave their parents similar ratings. In the "moderate" category the spread of the scores over all four groups in the sample are more or less similar. In the case of the SM group 28% of the wives and 26% of the husbands fell in this category. In the UM group the figures for the wives and the husbands are 24% and 27% respectively.

Degree of attachment between self and father

When the ratings "none" and "very little" are combined, 26% of the UM wives as compared to 12% of the SM wives, see the amount of affection between themselves and their fathers as being minimal. The greater degree of attachment that the SM daughters have for their fathers, compared to the UM daughters as a group, comes out clearly when the ratings "a good deal" and "very great"

are combined (SM 64% : UM 41%).

Similar trends appear when the husbands' replies are analysed : 24% of the UM husbands, as compared to 18% of the SM ones, discern "no" or "very little" attachment between themselves and their fathers. At the other end of the scale, 54% of the SM sons and 39% of the UM sons, find a "good deal" or "very great" attachment between themselves and their fathers.

Overall, the degree of attachment between self and father tends to be associated with marital adjustment.

Degree of attachment between self and mother

Among 18% of the UM wives, compared to 8% of the SM wives, there was a feeling that there was "no" or "very little" attachment between themselves and their mothers. On the other hand, 74% of the SM wives and 54% of the UM wives, felt that there was "a good deal" or "very great" attachment between themselves and their mothers.

A similar trend is noticeable in the husbands' responses. Only 2% of the SM husbands, compared to 14% of the UM ones, reported that there was "no" or "very little" attachment between themselves and their mothers. Greater attachment by the husbands of the SM group relative to the UM group, is evident at the other end of the scale as well. Among the SM husbands 86%, compared to 59% of the UM husbands, felt "a good deal" or "very great" attachment between themselves and their mothers.

Taken together with the earlier results relating to attachment to father, it would be seen that the UM husbands and wives consistently, as a group, rated

the degree of attachment to their parents lower than did the SM husbands and wives.

Degree of attachment between self and spouse before marriage

Two UM females, both of whom had married on account of premarital pregnancy, indicated that they had no feeling of attachment for their spouses. A further 41% of the UM wives, compared to less than one-half of that proportion (20%) of SM wives indicated that their attachment for their spouses could be rated as nothing more than "moderate". In marked contrast, 80% of the SM wives, compared to 57% of the UM wives, expressed "a good deal" or "very great" attachment for their partners. A similar trend was evident when the husbands rated the degree of attachment they had for their wives. A notable exception was that 42% of the UM husbands, compared to 36% of the SM husbands, rated their attachment to their future spouses as being "very great". One wonders whether this is not a variation of the observation made by Shakespeare's Queen Gertrude: "The lady doth protest too much, me thinks" (Hamlet, Act III, Sc. ii, line 240).

Overall, the results indicate that those individuals who had fewer conflicts with their fathers and mothers and those who enjoyed greater attachment with their parents were better adjusted in marriage. A somewhat similar finding is reported by Pond et al., (1963) viz., satisfactory marital adjustment is more likely when both partners experience emotionally secure childhoods than it is when one or both partners recall an insecure childhood (pp. 188-205).

While close relationships between child and parent are favourable to marriage, too strong family attachments, take on the character of fixation and make marriage difficult (Landis 1975, p. 175). In cases where the parent is over-

protective and overindulgent and the child is correspondingly overdependent, he as a youth, may find it difficult to break his attachment to his mother in order to marry. Or if he marries, he may still be so dominated by his mother that he finds it difficult to establish a satisfactory adult relationship with his wife. In a similar way, the wife may be unsuccessful in her adjustment with her husband because of over-dependence on her father or mother. "Mummy's boy", say Merrill et al. (1950), often unconsciously compares his wife to his mother, to the disadvantage of the former. Similarly, "daddy's girl" is often unable to give her husband the complete affection and cooperation so necessary for good marital relationship, because in her eyes, he does not measure up to her image of her father (p. 309).

Happiness during childhood period (Item 38)

Terman (1938) found that no item related to background was more important for marital adjustment than was happiness in childhood. It far outweighed such items as adequacy of sex instruction, source of sex information, religious education, adolescent petting and premarital sex (pp. 225-228).

In the present study husbands and wives were asked whether their childhood was very happy; happy; average; unhappy; or very unhappy.

Their responses are presented in Table 6.4.

TABLE 6.4

DEGREE OF HAPPINESS IN CHILDHOOD

Degree of Happiness	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
Very happy/Happy	68	62	42	35
Average	24	22	31	29
Unhappy/Very Unhappy	8	16	27	36
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

A significantly larger percentage of happily married men and women, than unhappily married ones, reported their childhood as "happy" / "very happy" (Husbands : SM 68% vs UM 42%; Wives : SM 62% vs UM 35%). This means that a significantly larger percentage of UM, than SM husbands and wives were in the combined category of "average" and "unhappy" / "very unhappy" (Husbands : SM 32% vs UM 58%; Wives : SM 38% vs UM 65%).

Two possible explanations may be offered for the relationship between the reported happiness of childhood and marital adjustment. First, it is possible that one who is experiencing marital happiness may tend to see his childhood through rose-tinted glasses, thus rating it happier than it really was. Another possible explanation is that one who experiences unhappiness in childhood and adolescence may have been less selective in the choice of a marriage partner than would otherwise have been the case, with consequently increased chances of marital maladjustment.

Marital status of parents at the time of the respondent's marriage (Item 39)

Information relating to marital status of the respondents' parents was sought in order to ascertain whether significant differences existed in this regard between the happily married and unhappily married groups in the sample. The responses are recorded in Table 6.5.

TABLE 6.5

MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS AT TIME OF
RESPONDENTS' MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Marital Status of Parents	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband's Replies	Wife's Replies	Husband's Replies	Wife's Replies
Married (Both Living)	80	74	73	74
Separated	0	2	4	6
Divorced	0	0	0	0
Both dead	2	4	4	4
Mother dead	6	12	7	6
Father dead	12	8	12	10
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

An examination of Table 6.5 shows that 10% of the parents of the UM couples had separated, whereas only 2% of the parents in the SM group did so. This suggests that the UM couples tended to be reared in homes characterised by a greater amount of parental bickering. Also noticeable is the fact that none of the parents of any of the spouses in the sample had divorced each other. This is probably an indication of the seriousness with which Hindus in earlier generations considered their marriage vows. Among them, if life

together reached intolerable levels, they elected to take the less serious step of separating from each other rather than divorcing. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, however, the strong feelings against the practice of divorce are now beginning to decline as younger Hindus became more westernised.

Examination of the other categories which appear in Table 6.5 show that the distributions for the two groups were more or less even.

Occupation of respondents' fathers (Item 40)

The specific occupations followed by the fathers of the respondents in the sample covered a wide range. These occupations have been grouped in Table 6.6 according to the categories given in Chapter 5, Item 5. In those cases where the father was not living at the time of the respondent's marriage, the respondent was asked to furnish his/her father's last occupation. The distributions for the SM and UM groups are as follows:

TABLE 6.6

OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS' FATHERS (in percentages)

Categories of Occupation	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
Professional	20	16	9	12
Clerical	6	12	8	16
Sales	26	24	10	8
Artisan	20	22	38	30
Service	28	26	35	34
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6.6 shows that the fathers of the SM husbands and wives were concentrated to a greater extent, than the fathers of the UM respondents, in the upper categories of occupations. When the professional, clerical and sales categories are combined, the percentages are as follows: Husbands : SM 52% vs UM 27%; Wives : SM 52% vs UM 36%. This trend is reversed in the two lower categories, viz., artisan and service : Husbands SM 48% vs UM 73%; Wives : SM 48% vs UM 64%. This finding indicates that there is a degree of relationship between the occupations followed by fathers and the happiness (or unhappiness) of the marriages of their offspring.

Financial status of the parents at the time of respondents' marriage
(Item 41)

Item 41 was designed to test whether the financial status of the respondents' parents at the time of their marriage was associated with the happiness or unhappiness of the respondents' marriage. Their responses are given in Table 6.7.

TABLE 6.7
FINANCIAL STATUS OF PARENTS AT TIME OF
RESPONDENTS' MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Parents' Financial Status	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
Very Wealthy	0	0	5	0
Wealthy	6 20	4 22	2 13	2 13
Well-to-do	14	18	11	11
Comfortable	46	38	45	39
Meagre	12	22	18	26
Poor	22 34	18 40	24 42	22 48
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

When the categories "very wealthy", "wealthy" and "well-to-do", are combined the percentages are as follows: Husbands : SM 20% vs UM 13%; Wives : SM 22% vs UM 13%. This trend is reversed when the "meagre" and "poor" categories are combined : Husbands SM 34% vs UM 42%; Wives SM 40% vs UM 48%. This finding suggests that there is an association between the financial status of an individual's parents at the time of marriage and his/her marital happiness (or unhappiness).

Attitude of the parents toward the prospective mate (Items 42, 43, 44 a and b)

Parents' approval and successful marriage adjustment, says Bowman (1974), tend to go hand in hand. In contrast, there is a higher percentage of poor adjustment in those cases where the parents were against the marriage (p.138).

It was decided to test this hypothesis in the present investigation by determining the attitude of the parents toward the prospective mate. Four possible answers were offered : parents approved, parents were indifferent, parents disapproved, and parents did not know the mate. The responses are given in Table 6.8.

Attitude of respondents' parents toward prospective spouse (Item 42)

TABLE 6.8

ATTITUDE OF RESPONDENT'S PARENTS TOWARD
PROSPECTIVE SPOUSE (in percentages)

Parents' Attitude Toward Spouse	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
Approval	72	72	56	51
Indifference	6	12	7	19
Disapproval	18	14	33	26
Did not know	4	2	4	4
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

The results indicate that the parents of 72% of the SM men and 72% of the SM women approved of their prospective mates, whereas only a little more than half of the UM husbands and wives reported parental approval. Table 6.8 also indicates that 18% of the parents of SM husbands, compared to 33% of the parents of UM husbands, disapproved of their mates. In the case of the wives, the parents of 14% of the SM group, compared to 26% of the UM group, disapproved of their mates. For both men and women, a higher percentage of UM, than SM, reported that their parents were indifferent toward their prospective mate.

These findings suggest that parental approval of the prospective mate was associated with marital adjustment while parental disapproval was associated

with marital maladjustment. It has to be borne in mind that a variable such as marital opposition might be particularly susceptible to distortion of recall. Opposition to a successful marriage might well be forgotten, whereas those whose marriages were unsuccessful might be more inclined to remember parental efforts to prevent the union or, indeed, to have later been reminded of such attempts by their parents.

In the course of the interviews it became apparent that a few of the parents disliked their future daughter-or son-in-law but gave no specific reason for the dislike. Of those who did give a reason for disliking their prospective son-in-law, the dislike centered around perceived negative characteristics which ranged from vague labels of selfishness and fears of irresponsibility and laziness, to specific concerns about the son-in-law being "work-shy". The expression of hostile views toward the prospective son- or -daughter-in-law sometimes resulted in a hardening of the determination to go through with the marriage. In one case both of the wife's parents objected strenuously to the chosen mate because of his heavy drinking and explosive temper. The ages of the brides and grooms also caused some opposition. One woman mentioned her parents' concern over the age discrepancy between herself and her prospective spouse, the age difference being eleven years. Yet another reason for parental rejection was that the parents felt that the prospective spouse did not come from a "respectable enough family".

Change (or absence of change) in the parent's attitude toward the respondent's spouse after marriage (Item 43)

Statistics showing change (or absence of change) in the respondent's parents' attitude toward his/her spouse after marriage are presented in Table 6.9.

TABLE 6.9

CHANGE (OR ABSENCE OF CHANGE) IN PARENTS' ATTITUDE
TOWARD RESPONDENT'S SPOUSE AFTER MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Parents' Attitude toward Respondent's Spouse	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Changed	40	44	38	64
Did not change	60	56	62	36
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

An analysis of the responses to Item 43 shows that 40% of the SM husbands and 44% of the SM wives reported a change in attitude on the part of their parents toward their spouse after marriage.

In the UM group 38% of the husbands and 64% of the wives reported a similar change.

The direction of the change, i.e. whether it was for the better or for the worse, is shown in Table 6.10.

Nature of change in the parents' attitude toward the respondent's spouse after marriage and the reasons thereof (Items 44(a) and (b))

Statistics showing the nature of the change in the respondent's parents' attitude toward his/her spouse are presented in Table 6.10.

TABLE 6.10

NATURE OF CHANGE IN PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD RESPONDENT'S SPOUSE AFTER MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Nature of change in Parents' Attitude	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband's Response	Wife's Response	Husband's Response	Wife's Response
For the better	24	26	12	18
For the worse	16	18	26	46
Unchanged	60	56	62	36
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

The data which showed the percentages of parents whose attitude toward their offspring's spouse changed (or did not change) after marriage were presented in Table 6.9. In those cases where there was a change for the better, the relevant statistics read as follows : Husbands SM 24%, UM 12%; Wives SM 26%, UM 18%. Where there was a change for the worse the following data were recorded: Husbands SM 16%, UM 26%; Wives SM 18%, UM 46%.

These statistics indicate that where changes in attitude did take place, they were mainly for the better in the SM group, while the opposite was true for the UM group.

A wide variety of reasons were given for the changes in attitude by both husbands and wives. The following are some of the reasons given by those who reported a change for the better:

"My family got to know him better".

"My family began to think highly of her."

"My wife proved to be friendly and sociable and she fitted into our family very well."

"My parents found my husband to be a very responsible person."

"My mother began to like him because he stopped drinking."

Among the reasons given by those who reported a change for the worse are the following:

"My husband started drinking very heavily and my parents became very upset when he became very abusive and violent towards me."

"My parents felt disappointed because my husband could not hold a steady job. They had to keep helping us with money and groceries."

"My husband found a mistress at work and he spent a great deal of the house money on her."

"My parents were upset when they found that my wife was extremely jealous and possessive."

"My wife is very dominating and she quarrels with my mother for trivial reasons and shows her no respect."

Parent and in-law relationships (Items 42 to 52) : An overview

Marriage is not merely an individual affair. Parents and other relatives are vitally interested and involved. Both "recruits" join each other's family and from then on they participate in two kin networks : the husband's and the wife's. Often the parental family is a sort of closed corporation, structurally organised on the basis of interdependent attitudes and strong attachment (Locke, 1951). Upon marriage the son, daughter, or parents find difficulty in breaking off these attachments. An attempt may be made to incorporate the mate into the closed corporation. This sometimes involves

moving in with the in-laws. If the mate does not fit into the closed set of relationships and follow the practices which have become habitual to the parental family, irritation and conflict may ensue and may result in the departure of the mate and finally divorce (pp. 117-118).

In-law problems, according to Blood and Blood (1978), are generally concentrated at the beginning of marriage and then decline steadily thereafter (p. 333). It is interesting to note that there are very often contradictions with regard to the in-laws as sources of trouble. For example, one study found that the commonest complaint by young couples about their in-laws was that they were meddlesome and dominating. But the second most common complaint was that the in-laws were "distant, indifferent, thoughtless and unappreciative" (Duvall, quoted in Christensen (1967, p. 727).

Hindu mores and customs, to an increasing extent, are sanctioning the right of young people to control their own destiny in the selection of marriage partners. In spite of this change, however, parental attitudes are still important: they usually express their approval or disapproval of the marriage. The young couple, in turn, are in most cases concerned with the reaction of their parents. Parents in general, at present as in the past, are strongly inclined to place prudential considerations above those of romance. They are likely to emphasize qualities such as stability and earning capacity in the young man and domesticity and consideration for others in the girl.

Many young people think of marriage and in-law conflict as being inevitable and an expected consequence of marriage. For them it may turn out to be a "self-fulfilling" prophecy. However, there are many times when conflict with parents is due to more than simply anticipation.

One problem area develops from the fact that after marriage the couple do not always move away from the control and influence of their parents. The parents are faced with certain problems when their children marry. They see their young adult child not only in his present role, but in all the roles he has filled from infancy onwards. The parents have taken responsibility for rearing their child and making many of his decisions for him, and they often continue this to the same degree right up until he marries. But once he marries, the parents often find that their child no longer listens, or that he no longer considers they have the right to instruct him. Some parents find the sudden shift in their role difficult to accept. In some cases, the role loss may lead to hostility directed at the offspring's spouse. Because of their emotional commitment to their own child, it may be difficult for the parents to recognise that the relationship has changed; the spouse may provide a convenient scapegoat.

The parents must also face the fact of "losing" their offspring to someone for marriage. The parents may have an exaggerated notion of their child's worth and they may view the person he marries as unworthy of him. In this connection Waller and Hill (1951) write: "The father and mother of the newly married person often overvalue their own child and cannot believe that anyone is quite good enough for him; they are thereafter highly critical of the newcomer in the group" (p. 290).

The young married couple also need to recognise that they have been through many roles in relationship to their parents and that, this may lead to difficulty when they marry and move into new role relationships with their parents and with their spouse. A long pattern of turning to parents for help has been established for many; it is not always easily ended with marriage. It may be viewed as threatening by the spouse in the new marriage.

The young wife who feels her husband is turning to his mother when she feels he should be turning to her, will often see her role as being threatened.

Each of the newly married pair may also have a tendency to compare his spouse with his own parent of the same sex. This may have unfortunate consequences since the two compared are not role equals : one has been in the role for a long time and the other is just beginning it. The very fact that the young wife is in a new role often means role insecurity for her; comparing her to her mother-in-law may play upon this insecurity.

Attitude toward mother-in-law and father-in-law (Items 45 and 46)

In-law relationships, says Komarovsky (1964), can broadly be divided into three broad categories. The first is a "good" relationship, when affection and positive satisfaction are coupled with only minor conflicts, if any. An "average" relationship is one in which favourable comments are interspersed with some dissatisfaction, though not serious ones. The third category of "strained" relations is characterised by serious problems and absence of positive remarks (p. 201).

Before analysing the findings of this study, it is necessary to outline some of the more important features of the various in-law relationships presented in the literature.

Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law

The Landises (1953) in their study of 116 husbands and 160 wives reporting various in-law conflicts, found that 50% of the wives had a problem with their mothers-in-law, making this the most frequent in-law conflict (Landis and Landis, p. 289). When the Landises computed the frequency of conflict

with specific in-laws, the mother-in-law led the list; the sister-in-law came second, and the father-in-law third (p. 289). This shows up the mainly female nature of in-law conflict. This view was supported in a study by Kamarovsky who found that one-third of the wives revealed serious dissatisfaction with their in-laws, whereas the husbands enjoyed fairly satisfactory in-law relationships (p. 259).

The adult roles of the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law contribute to the frequency of conflict in their relationship. The important fact is that though their adult roles are essentially the same, they are two individuals with many differences in role experience. The young wife usually brings into marriage the training she received from her mother, and as a result she may have ways of doing things different from the ways in which her mother-in-law does them. If the daughter-in-law rejects suggestions of the mother-in-law, she is seen as questioning and indirectly criticising the way the mother-in-law has been doing things for many years. On the other hand, for the daughter to accept the mother-in-law's way of doing things may indicate to her own mother a rejection of the way she (i.e. the mother) has played her role. Thus, the young wife may be caught between two experienced women trying to show her how she should fill her new role. It is also important to note that many aspects of the woman's role and her efficiency and success are publicly available for assessment. How a woman manages her home or prepares a meal can be evaluated and compared, particularly by her relatives.

Competition between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law for the son and husband may also occur. With the effective development of her marriage role, the daughter-in-law inevitably replaces her mother-in-law in many areas in which the mother-in-law in the past received her son's love and admiration.

Mother-in-law and Son-in-law

The Landises (1953) also found that 42% of the husbands in their study reported the mother-in-law was the main cause of in-law friction (p. 289). It needs to be remembered, however, that "a mother-in-law is more likely to accept her son-in-law at par than her daughter-in-law"(Baber,(1953,p.221). One reason for this is the fact that the mother-in-law and son-in-law belong to opposite sexes in their role performance and cannot be personally compared. Each one's world is so different from the other's that possible areas of criticism and friction are limited. When the mother-in-law does criticise her son-in-law it may be in his role of husband - if,for instance, he does not treat her daughter in the way she thinks he should be treating her.

Probably the most important source of conflict between the two comes from the feelings of the son-in-law. Because controls over behaviour are usually longer and greater for the girl than for the boy, the mother may have greater difficulty giving up the controls over her daughter when she marries. The son-in-law may feel that his mother-in-law is overstepping her rights and treading on his prerogatives as husband if she continues to influence his wife.

Father-in-law and Daughter-in-law

The Landises (1953) found only 11% of the young wives had a problem in this relationship, making it the one of least frequent conflict (p. 289). The father generally has much less influence on the day to day rearing of his children and is therefore less involved after they marry. Also, because the daughter-in-law is filling an opposite adult sex role, he has little reason to compare her role with his. The daughter-in-law herself may feel relatively comfortable in her relationship with her father-in-law because

he often has the same characteristics that her husband has.

Father-in-law and Son-in-law

Only 15% of the husbands in the Landis study (1953) named the fathers-in-law as the in-law causing friction (p. 289). Baber (1953) points out that jealousy of the father toward his son-in-law does not seem to exist, at least to the degree that is troublesome (p. 221). The important role difference, when compared with the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship, is that, while the two males have the same primary role responsibilities, they are not usually subject to detailed and public comparison.

Both have the primary responsibility of earning a living, and if the father-in-law accepts the son-in-law's ability to do so, conflict is not likely to emerge. How the one fills his occupational role is not usually subject to observation by the other; the variety of occupations that a male can fill are almost endless, and most of them are known only in a very general way to persons not in them.

Unlike the mother, the father, is much less apt, even though experienced as a husband, to try to influence his son-in-law in that role. However, the father's concern may emerge if he feels the son-in-law is overstepping the rather broad limits of the husband's role. He may then feel called upon to act as his daughter's protector. But, generally, if the son-in-law is at least adequate in his important occupational role, his behaviour in the husband's role is not of major importance to the father-in-law.

In-laws as Grandparents

One of the contradictions in stereotyped role images in our society centres around the same person filling two different roles, the mother as mother-in-law and the mother as grandmother. Often the stereotype of the mother-in-law is of a hard, interfering battle-axe, while the stereotype of grandmother is of a kindly lady handing out sweets to her adoring grandchildren. Neither of these stereotypes is very accurate.

In some situations of in-law conflict, the influence of grandchildren may be positive. They may provide a common focus of emotional and social involvement for both parents and grandparents. Many times the grandparents get a great deal of pleasure out of their grandchildren; they can deal with them pleasurably and without the responsibility of rearing them.

In other situations, grandchildren may provide an area of conflict. The dispute often involves the question of how the children should be reared, and it usually occurs between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. Disputes arise because one has reared children in the past while the other is doing it in the present, and because of differences in training and attitudes. The mother-in-law has a powerful argument which she can use in support of her notions on child-rearing if she chooses to use it. She can argue that her methods were obviously successful - the daughter-in-law chose to marry her son!

While this discussion has pointed out possible in-law conflicts, it should not be assumed that they are inevitable. In most marriages, adjustments with the parents of both husband and wife will have to be made. But, as Burgess and Wallin (1953) found, "in many cases little if any adjustment is necessary"

(p. 603). Perhaps, certain social changes are emerging in present times that are decreasing the extent of in-law conflict.

One factor of change, a decrease in the generational difference between the parents and their married children, has several causes. Two of these are the younger ages of marriage and the changes in ageing resulting from increased knowledge in the medical and health areas. The young married couple and their parents are, therefore, much more likely to be closer age peers in a social and psychological sense than they were in the past. As a result, their pattern of life may be closer than has previously been the case.

A second factor is that with a high degree of geographical mobility for the younger generation, the parents and children often have limited contact after marriage. Increasingly, they are not living near each other and they may have to travel long distances to visit. Because they see less of each other, the chances of strain that develop over long and continuous contact are reduced. When they do get together, it may be within a vacation setting rather than one of duty or obligation relationship.

It is against this background that the findings of the present study need to be considered. Attitudes towards the mother-in-law and father-in-law were obtained through the use of a five-point rating scale : Like her/him very much; like her/him mildly; dislike her/him mildly; dislike her/him very much; no attitude as she/he is dead.

The data pertaining to mothers-in-law are presented in Table 6.11.

TABLE 6.11

Present attitude toward mother-in-law (Item 45)

RESPONDENTS' PRESENT ATTITUDE TOWARD MOTHER-IN-LAW (in percentages)

Attitude	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
Like her very much	36	36	22	23
Like her mildly	26	30	25	31
Dislike her mildly	16	10	14	12
Dislike her very much	10	12	29	23
No attitude, as she is dead	12	12	10	11
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Marked differences in the SM and UM husbands' attitudes toward their mothers-in-law are revealed in the categories "like her very much" (SM 36% : UM 22%), and "dislike her very much" (SM 10% : UM 29%). A similar trend is evident in the attitudes of the SM and UM wives : "like her very much" (SM 36% : UM 23%), and "dislike her very much" (SM 12% : UM 23%).

The data pertaining to fathers-in-law are presented in Table 6.12.

Present attitude toward father-in-law (Item 46)

TABLE 6.12

RESPONDENTS' PRESENT ATTITUDE TOWARD FATHER-IN-LAW (in percentages)

Attitude	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
Like him very much	30	44	17	27
Like him mildly	32	28	29	27
Dislike him mildly	16	10	20	20
Dislike him very much	8	8	22	12
No attitude, as he is dead	14	10	12	14
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

The general pattern of the responses is similar to that pertaining to the mother-in-law. A larger percentage of the SM husbands (30%), as opposed to the UM husbands (17%), reported that they liked their fathers-in-law very much. A strong dislike for him existed among 22% of the UM husbands compared to 8% of their SM ones. Significant differences also exist in the attitudes of the two sets of wives : "like him very much" (SM 44% : UM 27%), and "dislike him very much" (SM 8% : UM 12%).

The responses to Items 45 and 46 taken together, indicate that harmonious relationships with the mother-in-law and father-in-law are more often found among those that are happily married than among those who are unhappily married.

Two other important features emerge when Tables 6.11 and 6.12 are examined closely. Firstly, a higher proportion of sons-in-law in both the SM and UM groups gave their mothers-in-law the rating "like her very much" than they did their fathers-in-law. Also a higher proportion of daughters-in-law in both the SM and UM groups gave their fathers-in-law "like him very much" than they did their mothers-in-law. Secondly, a comparison of the figures for all four groups in the sample suggest that the dislike for the mothers-in-law tends to be stronger than for the fathers-in-law.

These findings lend support to the observations made by the Landises mentioned earlier in the discussion.

Conflicts between mothers-in-law and employed daughters-in-law, both of whom lived in the same home, were mentioned in four cases during the interviews. The younger women consistently mentioned that much more than reasonable demands were made on them to perform household duties in the little time that they had to spare. Two women claimed that their husbands' mothers failed to understand and accept that, being educated and earning women, they could not be expected to be totally submissive, subordinating their set ways of doing things to the authority of the mother-in-law or father-in-law. Tensions were also created where the mother-in-law was too possessive of her son or where the husband was too much under the influence of his mother.

There were some daughters-in-law who spoke of their mothers-in-law in complimentary terms . A young wife who had been married for three years reported as follows : "My mother-in-law realises that I have to work at the office for the entire day and so she does not insist on my doing housework. She takes it upon herself to do this in addition to caring for my children during my absence. I take over the household responsibilities over the weekends. My

father-in-law is also considerate and he urges me to rest after I return from work. My husband is also helpful and affectionate. All these things make me feel very happy with my marriage and my job".

From the foregoing, it is clear that inspite of the changes that have taken place in the structure of the family, an important part of marital adjustment still involves relations with in-laws. As Wallin and Vollmer (1953) note the husband needs to adjust to his wife's parents and she to his. In addition, each must work out a satisfactory relationship to his/her own parents (pp. 424-431).

Living with wife's parents during marriage (Items 47 a-e)

In-law conflict is more likely to arise if the young couple live with either set of parents and this could have a detrimental effect on the marital relationship (McCary, 1980, p. 307). In order to test the validity of his statement, the SM and UM couples were asked whether or not they had lived with the wife's parents at sometime during their marriage. And if they did so, information was sought on the length of the stay, the feelings of both spouses with this arrangement and, if they had moved out, their reasons for doing so.

A larger percentage of the UM spouses, than the SM ones, reported living with the wife's parents (UM 16% : SM 6%). Of those UM couples who reported that they had lived with the wife's parents, 25% of the 16 couples stayed there for less than six months; and another 25% for about a year. None of the SM couples lived with the wife's parents for more than a year. At the time of the interview 6 of the 16 UM couples were still living with the wife's parents.

Only 6 of the 16 UM wives indicated that they were happy about living with their parents while 4 were definitely unhappy, mainly on account of their husband's unhappiness with the situation. Half of the number of husbands openly complained about having to live with their in-laws. However, owing to accommodation, and in some cases financial problems, arising out of unemployment, they had no alternative. Only 2 husbands said that they were happy with the situation while the other 6 were periodically plagued with the feelings of inadequacy, arising partly from the fact that it is not "the done thing" among Hindus for married men to be living in their in-law's home.

The 3 SM couples reported that they lived with their in-laws merely as an interim measure until they purchased their own home.

In the case of those UM couples who moved out, they were invariably forced to do so because they had quarrelled with some member of the household, or on account of abusive, violent or drunken behaviour on the part of the son-in-law. Some, however, moved peacefully into their own homes, mainly council homes. One husband was forced to leave his in-law's home because his own parents pressurised him into doing so : they argued that living with his in-laws ran counter to custom and invited ridicule from the family members.

Living with husband's parents during marriage (Items 48 a-e)

The SM and UM couples were also asked whether or not they had lived with the husband's parents at sometime during their marriage. And if they did so, information was once again sought on the length of the stay, the feelings of both spouses about this arrangement and, if they moved out, their reasons for doing so.

A greater proportion of the UM spouses (76%) compared to the SM ones (58%) reported living with their husband's parents. Of those UM couples who reported that they had lived with the husband's parents, 52% stayed there for about a year or less, 5% for about eighteen months, 5% for about two years and 16% for more than three years. The corresponding percentages for the SM couples were 38%, 17%, 8% and 13% respectively. Some couples, 21% of the UM group and 25% of the SM group, were still living with their parents at the time of the interview. Some of them did so because their parents depended on them financially and for protection. Another factor which was responsible for the relatively large number of couples living with the husband's parents after marriage has its roots in Indian custom : "In the early years of marriage, man and wife are part of a joint family" (Kuper, 1960, p. 133).

An overwhelmingly large percentage of the UM wives, and a smaller, but still relatively large proportion of SM wives (31%), reported that they were unhappy about living with their in-laws. Only 16% of the UM and 28% of the SM wives reported that they were happy. These figures contrast sharply with the husbands' feelings about living with their parents : 55% of the UM and 66% of the SM husbands expressed satisfaction.

The wife's unhappiness was one of the main reasons given by those couples who had moved out of the parental home. Other reasons included the following:

"My husband came into conflict with his brother."

"We wanted to be independent."

"My wife came into constant conflict with my mother."

"My father-in-law wanted my husband to be able to stand on his own feet."

"My husband started having an affair with his step-mother."

"The house was overcrowded."

"My husband changed his job and we therefore had to move nearer to his place of work."

"We moved into our own home."

"Accommodation problems arose after my husband's younger brother married."

Although there are minor exceptions, the statistics pertaining to Items 47 and 48 lead one to conclude that living with in-laws is unfavourable to marital adjustment both in the case of the daughter-in-law and of the son-in-law. The less favourable attitude of the UM couples toward living with in-laws could partly be coloured by unpleasant experiences which they had had with their in-laws.

Distance of respondents' residence from that of the parents (Items 49, 50, 51)

It was decided to find out whether living near the home of the parents of either of the spouse's was associated with marital adjustment.

There are two questions on this item, both of which were answered by the wife. The first one aimed to establish the distance between the couple's home and that of her parents. The distances for both the SM and UM groups ranged from being neighbours to two hundred kilometres. Of the SM couples, 16% lived within a radius of five kilometres from the wife's parents' home while the same was true of 18% of the UM couples.

The second question was designed to determine the distance between the couple's home and that of her husband's parents. Once again, for those couples who were not actually living with their in-laws, the distance between residences ranged from being "next door" to approximately four hundred kilometres. Using

a five kilometre range as the cut-off point once again, it was found that 36% of the SM couples, compared to 46% of the UM couples, lived within this range of the husband's parents' home. On the assumption that greater distances would tend to offer fewer opportunities for in-law interference, no attention has been given to those distances beyond 5 kilometres.

An examination of the data pertaining to Item 49 shows that a greater percentage of couples lived in the neighbourhood of the husband's parents' home. It is this factor, according to a number of interviewees who complained about in-law interference that made it possible for the in-laws to exert an important influence on their households. In more extreme cases the couples had to contend with the "guidance" of both the husbands' and wives' parents who lived a short distance away. The husband's parents in particular, saw it as a part of their duty to "assist" their sons. They draw support for this practice from the earlier Hindu custom which regarded the son's home as an extension of their own.

In the case of the wives who lived close to their parents' homes, the difference between the SM and UM groups was a mere 3%. In the case of the husbands, the difference between the UM and SM groups was 10%. It would appear therefore that the residences of the SM and UM women were not significantly different with respect to proximity to the residences of their parents. However, the same cannot be said in respect of proximity to the residences of their in-laws. The interview data also suggests that this proximity to the in-laws home tends to be associated with marital maladjustment.

Frequency of seeing parents and parents-in-law (Items 50 and 51)

Another measure of the influence of relatives upon the marital adjustment of the young couple is the number of times during the year they have seen their parents and parents-in-law. An analysis of the data showed that there was no clear cut difference in the number of times parents and parents-in-laws were visited by the couple in both the SM and UM groups. The impression gained from the interviews was that the SM couples had more cordial relationships with their in-laws and the couple generally visited them together. In the UM group strained relationships between the in-laws and one of the spouses sometimes resulted in only one of the couples visiting his/her parents. In the minority of cases the husband instructed his wife not to visit her parents. This invariably led to further deterioration in the already strained relations that existed between a couple.

In general, the attachment of young wives to their mothers is reflected in the frequency of their contacts. Many women who lived in the same district as their parents mentioned that earlier in their marriage they saw their mothers several times a week. With the passage of time, however, the number of contacts declined. The men tended to have fewer contacts with their mothers, but in a number of cases it was the husband's close ties to his mother that caused the marital conflict.

Among a sizeable proportion of the couples, there was a tendency for them to associate more frequently with the wife's family although the spouses often expressed the view that both sets of parents should be treated equally with respect to gifts and visits. The main factor responsible for the more frequent association of the couple with the wife's relatives was found to be her dominant role in planning social activities.

Overall, the study shows that parental influence plays an important part in shaping the kind of marriage partners their children eventually become.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this part of the study was to determine whether there was any association between marital adjustment and the following aspects : those relating to parent-child relationships; parent-parent relationships; and in-law relationships.

This study has highlighted several conditions and circumstances relating to the above-mentioned aspects which are conducive to marital adjustment. These are summarised below.

It is an advantage to be reared in a home where the parents, while exercising a certain amount of control over their children's behaviour, also respect their individuality and desires. Children who come from homes where they are dominated by their parents are more likely to experience problems later on in marriage. The same holds true for children who come from homes where there is "a good deal" of conflict between their parents.

Some conflict with one's parents, but not to the extent that it causes deep resentment, is apparently conducive to good marital adjustment. On the other hand, "a good deal" of conflict with one's spouse before marriage is an ominous sign.

A healthy degree of attachment and affection between parent and child assists the latter's adjustment in marriage. So too does a "happy" or "very happy" childhood. Too close or too little attachment could lead to problems.

The results of the study also indicate that there is a greater likelihood for individuals who are well adjusted in marriage to be the sons and daughters of fathers who hold (or held) a high status occupation.

Approval of one's partner by one's parents, both before and after marriage promotes marital adjustment. The process is assisted even further if the partner has a positive attitude toward his/her in-laws.

Conflict between spouses is minimised when the couple live on their own after marriage rather than with his/her parents.

Living close to the wife's parents' home does not appear to be associated with marital maladjustment but the same does not hold true when the couple lives close to the husband's parents' home.

Visiting the in-laws together helps create a better understanding between couples and a relatively peaceful married life.

VI General Personality Patterns

Literature studies suggest that participation in social life is related to marital success. A young person who makes friends easily and is active in social organisations has a greater chance, on the average, of turning out to be a better marriage partner than the lone-wolf isolated kind of a person who has no organizational affiliations. This is a reasonable expectation because the characteristics and behaviours necessary for success in social life are very similar to those required for success in marriage. Blood and Blood (1978) endorse this view by noting that people who make the best marriage partners also make friends more easily. Before marriage they have

more friends of both sexes. After marriage, they maintain old friendships and make new ones (p. 232).

The same writers go on to point out that marriage need not be exclusive in the sense that it terminates other friendships. Rather, it is itself the most comprehensive and durable of friendships. Marriages can link two sets of friends. Husbands and wives with the ability to establish good personal relations may get to know each other's friends so that they become common friends. Babchuk (1965) found that half of the middle-class couples in his sample shared all their closest friends, while the remainder had some separate close friends. Couples with the largest number of friends had both the most joint friends and the most separate friends, showing there need not be antagonism between the two (pp. 483-493).

Babchuk's findings are consistent with those of earlier researchers. Burgess and Cottrell (1939), for instance, found that the extent of friendship in both sexes is associated with marital adjustment. A husband with few men friends and almost no women friends before marriage had the poorest chances of marital success; a husband with several or many men and women friends were in the "good" adjustment group; a wife who had almost no men or women friends before marriage was a "poor" matrimonial risk; a wife having many women friends and a few, several or many men friends were in the "good" adjustment group (pp. 128-132; 395-397).

In another study Kirkpatrick (1937) found that when a husband had too many or too few women friends, the possibility of maladjustment in marriage increased (p. 282).

Similarly, Locke (1951) found that sociability, as measured by the possession of friends before marriage, after marriage, and in common with the spouse during marriage, is a positive factor in marital adjustment - and the absence of sociability as measured by the relative lack of friends is a negative factor (p. 230).

It is generally acknowledged that friends perform an important nurturing function. Some of them serve as confidants and informal counsellors when individuals experience problems in their marriage. They also provide morale-building sociability that enriches the marriage.

The above-mentioned studies provide a useful background against which the findings of this study may be compared.

Number of friends (a) before marriage; (b) after marriage; (c) in common with the spouse during marriage (Item 53)

The SM and UM husbands and wives in the sample were requested to give ratings on the number of friends they had before and after marriage. A four-point scale was used. Respondents were required to check one of the following replies : almost none, a few, several and many.

The general hypothesis was that a greater number of highly sociable persons would be found in the happily married group than in the unhappily married group.

Table 6.13 shows the manner in which the responses obtained were distributed.

TABLE 6.13

NUMBER OF FRIENDS POSSESSED BY RESPONDENTS BEFORE AND AFTER MARRIAGE (in percentages)⁽¹⁾

Number of Friends	Almost None				A Few				Several				Many			
	SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
	Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses	
	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
No. of friends of the same sex BEFORE marriage	2	8	4	10	8	28	25	38	42	22	36	29	48	42	35	23
No. of friends of the opposite sex BEFORE marriage	22	28	35	35	28	26	37	31	28	20	12	19	22	26	16	15
No. of friends of the same sex AFTER marriage	10	30	15	35	38	28	34	37	32	18	30	17	20	24	21	11
No. of friends of the opposite sex AFTER marriage	42	52	56	66	42	28	34	32	10	12	8	0	6	8	2	2
No. of common friends of spouses DURING marriage	26	24	50	54	36	42	36	30	24	22	8	6	14	12	6	10

(1) The responses of each set of husbands and wives in each of the two groups (SM and UM) add up to 100%.

(a) Number of friends BEFORE marriage

The statistics in Table 6.13 suggests that a sociable woman, as measured by the number of women and men friends she has, is a good marital risk: among the UM wives 48%, as compared to 36% in the SM group, reported "almost none" and "a few" women friends before marriage. At the other end of the scale, 64% of the SM wives and 52% of the UM ones reported that they had "several" and "many" women friends. Likewise, "almost no" men friends was reported more frequently by UM than by SM women, while SM women more frequently reported "many" men friends before marriage.

The statistics in Table 6.13 also suggest that a sociable man, as measured by the number of men and women friends he has, is a good marital risk. Among the UM husbands - 29%, as compared to 10% in the SM group reported "almost none" and "a few" men friends before marriage. At the opposite end of the scale, 90% of the SM husbands and 71% of the UM ones reported that they had "several" and "many" men friends. Likewise, "almost no" women friends was reported more frequently by the UM than by the SM men, while the SM men more frequently reported "many" women friends before marriage.

(b) Number of friends AFTER marriage

The Table 6.13 also shows that the number of friends after marriage is associated with marital adjustment or maladjustment. Sociable wives, as measured by the number of friends, are good marital risks. These women who mainly belong to the SM group reported more frequently, than the UM wives, that they had "several" and "many" women friends. In the combined category of "almost none" and "a few", on the other hand, the UM wives exceeded the number of SM wives. A similar trend was found among the men. The number of SM husbands exceeded the

UM ones in the combined category.

A greater proportion of the UM husbands, in comparison with the SM husbands, reported that they had "almost none" and "a few" women friends after marriage. This means that more SM, than UM husbands, reported "several" and "many" women friends.

A higher percentage of UM wives, compared to the SM wives, indicated that they had "almost no" and "a few" men friends after marriage. In the other half of the scale the position is reversed : more SM than UM wives reported that they had several and many friends of the opposite sex after marriage.

An interesting feature that is present in the case of almost all the groups is the decrease in the number of friends, both male and female, after marriage. Presumably, spouses depend more on each other for companionship. It is also possible that their increased responsibilities do not allow them sufficient time to cultivate and maintain as wide a circle of friends as they had when they were single.

(c) Number of friends in common with the spouse DURING marriage

It is reasonable to expect that a couple who have many friends in common would be well adjusted in marriage. The data which have been gathered in this study support this assumption. A greater percentage of SM couples reported that they had "several" and "many" friends in common. At the other end of the rating scale a greater percentage of UM couples indicated that they had "almost none" and "a few" friends in common.

Seen in overall terms, the happily married group consistently reported that they had a greater number of friends, both males and females, compared to the unhappily married group. Sociability thus appears to improve the chances of success in marriage. This finding confirms those made by Blood and Blood, Babchuk, Burgess and Cottrell, and Locke, mentioned earlier.

SUMMARY

This study shows that participation in social life is related to good adjustment in marriage. A common circle of friends congenial to both partners is an important factor in the preservation of the union. The results also show that either the absence of friends or conflict over the choice of friends is indicative of marital disharmony.

Another feature revealed by this study is that there is a decrease in the number of friends which husbands and wives have after marriage. Presumably, spouses depend more on each other for companionship. Moreover, their increased responsibilities do not allow them sufficient time to add to, or retain, as wide a circle of friends as they had when they were single. From the interviews, it was apparent that most of the friends who were dropped after marriage were those of the opposite sex.

VII The Companionship Family

Introduction

Hindu South Africans have, to a great extent, become part of a western-oriented society in which the companionship ideal of marriage is held up as

a major goal toward which every couple is expected to aim. Companionship involves intimacy and sympathetic understanding. Husbands and wives are also expected to accompany each other to most social occasions, to devote their leisure to mutual activities and to enjoy being together. Some persons find their wish satisfied; some adjust to the absence of companionship because the marriage may satisfy other cherished values; others maintain formal family relationships and seek companionship outside marriage; still others, separate themselves from the situation in which their wish for companionship is not being satisfied.

In the past, among Hindus, the companionship element was often taken for granted. Marriages were usually arranged and the partner was rarely selected on the basis of leisure-time interests. Bride and groom were sometimes complete strangers to each other. They began their life together wondering what the partner was like but submitting dutifully to what parents and culture had ordained. The parents of the groom were concerned with finding a daughter-in-law to bear male children to continue the family line and maintain the family shrine.

Even in societies where men and women chose their own partners, the emphasis in the past was often on what the partner could do rather than on who the partner was. In primitive societies, where the margin of protection against starvation is narrow, a man is valued for his hunting prowess or agricultural skill, and a woman prized for her good health, her domestic skills and whatever else she can contribute to the division of labour. In short, a primitive economy focuses the attention of its members on the economic resources which a potential partner can bring to the marriage. The focus is away from personality characteristics. Life is so preoccupied with staying alive that little time or energy is left over for anything else (Blood & Wolfe, 1960,

p. 147).

The modern concept of companionship differs sharply from the utilitarian yoking - together of fellow "work-horses" characteristic of primitive marriages. Companionship today has two essential components:

- (1) free choice of partner and
- (2) enjoyment of leisure time with that person.

When a couple begin life together they shift the structure of their relationship from one that requires making a date in order to see each other to one where being together is as natural as the shared activities of eating and sleeping. Many couples spend a large proportion of their time together and share certain leisure time activities at home. Locke (1951) found that the most popular marital leisure time activities were of a domestic nature, activities such as listening to the radio, music and reading (p. 258). In the years since Locke's study, television has replaced the radio as the chief medium of entertainment inside the home, perhaps to the detriment of companionship. One often hears a frustrated wife complaining of her husband: "All you do is just sit there in front of the T.V. set! We never do anything any more. We never talk. The T.V. talks for us."

Television-watching can become a barrier to communication between spouses. On the other hand, discriminating use of television can stimulate, educate and promote good communication.

It is important to remember, as Blood and Blood (1978) point out, that "men and women do not have to be identical in order to have a good time together" (p. 173). These writers correctly point that to lose one's identity is to

become a "nonperson." At this extreme, togetherness is inconsistent with the growth of the personality, and without personal growth the relationship, too, deteriorates. Marriage requires enough separateness to enable each individual to be a real person.

Maslow (1953) found that his "self-actualizing" persons were extraordinarily intimate with their partners without becoming overdependent on them or losing their individuality. Togetherness and separateness are not necessarily incompatible. Such persons, says Maslow, can be extremely close together and yet go apart quite easily. They do not cling to each other or have hooks or anchors of any kind. One has the definite feeling that they enjoy each other tremendously but would take philosophically a long separation or death. Throughout "the most intense and ecstatic love affairs, these people remain themselves and remain ultimately masters of themselves as well, living by their own standards even though enjoying each other intensely" (p. 236).

The ideal marriage, it would therefore appear, balances unity and individuality. This ideal has been expressed by Gibran (1923):

*But let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you
be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with
the same music.*

(The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran)

If Gibran is correct about spaces in togetherness, marriages need not end all individual activities and friendships. Husbands, if obligated to give up their good times with "the boys", may find marriage stifling instead of invigorating.

The problem is not to choose between no freedom and complete freedom, but to balance freedom and togetherness. "Too much separateness leads to alienation. Too much togetherness creates a smothering entanglement of personalities" (Blood and Blood, 1978, p. 224). Moderation was consistent with marital happiness in Locke's research : almost half of his happily married couples engaged in some, but not all, of their outside interests together. They shared enough common interests to be able to accept separate activities without anxiety.

Before marriage, couples are often criticised for being too wrapped up in each other. After marriage, the chief danger is that other roles will prevent the husband and wife from paying enough attention to each other. Each partner feels taken for granted.

Many wives complain about the lack of emotional togetherness in their marriage. More than anything else, they wish their husbands would talk about their feelings. One woman recalled: "In the first few years we shared everything we felt but, as differences arose so did the fear of displeasing the other, and we began to keep our feelings to ourselves".

Of the various activities which are reputedly closely related to marital dissatisfaction, drinking features prominently. Almost three times as many of Locke's divorced, as happily married, couples reported drinking together (19% versus 7%) - a bigger difference than any other joint activity; drinking

alone, however, was even more closely associated with divorce. Drinking lowers inhibitions against verbal and physical abuse of the spouse and is, therefore, a risky habit from the point of view of good marital adjustment (p. 256).

It is against this background that companionship between Hindu husbands and wives needs to be considered. It is hypothesized that happily married couples will share and obtain mutual satisfaction from a greater number of socially acceptable activities than unhappily married couples.

Included in the interview schedule are several questions which, in a general way, related to companionship and compatibility between spouses and their marital adjustment. These provide valuable supplementary information so that reliable observations can be made.

Outside interests in which there is joint participation by spouses (Item 54)

According to Locke and Karlsson (1952) couples who have shared attitudes toward activities are more likely to have better marital adjustment than are couples who do not have such shared attitudes (pp. 10-17).

In order to test the applicability of this finding to Hindu husbands and wives, the subjects in this study were asked the following question : "Do you and your spouse engage in outside interests together?" One of four possible answers had to be checked : All of them, some of them, very few of them, none of them. The manner in which the responses to the question were distributed are given in Table 6.14.

TABLE 6.14

OUTSIDE INTERESTS IN WHICH THERE IS JOINT PARTICIPATION BY SPOUSES (in percentages)⁽¹⁾

All of them		Some of them		Very few of them		None of them	
SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM
H 8	4	48	24	32	33	12	39
W 10	4	42	24	36	26	12	46

(1) The responses of the couples in each of the two groups (SM and UM) adds up to 100%

The statistics in Table 6.14 show that joint participation in all outside interests was reported by a larger percentage of SM than UM persons. For the combined category "engaging in all the activities" and "engaging in some of the activities" together, the percentages for men (SM and UM) were 56 and 28 respectively; and for women, the percentages were 52 and 28. At the other end of the scale, 44% of the SM husbands compared to 72% of the UM ones, and 48% of the SM wives, compared to 72% from the UM group, reported that they engaged in "very few" or "none" of the activities together.

These findings support the hypothesis that there is a link between joint participation in outside activities and interests on the one hand, and marital happiness, on the other.

Leisure time preferences (Item 55)

In order to determine whether SM and UM husbands and wives differed, as groups, in their desire relating to spending their leisure time at home,

the interviewees were asked: "In leisure time do you prefer to be 'on the go' or to stay at home?"

The responses which were obtained revealed that the difference between the SM and UM husbands who preferred to spend their leisure time at home was not as wide as originally expected. Thirty-eight percent of the SM husbands, as opposed to 31% of the UM husbands preferred to remain at home.

An almost identical difference was found between the two sets of wives : 50% of the SM wives, compared to 44% of the UM ones, preferred to remain at home.

Husbands, but even more particularly the wives, who preferred to remain at home, said that they did so in order to recover from the week's exertions and to lessen the backlog of the domestic duties that had accumulated while they were at work. Several women mainly housewives, however, preferred to spend at least a part of the weekend away from home. They saw this "change of scenery" as being good for their mental health.

The interviews also revealed that where both the husband and wife expressed a similar desire - i.e. where both preferred to be "on the go" or both preferred to remain at home - conflicts were minimal. Quarrels arose more frequently when the wife expressed one desire and the husband another.

Equality of husband and wife (Item 56)

In this section each spouse was asked whether he/she saw himself/herself as being more intelligent than his/her partner. In the SM group 20% of the husbands considered themselves as being more intelligent than their wives. About two-and-a-half times this proportion of UM husbands (49%) felt that

their level of intelligence was higher than that of their partner.

Among the wives, too, a higher percentage of those belonging to the UM group (31%) compared to only 16% of the SM wives, saw themselves as being intellectually superior to their husbands.

Compared to the UM groups the majority of the SM husbands (52%) and SM wives (46%) saw themselves as being equal in intelligence to their partners. A similar response was given by only 26% of the UM husbands. The UM wives were more generous in the appraisal of their husbands : 41% of them rated themselves equal in intelligence to their husbands.

These figures mean that, in effect, 28% of the SM husbands (compared to 25% of their UM counterparts) said "I feel that I am less intelligent than my spouse." A similar answer was given by a greater proportion of SM wives (38%), compared to the UM wives (28%). Thus marital adjustment seems to be associated with rating oneself as equal to the spouse or rating oneself lower than the spouse, in intelligence.

Feelings of equality between spouses (Item 57)

A trend similar to the one found in Item 56 is evident in Item 57. In the SM group 16% of the husbands saw themselves as being generally superior to their wives. A higher proportion of UM husbands (29%) felt that they were generally superior to their wives.

Among the wives, too, a higher percentage of those belonging to the UM group (19%) compared to 12% belonging to the SM group, saw themselves as being generally superior to their husbands. The majority of the SM husbands (68%) and the

majority of the SM wives (62%) saw themselves as being generally equal to their partners. A similar response was given by a smaller proportion of UM husbands (60%) and UM wives (58%).

These figures mean that, in effect, 16% of the SM husbands (compared to 11% of their UM counterparts) felt that they were generally inferior to their spouses. A similar reply was given by a greater proportion of SM wives (26%), compared to the UM wives (23%). Thus marital adjustment seems to be associated with rating oneself as equal to one's spouse or inferior to him/her.

While much of the ratings given by the spouses would probably correspond with the results that would have been obtained had more objective measures been used, it is possible that in Items 56 and 57 some husbands had overrated themselves, and some wives had underrated themselves, compared to their spouses. A possible explanation for this is a "carry-over" effect : the husband in the Hindu home usually has the final say in the decisions affecting the family and it is possible that, in the mind of the lay person, this position and authority are erroneously equated with greater intelligence and a feeling of superiority.

Considered in overall terms, marital adjustment appears to be associated with attitudes of equality between husband and wife.

Feelings toward a given list of activities related to companionship (Item 58)

Another question on the association between companionship within the family and marital adjustment which was directed to the respondents in the present study dealt with their feelings about their participation in the various activities listed in Table 6.15. One of five possible responses had to be checked for each item : enjoy it very much, enjoy it, indifferent to it,

dislike it, and dislike it very much. The responses which were obtained are also presented in Table 6.15. It will be noted that the first two ("enjoy it very much" and "enjoy it") and the last two categories ("dislike it very much" and "dislike it") have been combined. This has been done so as to make it easier to see the differences in the responses given by the SM and UM groups to each of the activities, particularly at the upper and lower ends of the rating scale.

TABLE 6.15

SPOUSES' FEELINGS TOWARD GIVEN ACTIVITIES (in percentages)⁽¹⁾

Activities	Enjoy it and Enjoy it very much				Indifferent to it				Dislike it and Dislike it very much			
	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages		Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages		Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Responses				Responses				Responses			
	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W
Reading	72	70	43	45	28	28	57	53	0	2	0	2
Gambling	26	0	36	0	34	32	31	21	40	66	33	79
Drinking	38	0	55	0	24	36	17	25	38	64	28	75
Dancing	26	22	32	34	46	44	45	39	28	34	23	27
Watching Television	82	88	90	96	18	12	10	4	0	0	0	0
Parties	62	72	69	68	30	26	24	30	8	2	7	2
Listening to the radio	76	82	78	85	24	18	22	15	0	0	0	0
Music	86	96	84	98	14	4	16	2	0	0	0	0
Sports	56	24	73	19	44	74	27	78	0	2	0	3

(1) The responses of each set of husbands and wives in each of the two groups (SM and UM) add up to 100%

An examination of the data in Table 6.15 indicates that where the activities were enjoyed, a difference of at least ten points exists in respect of the following items: reading (SM husbands 72% : UM husbands 43%; and SM wives 70% : UM wives 45%); gambling (SM husbands 26% : UM husbands 36%); drinking (SM husbands 38% : UM husbands 55%); dancing (SM wives 22% : UM wives 34%); and sport (SM husbands 56% : UM husbands 73%).

The items on which relatively smaller differences (i.e. five points or less) occur, in the combined category "enjoy it" and "enjoy it very much," are the following : parties (SM wives 72% : UM wives 68%); listening to the radio (SM husbands 76% : UM husbands 78%; and SM wives 82% : UM wives 85%); music (SM husbands 86% : UM husbands 84%; and SM wives 96% : UM wives 98%); and sports (SM wives 24% : UM wives 19%). It is noteworthy that not a single SM or UM wife reported enjoying either gambling or drinking. It is debatable whether these responses are correct or have been given merely to conform to social expectations. In spite of more enlightened present-day attitudes, the taboo against women taking part in gambling and drinking is still strong in Hindu society.

A relatively higher percentage of SM husbands (compared to UM ones) and UM wives, (compared to SM wives) disliked gambling, drinking and dancing. The reasons offered by these two groups for their objections differed somewhat: the SM men objected mainly because what could happen if one were to indulge in what they referred to as "these vices" while the UM wives objected mainly because of the hardships they were already experiencing as a result of their husbands' excess in these activities. Many of these women complained that their limited financial resources were further strained by the cost of liquor and the threat of alcoholism to the husbands' wage-earning capacity. Gambling is a similar financial hazard. Moralists consider drinking and gambling as being inherently sinful; hence

if only one partner enjoys them he is inviting severe criticism.

The most marked difference between the SM husbands and wives on the one hand, and their UM counterparts on the other, relates to the socially approved activity of reading. This may be a reflection of the differences in educational level and the amount of leisure time available. Fifty-seven percent of the UM husbands and 53% of the UM wives stated that they were indifferent to reading.

Relatively high percentages among all the sub-groups in the sample reported that they enjoyed parties. This could be due to the fact that the field workers were requested to interpret the term "party" so as to include all social and family functions where there was a gay and festive atmosphere. Thus weddings, engagements, birthday parties and "success parties" were all incorporated within the term.

Two other activities, "listening to the radio" and "music" tended to go together. Younger husbands and wives tune in mainly to western music on Capital Radio while the older couples tune in mainly to Radio Lotus and Radio Truro, both of which broadcast mainly Indian music. Of course, many of the couples reported that they listen to a variety of programmes on other radio stations as well. These include the news, sports commentaries, serials and interviews.

An interest in sport, both as spectators and participants, is very much alive among UM men in particular. The wives, for their part, complain that the long hours which their spouses spend at the sports fields deprives them of eagerly-awaited visits to families and friends. This becomes an important point of conflict.

Especially striking, and perhaps unfortunate, is the marked drop in the number of women who are interested in sport. Discussions with teachers indicate that there is a keen interest in sport among Indian girls at high school level. It would appear that the combination of domestic responsibilities and the business of earning a living are mainly responsible for this diminished interest in sport after marriage.

Overall, it would appear that UM husbands and wives are generally more moderate in their attitudes toward the various activities listed in Table 6.15. UM wives register a stronger dislike for the socially disapproved behaviours of gambling and drinking, because they often perceive the adverse consequences of these activities as being at the root of many of their problems. In the case of the SM wives, the destructive impact of these activities is probably not as great.

Spouses who take the lead in given situations (Item 59)

TABLE 6.16

SPOUSES WHO TAKE LEAD IN GIVEN SITUATIONS (in percentages)⁽¹⁾

Situations	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband takes lead	Wife takes lead	Husband takes lead	Wife takes lead
Making family decisions	56	44	61	39
Disciplining children	60	40	52	48
Handling family money	52	48	57	43
Affectionate behaviour	62	38	68	32
Religious behaviour	24	76	21	79
Recreation behaviour	58	42	62	38
Meeting people	58	42	51	49

(1) The responses of each set of husbands and wives in each of the two groups (SM and UM) add up to 100%.

Democratic behaviour is generally recognised as one of the components of a marriage based on companionship. A question designed to test the extent of democratic behaviour sought to know whether the husband or the wife took the lead in different types of situations. Seven kinds of situations were listed: making family decisions, disciplining children, handling family money, affectionate behaviour, religious behaviour, recreation, and meeting people.

An examination of the data in Table 6.16 reveals an important feature : in both the SM and UM groups, husbands are the ones who mainly take the lead, the UM husbands somewhat more so than the SM ones. In only one out of the

seven given situations (viz., decisions relating to religious behaviour) does the wife take the lead more often. This finding indicates that the Hindu family is still, albeit to a lesser extent than formerly, patriarchal in structure and behaviour.

Another interesting feature emerges when one compares the differences in responses within each group (SM and UM) between husbands and wives. Except for "religious behaviour" in which the wives of both groups take the lead, and "disciplining children" and "meeting people" in which the SM husbands take the lead, the UM husbands turn out to be the group that most often takes the lead. This suggests that a more equalitarian relationship exists between SM husbands and wives - though as already mentioned, here too, the husbands generally take the lead. This finding supports the observation made by Pond et al., (1963) that couples who make decisions jointly are more likely to be better adjusted in marriage (pp. 188-205).

SUMMARY

Companionship involves intimacy and sympathetic understanding, a togetherness between couples yet enough separateness so that personal growth is not stifled.

The present study indicates that there is positive association between marital adjustment and the following aspects of the companionship family :

Joint participation in outside interests, as indicated by the number of activities husbands and wives shared away from home.

Equality, as indicated by the ratings of husbands and wives : well-adjusted

couples tend to see their spouses as their equals intellectually and in other ways.

Democratic relationships within the family, as indicated by neither spouse constantly assuming the role of sole decision maker in matters affecting the family.

As expected, conflict over activities which made serious inroads into the family's limited financial resources - such as drinking and gambling - featured more prominently in the reports of unhappily rather than happily married wives.

VIII Personality Traits as Perceived by Spouse

Introduction

A marital relationship involves the interaction of two personalities. Consequently, the personality traits of the spouses play an important part in determining the kind of interaction that takes place. This section of the report relates to the manner in which spouses perceive certain given behaviours and traits in their partners and the relationship of these perceptions to marital adjustment/maladjustment.

Contrary to the prevailing impression, marriages are not made in heaven but on earth, and their participants are very human and fallible men and women. In this regard Mowrer (1935) writes : "Every individual enters marriage with certain potentialities and impediments to adjustment. These 'assets' and 'liabilities' consist in general of the ideas of the person as to what

constitutes marriage, of habit complexes, and of dominant trends in personality" (p. 219). In this sense, the marital equipment is largely acquired before marriage and the individual personality is formed by the time the young man and woman are ready to marry. However, this should not be taken to mean that the participants cannot adjust to each other and to the marriage relationship. Modifications are possible (Mowrer, 1935, p. 220).

With regard to the manner in which a particular mate is selected, Scanzoni (1981) says men and women view each other through an initial screening or filtering process which is represented by a potential "field of eligibles" (p. 159). Persons first tend to screen out those whose educational level, age, race and religion are very different from their own - although there are, of course, exceptions in all these areas. In general, persons are attracted to each other and maintain a relationship because of the rewards they give one another.

After persons have passed through the filtering process and have been defined as belonging to a category that makes a marriage bargain possible, the question of which one to marry still remains. Obviously, one person cannot marry all those who are eligible; he or she has to select just one mate from the total field available. It is at this point, says Scanzoni, that a person measures possible partners against his conception of the ideal husband or wife. Such a conception includes a number of desired personality traits which, of course, vary from person to person. If a possible partner falls too far short of the desired mate, he is eliminated from the list of eligibles. If he meets the ideal sufficiently well, the tendency is to emphasize those ways of behaviour which are desirable and to think of the other traits as simply less desirable (pp. 159-160). Women who marry men with the wistful hope of "reforming" them (i.e. producing a fundamental change in their

characters), says Dominian (1981), are often disappointed as is a man who marries a woman with the hope of changing her into the ideal wife (p. 6).

Terman (1938) undertook a study to try and discover those personality traits which make for unhappiness in marriage. He asked 792 couples to rank the most common grievances he/she had against his/her spouse. The grievances were ranked according to their seriousness in causing difficulty in the marriage. Terman writes as follows:

"We believe that a large proportion of incompatible marriages are so because of a predisposition to unhappiness in one or both of the spouses. Whether by nature or by nurture, there are persons so lacking in the qualities making for compatibility that they would be incapable of finding happiness in any marriage. There are others, less extreme, who could find it only under the most favourable circumstances; and still others whose dispositions and outlooks upon life would preserve them from acute unhappiness, however unfortunately they were mated ... In a large proportion of unsuccessful marriages it is possible to discover either in the husband or the wife, or perhaps in both, numerous elements of the unhappy temperament and evidence that these elements have played a casual role. We have found reason to believe that even the sexual adjustments in marriage, which on the surface appear to contribute so materially to happiness or unhappiness, are themselves, in turn, largely functions of the personalities and prior experiences of the marital partners" (pp.110-111).

The general public appears to agree with Terman (1938) that incompatibility of temperament is the prime factor in marital unhappiness. It is especially characteristic of unhappy subjects, says Terman, to be touchy or grouchy; to lose their tempers easily; to fight to get their own way; to be critical

of others; to be careless of others' feelings; to be easily affected by praise or blame; to lack self-confidence; to be dominating in their relations with the opposite sex; to be unconventional in their attitudes toward religion, drinking, and sexual ethics; and to alternate between happiness and sadness without apparent cause (pp. 110-111).

These characterizations hold for the unhappy of both sexes. The husbands ranked first in order : nagging, not affectionate, selfish and inconsiderate, and complaining. Selfish dispositions and complaining attitudes toward life are not traits that suddenly develop after marriage. These traits are present before marriage, but the future husband or wife often does not see them or does not consider them serious. In marriage they loom large as causes of trouble.

These temperamental qualities mentioned by Terman are presumably as old as human society and will continue to be the heritage of prospective husbands and wives. Such conflicts assume significant proportions in the contemporary family because of the possibility of divorce whereas they did not jeopardize the existence of the traditional family. In the tradition-bound families, a woman was brought up in such a manner that her individual ego or self was not allowed to develop in terms of her own tastes, interests and habits. Instead, she patterned herself after the style of life desired by her husband and lived in the environment he created. Now factors such as increasing opportunities for females to have education and the ever-widening avenues of vocations for them have brought about a change in the position of women in society. And with this change it has become inevitable that their behaviour patterns and personalities should be affected. The changed position of educated women, and more so of working women, and the changed pattern of their premarital life style encourage them to develop along individual lines. And this, in turn, may make adjustment between husband and wife more difficult.

The foregoing discussion serves as a background against which the findings of the present study need to be considered.

Personality traits as perceived by spouse

In this section the happily and unhappily married men and women in the sample are compared on twenty-seven personality traits. Following Locke's example in his well-known study (1951), these personality traits are classified under four broad headings, viz., directorial ability, adaptability, affectionateness and sociability. This facilitates the analysis of the responses and enables the researcher to report her findings more meaningfully.

On a rating scale which provided for three possible answers - has the trait very much; has the trait somewhat; does not have the trait at all - each spouse was requested to check the degree to which he/she felt his/her spouse possessed a particular trait. Husbands' and wives' responses were recorded separately.

It will be noticed that the order of the items in the tables which follow differs from the order in which they appear in the interview schedule (Appendix A). This re-arrangement became necessary since each item had to be placed under the most appropriate of the broad headings mentioned above.

(a) Directorial Ability

For the purpose of this discussion, the person with directorial ability is generally one who is able to make decisions and assume responsibility readily. He engages in disciplining the children, is determined, ambitious and self-confident. He is also one who is not readily influenced by others and has a sense of duty. Marital adjustment, says Locke (1951),

is related to these items and may be "associated with the type of person who unobtrusively manipulates, works with and directs the efforts of family members, so that the goals and objectives of the family may be attained" (p. 176).

The assessments of their spouse's personality traits made by the husbands and wives in the sample are given in the table below. This set of traits falls under the broad heading, "Directorial Ability."

TABLE 6.17

PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PERCEIVED BY SPOUSE - DIRECTORIAL ABILITY (in percentages)

Traits		My spouse has the trait very much				My spouse has the trait somewhat				My spouse does not have the trait at all				Totals			
		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses	
		H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
1.	Able to make decisions readily	44	52	37	33	42	30	27	31	14	18	36	36	100	100	100	100
2.	Assumes responsibility readily	52	58	37	32	28	28	24	21	20	14	39	47	100	100	100	100
3.	Determined	36	42	36	39	52	44	46	37	12	14	18	24	100	100	100	100
4.	Strict with children	28	28	20	18	54	60	46	42	18	12	34	40	100	100	100	100
5.	Easily influenced by others	36	28	61	47	24	24	27	37	40	48	12	16	100	100	100	100
6.	Ambitious	42	42	38	22	48	46	28	31	10	12	34	47	100	100	100	100
7.	Has a sense of duty	64	56	42	31	34	36	37	19	2	8	21	50	100	100	100	100
8.	Self-confident	38	42	20	24	50	50	39	31	12	8	41	45	100	100	100	100

The data in Table 6.17 indicates that the SM husbands and wives consistently gained scores which showed that, by and large, they possessed those traits which make for happy marriages. The reverse tended to be true in the case of UM couples. It was found, for instance, that 44% of the SM husbands saw their wives as women who could make speedy decisions. A smaller proportion (37%) of the UM husbands gave their partners the same rating. The wives' ratings of their husbands shows a similar trend : more SM wives (52%) than UM wives (33%) saw their husbands as persons who could decide on matters quickly. The statistics at the other end of the scale confirm these conclusions. Fewer SM husbands and wives, compared to UM husbands and wives, saw their partners as notoriously indecisive individuals.

A close examination of the other data in Table 6.17 reveals a similar pattern: on all the remaining traits the SM spouses tended to rate their partners more favourably than do UM spouses. Thus marital adjustment appears to be associated with directorial ability, as measured by the ratings of happily and unhappily married persons with reference to the ability to make decisions readily, acceptance of responsibility, determination, strictness in dealing with children, ability to think for oneself (as opposed to being easily influenced by others), ambition, having a sense of duty and self-confidence.

Possession of these qualities help contribute to marital happiness in various ways. For example, those who are quick in making decisions presumably solve marital problems before they disrupt family relationships, whereas problems tend to accumulate in marriages where persons are slow in making decisions. Determination is also an important trait since

without it the objectives and goals of a family are more difficult to attain.

The significance of the tendency for the SM husbands and wives to be stricter with children than the UM couples is not clear. It might mean that being strict with children helps create a more peaceful home life in which adult members enjoy themselves and remain calm, while the reverse results in irritation with subsequent difficulties between the spouses. Another possibility is that marital maladjustment is related to complaints about the spouse. The maladjusted accuse their partners of various deficiencies, including that of not exerting sufficient control over the children. Finally, there is a point that married persons expect their partners to assume some responsibility in disciplining their children, and being somewhat strict with children is, therefore appreciated. Regardless of the fundamental attitude involved, there is a positive correlation between strictness in dealing with children and marital adjustment.

The differences between the SM and UM groups is particularly noticeable, in the case of the trait "easily influenced by others". Persons who are maladjusted in marriage often blame their marital difficulties on the fact that the spouse is greatly influenced by relatives, friends and acquaintances. Often these individuals claim that their marriages would be happy if their spouses did not accept the suggestions and advice of outsiders.

The statistical data relating to this trait is supported by informal statements secured in the interviews. For example, the following excerpt from a conversation with a UM woman shows that she felt that her husband

was too easily influenced by his family:

"My mother-in-law does not like it when my husband pays attention to me. She passes crude remarks whenever she sees me alone with my husband. On these occasions she finds some excuse or other to call him away. My husband is very attached to his mother and believes anything and everything she tells him about me. She accuses me of being rude to her and constantly tells my husband that I do not care for him and that he should not care to listen to me and do whatever pleases him. My husband believes her and quarrels with me."

An overall consideration of the results shows a high correlation between directorialability and marital maladjustment.

(b) Adaptability

Locke (1951) defines adaptability as "the ability to adjust to others with a minimum of friction" (p. 192). Some persons are highly adaptable and others relatively unadaptable in their relations with others. For the purpose of this discussion, the highly adaptable person is characterised by certain distinctive traits. For example, he does not dominate others, he 'gives in' in arguments and is easy-going. He is not unnecessarily stubborn, selfish, jealous, moody, nervous, easily depressed or easily excited. He is also noted for his slowness in getting angry and his quickness in getting over anger.

The assessments of their spouses' adaptability made by the husbands and wives in the sample are given in the table below. This set of traits falls under the broad heading "Adaptability."

TABLE 6.18

PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PERCEIVED BY SPOUSE - ADAPTABILITY (in percentages)

Traits	My spouse has the trait very much				My spouse has the trait somewhat				My spouse does not have the trait at all				Total			
	SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
	Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response	
	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
1. Dominating, presses his opinions and ideas on others	28	28	41	41	32	38	33	29	40	34	26	30	100	100	100	100
2. "Gives in" in arguments	36	30	19	15	52	58	37	37	12	12	44	48	100	100	100	100
3. Gets angry easily	14	28	37	48	50	42	41	30	36	30	22	22	100	100	100	100
4. Gets over anger quickly	42	34	25	25	46	44	41	31	12	22	34	44	100	100	100	100
5. Moody	20	28	41	39	34	38	41	39	46	34	18	22	100	100	100	100
6. Easy going	22	16	24	20	42	40	52	56	36	44	24	24	100	100	100	100
7. Stubborn	14	12	37	44	48	56	49	39	38	32	14	17	100	100	100	100
8. Easily hurt	32	26	39	26	44	42	34	37	24	32	27	37	100	100	100	100
9. Jealous	18	38	45	56	50	46	31	32	32	16	24	12	100	100	100	100
10. Selfish	8	18	23	26	36	34	41	54	56	48	36	20	100	100	100	100
11. Easily depressed	22	22	42	36	46	38	44	36	32	40	14	28	100	100	100	100
12. Easily excited	34	24	45	29	46	34	41	51	20	42	14	20	100	100	100	100
13. Nervous	26	18	30	33	36	34	39	39	38	48	31	28	100	100	100	100

The data in Table 6.18 indicate that the SM husbands and wives once again consistently gained scores showing that they were better endowed than their UM counterparts with the positive aspects of the traits listed under the heading "Adaptability". These endowments, it would appear, assist them in their marital adjustments. It was found, for instance, that a larger percentage of UM husbands (41%) were rated by their wives as being very dominating compared to 28% of the SM husbands who attributed the same characteristic to their spouses. This pattern was retained in the ratings which the husbands gave their wives : 41% of the UM husbands, compared to 28% of their SM counterparts, perceived their wives as very dominating individuals. The data at the other end of the scale confirm these conclusions. A greater number of UM husbands and wives, compared to SM husbands and wives, saw their partners as persons who dominate and impose their opinions and ideas on others. This is not conducive to good marital adjustment. The maritally well-adjusted engage in democratic and equalitarian practices to a greater extent than the maladjusted. Equalitarian practices imply that there will be little domination of one spouse by the other.

The statistics pertaining to the other traits under "Adaptability" continue the pattern of distinguishing between happily married and unhappily married couples : the SM spouses tend to rate their partners more favourably than do the UM spouses. Those who are better adjusted in marriage tend not to get angry quickly. Marital and family relationships in these cases are characterised by friendliness and affection, rather than by quarrelling and expressions of anger. Family members may make allowances for a father, mother, or child who gets angry quickly, provided this does not happen too frequently; however, the habitual expression of anger toward a spouse or children is likely to create hostility and to interfere

with marital and family adjustment.

The data also indicate that the speed with which persons get over anger is correlated with the degree of marital adjustment. In the SM group 34% of the wives, compared to 25% of the UM group, indicated that their husbands got over their anger quickly. In rating their wives on the same item, 42% of the SM husbands, compared to 25% of the UM husbands reported that their partners got over their anger quickly. The rapidity with which one gets over anger may be seen as an index of the speed with which certain problems or difficulties of marriage will be solved. Not only may anger itself create marital difficulties, but in so far as anger is associated with any marital difficulty, slowness in getting over it serves as an obstacle to bringing about the solution of the problem, or achieving reconciliation.

The partners of UM husbands and wives, relative to the SM ones, generally see them as being moody, stubborn, selfish and jealous. They are also prone to nervousness, excitability and depression.

Two traits, "easy-going" and "easily-hurt", are more characteristic of UM couples than SM ones but they do not discriminate between the two groups to the same extent as most of the other personality traits given in the list.

(c) Affectionateness

Locke defines affection as "an inner feeling of warm regard or settled goodwill toward a person. It is a disposition to love, to be fond of, or to be strongly attracted to a person." In general, persons tend to be affectionate and sympathetic toward those with whom they are inti-

mately associated; also they are eager that affection should be expressed toward themselves.

The husbands and wives in the present study were asked to assess the degree of affectionateness their spouses possessed. The responses are given in the table below.

TABLE 6.19

PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PERCEIVED BY SPOUSE - AFFECTIONATENESS (in percentages)

Traits	My spouse has the trait very much				My spouse has the trait somewhat				My spouse does not have the trait at all				Totals			
	SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
	Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response	
	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
Affectionate	52	48	29	25	42	42	47	37	6	10	24	38	100	100	100	100
Sympathetic	52	42	34	25	42	48	39	47	6	10	27	28	100	100	100	100

The data in the table indicate that SM husbands and wives rated their spouses as being affectionate and sympathetic to a greater extent than did the UM ones. This suggests that when a marriage is a happy one the spouses tend to be affectionate and judge each other generously. The reverse appears to be true when the marriage is an unhappy one.

(d) Sociability

Like affectionateness, sociability is a general type of behaviour which is valued highly in a husband or in a wife. Locke (1951) defines it as "the disposition to unite with others for companionship. It is the inclination toward conviviality, fellowship, or association with others, and is the opposite of seclusiveness and social isolation"(p. 212).

The four personality traits which are used as indices of sociability are : being sociable in that one makes friends easily, likes belonging to organizations, cares about what people say and think, and having a sense of humour.

The assessment of their spouses' sociability made by the husbands and wives in the sample are given in the table below.

TABLE 6.20

PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PERCEIVED BY SPOUSE - SOCIABILITY (in percentages)

Traits	My spouse has the trait very much				My spouse has the trait somewhat				My spouse does not have the trait at all				Total			
	SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
	Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response		Response	
	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
Sociable, makes friends easily	52	48	33	31	38	40	41	39	10	12	26	30	100	100	100	100
Has a sense of humour	38	34	34	39	41	40	44	42	21	26	22	19	100	100	100	100
Cares about people say and think	56	32	44	24	36	48	25	41	8	20	31	35	100	100	100	100
Likes belonging to organizations	40	34	26	25	32	34	22	25	28	32	52	50	100	100	100	100

Happily married men and women rated their spouses very highly in the traits relating to sociability. A greater number of these individuals, compared to their UM counterparts, have the ability to make friends easily, care about what people say and think, and enjoy belonging to organizations. The fourth trait, viz., "has sense of humour" was not as discriminating as the others : 34% of the SM wives and 39% of the UM wives rated their husbands as having a great deal of humour. In their turn, 38% of the SM husbands and 34% of the UM husbands gave a similar rating to their wives.

When all the responses are taken together there is clear evidence that marital adjustment is associated in a positive way with most of the personality traits listed under the broad headings of directorial ability, adaptability, affectionateness and sociability.

SUMMARY

The importance of personality factors as making for or against integration in marriage is widely acknowledged. This study provides research evidence that confirms this view. It has been found that marital adjustment is positively associated with the following personality traits which for convenience have been classified under four broad headings:

1. Directorial ability : A person is a good marital risk if he/she is able to make decisions quickly, readily accepts responsibility, has determination, a sense of duty and self-confidence, is able to deal with children strictly (in a wholesome sense) and does not allow himself to be easily influenced by others.

2. Adaptability : Possession of the following qualities also help promote marital happiness : readiness to consider the opinions and ideas of others; "giving in" in arguments without, of course, being spineless; not getting angry easily; on those occasions when the individual does become angry, his/her anger dissipates quickly. The present study also shows that the prognosis for a happy marriage is poor when one or both partners tend to be unduly moody, stubborn, selfish or jealous.

3. Affectionateness : The degree and mutuality of affection has also shown itself to be an important factor in marital adjustment. Happily married couples display greater affection and consideration toward each other than do unhappily married couples.

4. Sociability : Finally, this study has shown that persons who have a greater chance of success in marriage are generally those who make friends easily, care about what people say and think and enjoy belonging to organisations.

Seen in overall terms, a person is a relatively good marital prospect if he is possesses personality characteristics associated with directorial ability, adaptability, affectionateness and sociability.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY (CONTINUED)

IX Communication And Marital Adjustment

Introduction

Communication, says Virginia Satir (1964) is the most crucial aspect of interpersonal relationships. The significance of effective communication between spouses has been recognised by other therapists, researchers and family-life educators as well. Intimate, friendly and prolonged communication between husband and wife, says Locke (1951), welds them together, whereas a decided decline in this type of communication tends to break up existing attachment (p. 246). Further evidence that good communication skills are crucial to satisfactory family relationships is offered by large numbers of people involved in the marriage and family enrichment movement. Mace and Mace (1977), for instance, have incorporated communication skills training into their marriage enrichment programme.

At this point it is necessary to sound a note of caution. A good communication process should not be seen as a panacea for family problems. Even with the clearest communication among family members, individuals will differ in their desires, attitudes, values, and fears; and such differences may lead to disagreement and conflict. Although good communication, as Calhoun and his associates (1976) point out, may not eliminate such differences, poor communication seems likely to intensify them (p. 58).

Breakdown or failures in communication between spouses may take many forms. Bernard (1964) discusses some of these. At one extreme they may be the result of general inarticulatedness : one or both partners may not have the verbal skills to express themselves. The result is tacit or behavioural communication, by acts rather than by words, and the chances of misinterpretation are great.

At the other extreme, however, is a problem resulting from being too articulate. This difficulty, says Bernard (1964), is more commonly reported in women than in men. The best known example here is "the nag, the scold, the woman who talks incessantly at, rather than to, her husband ... This is the woman to whom others are primarily objects to talk at or against; she is hardly interested in what the other person has to say or even in how he (or she) reacts to what she herself is saying. She is in effect, talking to herself in the presence of another person. The contents of her talk may be pleasant or hostile; it is nearly always boring after a few minutes, if not actually antagonizing. It is to escape this barrage of non-communicatory articulateness, allegedly, that men sometimes seek refuge in the club or tavern, if not in desertion" (Bernard, p. 692).

Husbands and wives need not share identical worlds to understand one another, says Knox (1975), but their two separate worlds must be in contact at some points (p. 52). Sometimes this overlapping of interests is so narrow that neither partner can serve as a satisfactory audience for the other.

Good communication between spouses takes an added importance in the small nuclear family where interaction is particularly close. In this situation the husband at present has potentially more advantages compared to his wife. He has, for example, more continuity of experience in adulthood and fewer abrupt changes of life style. After marriage the bulk of his day is probably

spent much as it was prior to it, and parenthood calls for fewer changes on his part since he is unlikely to have the main responsibility for the care of children. Furthermore, his career, his job and work peers provide him with an important source of personal satisfaction each working day. Wives who are mothers on the other hand, may well spend most of their time at home alone with small children. For this reason they are more likely to have to look to their husbands for their emotional gratification and in the process they may make excessive demands upon the marital relationship. Communication between the spouses may, therefore, be of greater importance to women, and may account for the finding that women report a much earlier start to their marital difficulties than do men, since it would be likely that they would be more aware of inadequacies in interaction.

Research has also shown that partners who are dissimilar in culture, social background or religion, or differ too markedly in age, are more prone to divorce. Such dissimilarity has obvious problems relating to communication. If there is a high degree of mutuality already existing between a couple (so that they embark on a marriage already sharing similar influences, attitudes and values), they will be able, more easily, to communicate their needs and expectations to each other.

It is also likely that couples who have short courtships would have communication problems since many of them are likely to be relative strangers to each other; such couples will probably have had a limited period in which to become acquainted with each other.

There are several external factors which seem to correlate with divorce, such as low income or sub-standard housing : these same factors, in addition to depriving a couple of environmental benefits, also limit their opportunities

for relaxing together, thereby reducing the likelihood of effective communication between them. Furthermore, a low level of education whilst closely related to social factors such as social class and low monthly income, may nevertheless be an important element which can inhibit effective communication between the spouses through an inadequate development of verbal skills, and hence, perhaps, less ability to 'self-disclose' to the partner. These observations are relevant to this study particularly since there appears to be a general shift in Hindu society towards the companionate type of marriage: it seems likely that verbal skills will contribute increasingly to marital stability in this community.

The term "communication" as it is used in present study needs to be explained: it is used in a broad sense and includes the total process whereby husbands and wives learn to understand the needs and expectations of each other; both verbal and non-verbal cues are seen as modes of communication. Items in the interview schedule focus on the level of comfort felt by both partners when sharing important emotions and beliefs with each other.

Responses of SM and UM wives relating to communication (Item 61)

Flowing out of what has been mentioned up to this point it can be assumed that happy marriages are characterised by effective communication between the spouses while the opposite is true in the case of couples who are experiencing marital discord.

It was decided to test this hypothesis. Seventeen items on communication were presented to the SM and UM wives in this study. Each of them was requested to check one of the following five answers which best represented the behaviour between herself and her spouse: very frequently; frequently;

occasionally; seldom; never.

To help make the analysis of the responses more convenient and less disjointed, it was decided to rearrange the order of the items given in the interview scheduled in (Appendix A). Questions which are closely related have been gathered together and discussed as a unit. The new arrangement appears in Table 7.1.

TABLE 7.1

RESPONSES OF SM AND UM WIVES ON ITEMS RELATING TO COMMUNICATION (in percentages)

Items	Frequently and very Frequently		Occasionally		Seldom and Never		Total	
	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM	SM	UM
(a) How often do you and your spouse talk over pleasant things that happen during the day?	91	62	9	28	0	10	100%	100%
(b) How often do you and your spouse talk over unpleasant things that happen during the day?	78	32	14	26	8	42	100%	100%
(c) Do you and your spouse talk about things in which one of you is especially interested?	76	19	16	29	8	52	100%	100%
(d) Do you and your spouse discuss things together before making an important decision.	96	32	4	20	0	48	100%	100%
(e) How often do you and your spouse discuss decisions about money?	66	62	28	20	6	18	100%	100%
(f) Do you and your spouse avoid certain subjects in conversation?	18	60	32	22	50	18	100%	100%
(g) Do you and your spouse discuss matters of sex?	28	13	36	21	36	66	100%	100%
(h) Can you and your spouse discuss your most sacred beliefs without feelings of restraint or embarrassment?	40	28	38	22	22	50	100%	100%
(i) Do you avoid telling your spouse things which put you in a bad light?	50	61	28	25	22	14	100%	100%
(j) How often do you and your spouse talk with each other about personal problems?	46	32	44	28	10	40	100%	100%
(k) Do you find it easier to talk to someone else about intimate matters rather than your spouse?	30	59	42	19	28	22	100%	100%
(l) Do you know the feelings of your spouse from his/her facial and bodily gestures?	86	81	8	10	6	9	100%	100%
(m) Can your spouse tell what kind of a day you have had without asking?	84	78	12	12	4	10	100%	100%
(n) How often can you tell as much from the tone of voice of your spouse as from what he/she actually says?	94	82	6	8	0	10	100%	100%
(o) How often do you feel that your spouse knows what you are trying to say?	78	71	16	19	6	10	100%	100%
(p) How often do you commend your spouse?	66	16	28	38	6	46	100%	100%
(q) How often do you feel free to point out your spouse's shortcomings?	44	38	32	11	24	51	100%	100%

Items 61(a) and (b)

A useful measure of communication and companionship, says Locke (1951, p. 250), is the degree to which family members talk things over. Two questions in the interview schedule were designed to obtain information in this regard: the first one focused on the frequency with which the spouses talk over pleasant things which happen during the day and the second one on the unpleasant things that happen during the day.

An analysis of the responses in Table 7.1 show that happily married men and women talk over things together much more frequently than spouses who are experiencing marital problems: an exchange of views about pleasant things took place in the case of 91% of the SM couples and only 62% of the UM ones. Communication on matters unpleasant was more restricted in both groups, but more particularly in the UM group: SM 78% vs UM 32%. "Seldom" and "never" talked things over, irrespective of whether they were pleasant or unpleasant, was overwhelmingly characteristic of the UM couples. Forty-two percent of the UM group, as opposed to only 8% of the SM one, reported that they hardly talked about unpleasant things with their spouses.

Items 61(c), (d) & (e)

These three items measure, in a broad way, the extent to which consultation and mutual agreement takes place between the spouses. The responses in Table 7.1 show that co-operation and joint decision-making feature far more prominently among happily married couples than among those who are unhappily married : 96% of the SM couples, for instance, reported that important decisions were "frequently" and "very frequently" made after the views of both husband and wife had been considered. This happened in the case of only 32% of the UM couples.

Items 61 (f - k)

The responses relating to these items indicate the extent to which there is a free flow of thoughts and feelings between husband and wife. It is reasonable to assume that couples who are happily married and enjoy a greater sense of security will more readily accept their spouses as confidants. In those cases where a husband criticises his partner for getting into trouble in the first place, the wife has little incentive to ever tell him again. On the other hand, wives who get sympathy or practical advice in response to their tale of woe, have rewarding memories to encourage them to come back for more. "Marriage", say Blood and Wolfe (1960), "is an interactive process of action and reaction in vicious or beneficent cycles. Responsive husbands produce satisfied wives. But a wife who encounters only negative responses to her overtures will eventually either leave the field or battle through divorce or call a cease-fire by living alone in the same house with an unutilised husband. The human spirit cannot stand being caught in a vicious cycle for ever" (p. 203).

The responses to items f - k indicate that the SM spouses generally treated their spouses and their problems with a greater amount of sympathy and consideration. Among the UM couples, for example, only 28% reported that they could "frequently" or "very frequently" discuss their "most sacred beliefs" with their spouses without feelings of restraint and embarrassment. A much higher proportion of SM couples (40%) indicated that they could do this. Moreover, 59% of the UM couples, as compared to a little less than half this number in the SM group, found it easier to talk to someone else about intimate matters rather than with the spouse (UM 59% : SM 30%).

Considered as a unit, the responses to these items point to an association

between marital unhappiness and a reluctance on the part of the spouse to share his/her experiences with the partner since the sharing is perceived to be unrewarding, threatening or painful. One wife who was interviewed said that she found too many topics "too sore to discuss" with her husband. Since she found him to be "touchy" and "prone to sulking" whenever she raised some matter that needed to be faced squarely, she had to learn as she put it, "to keep her mouth shut." Other oft-heard complaints included the following:

- "After a quarrel my partner gives me the silent treatment."
- "My partner sometimes makes comments that hurt and depress me."
- "I wish my partner was more willing to share his feelings with me."
- "My spouse often talks about boring things."
- "My partner does not understand me."
- "We have nothing to talk about."

Positive comments, as expected, came mainly from the SM couples and included statements such as the following:

- "I am able to express all my true feelings to my partner because he is so understanding."
- "What I like most about my wife is her encouraging attitude."
- "My husband is a good listener."

Items (1 - 0)

These four items provide an approximate measure of familiarity that exists between spouses. In those cases where the partners have come to know each other particularly well, non-verbal cues probably provide as much information to the spouse as when his/her partner speaks. With time, and as the married couple move through the various family-life stages their marriage and

family roles undergo a variety of changes. For example, with time the knowledge and predictability with regard to the spouse's feelings and behaviour increases. Often the longer a couple are married, the less they verbally interact with each other. While this is no doubt true, it is also possible that the longer a couple are married, the less do they need to depend on conversation as their chief means of communication. The husband and wife often get to know each other so well over time that they are able to anticipate what the other is going to say, or a few words or gestures may be the only cues they need (Bell, 1968, p. 303). From a romantic point of view such a state of affairs is regrettable : each spouse is ceasing to be a "mystery" to the other and is coming to take the other for granted.

Brownfield (1953) found that facial expressions and gestures becomes increasingly more important as means of communication as marriage interaction continues over the years (p. 316).

The evidence also suggests that over time the spouses' knowledge and assessment of each other is such that they may gradually turn less to each other. This may be an adaptation to an over-dependency that existed earlier in marriage. Blood and Wolfe (1960) found that young wives turned very often to their husbands both for sympathy as well as when they were angry. But they found that over time and with the involvement of children "the husband assumes a less significant role as audience, being replaced by such alternatives as God, other people, and housework" (p. 189).

The differences between the percentage of responses given in each of the three rating categories is the least in respect of items (l), (m), (n) and (o). This indicates that these items do not differentiate between happily and unhappily married couples as clearly as do the other items relating to

communication. Both SM and UM couples appear to know their spouses sufficiently well to draw certain conclusions about their moods and thoughts from non-verbal cues. Only 9% of the UM and 6% of the SM wives reported that they could "never" or "seldom" gauge their husbands' feelings from their facial and bodily gestures.

Items 61 (p - q)

The unity that exists between a husband and a wife and the sense of security that each enjoys within this union is reflected, to some extent, in the freedom which each one has to commend or criticise the other. It may be hypothesised that a "give-and-take" attitude in this regard is more characteristic of SM couples. Criticisms are kept to a minimum and when they have to be made they are of a constructive kind. Fear of reprisals is not a major inhibiting factor. In the case of unhappily married couples on the other hand, it is likely that statements expressing praise would be scarce while those expressing criticism would be plentiful.

The responses to items (p) and (q) indicate that 66% of the SM couples "frequently" or "very frequently", compared to only 16% of the UM couples, commended their husbands. At the other end of the scale 46% of the UM wives, as compared to only 6% of the SM wives, "seldom" or "never" commended their husbands.

On item (q), 44% of the SM wives stated that they "frequently" or "very frequently" felt free to point out their husbands' shortcomings. A smaller percentage (38%) of the UM wives reported having the same kind of freedom. At the other end of the scale 51% of the UM wives, compared to less than half this number of SM wives (24%), felt free to point out their husband's short-

comings. These wives, presumably, were afraid of annoying their husbands or hurting their feelings.

Overall, the responses to the seventeen items relating to communication, indicate that striking differences exist between marriages in which the wife's problems are understood by the husband and those in which she is unable to communicate her problems to him or is rejected for doing so. Companionship is more prevalent between spouses who are well adjusted in marriage than between spouses who are maladjusted.

Insights gained into the communication processes of happily and unhappily married couples, as groups, are worth noting. Generally among the SM couples there was a meaningful exchange of feelings, thoughts, fears and opinions by both partners, even when these differed from those of the partner; and what was more striking is the fact that these differences seldom led to serious conflict. These couples, moreover, usually expressed negative feelings when they arose, rather than remaining silent and allowing resentment to build up.

The UM couples, in contrast, often found it difficult to limit the expression of their feelings and opinions even when they knew they would be hurting each other. The meagreness of their joint social life deprived many unhappily married couples of conversation about mutual friends, gossip and "party post-mortems." Many of the couples confined their joint visits to the homes of very close relatives. Several women complained that even these visits were few and far between and were usually restricted to such special occasions as Diwali ("the festival of lights"), religious ceremonies and weddings.

Low level of reading had a similar impoverishing effect. It is generally acknowledged that better education and associated social conditions go a long

way towards lowering a number of barriers between spouses.

SUMMARY

Communication is generally acknowledged to be the most crucial aspect of interpersonal relationships. In its wider sense the term refers to the total process whereby husbands and wives interact through the use of verbal and non-verbal cues. This study shows that there is a positive association between marital adjustment and various aspects of communication.

Happily married spouses talk over things together much more frequently than do spouses who are unhappily married. They also co-operate closely and reach joint decisions more often than do those who experience marital problems. Owing to the greater sense of security that they enjoy in their relationship, well adjusted couples confide in their spouses more readily than do maritally maladjusted couples. At the same time they are treated with a greater amount of consideration and sympathy by their partners. Unhappy husbands and wives, on the other hand, usually find it difficult to limit the expression of their feelings and opinions even when they know that they would be hurting each other. Their impoverished social life, moreover, deprives them of valuable material for communication.

X Marital Disagreements and Conflicts

It is generally accepted that a large proportion of married couples periodically encounter stressful periods in their relationship. When the problems become very severe, some couples choose to end the marriage, while others try to solve, ignore or live with the difficulties. A Gallup poll in the USA

found that 10% of the women interviewed had considered the possibility of divorce at some time in their married life (Gallup, 1962, p. 96).

There is a category of married couples, says McCary (1980), who do their best to avoid arguments inspite of their feelings of dissatisfaction. Such a situation, in McCary's opinion, may indicate various states: the person concerned could, for instance, lack individuality; or one of the partners may not recognise the other as being significant enough to disagree with; or one of them may refrain from disagreeing out of fear for the other. In these situations, the reasons for not arguing may be more detrimental to the marital relationship than if the arguments were to take place (p. 321-331). There are also those individuals who instead of arguing and clearing the air, resort to such potentially destructive tactics as pouting, withholding privileges, or as one informant aptly expressed it, treating the spouse in "an icy or frozen" manner.

The opposite characteristic to acrimony is apathy. This attitude may enter the relationship as an aftermath of a profitless and futile period of bickering. At this stage the couple cease arguing and behave as though they have passed the point of caring. Outwardly, they appear bored and "fed up" and admit that they do not know what they should be doing next. They may be seething with anger beneath the surface or feel utterly frustrated and despairing. They may keep busy, avoid interaction or confrontation and wait for something to happen. The intervention of relatives or friends may activate the couple; otherwise the relationship gradually peters out. These "avoidance tactics" are generally considered immature and detrimental to a good marital relationship.

Many marriages develop a closeness of paired relationship never achieved with any other individual outside the marriage. When the relationship is open and

unpretentious, the couple may be so frank with each other that they are bound to disagree. Some married couples find the arguments stimulating and enjoyable and they add an important positive dimension to marital interaction.

Accompanying the positive elements of arguing in marriage are certain dangers. These arise when one of the individuals allows his emotions to take over. He may become very angry and strike out in every direction he can, thereby endangering the marital relationship. Such randomly directed aggression may be a symptom of a more serious underlying problem.

Social workers point out that one of the most frequent reasons which prompts a couple to seek professional help is the realisation that there is something seriously wrong with their marriage. There is an escalation of quarrelling and what is particularly alarming to the couple is the sheer triviality of the cause. The slightest disagreement often flares up into a major row. These rows become more and more frequent and gradually seem to permeate just about every aspect of the couple's life. Such a situation may indicate that there are fundamental needs which are not being met in the marriage. Outwardly, one or both partners may be arguing about food, money, or the division of labour in the home; in reality, however, such individuals may be crying out for affection, love, sex, security, understanding, time together or an end to undue criticism, aggression, rejection and neglect. The couple may fail to see the basic cause and instead continue arguing about the details which lead to the quarrel. Hours may thus be spent bickering about the time the husband gets home, whether he smells of liquor, whether he is communicative or not, or whether the wife gossips - i.e. they argue over issues which are quickly and amicably settled in a marriage where the basic needs are satisfied. A counsellor may help a quarrelling couple to clarify their basic needs. Unfortunately, however, many couples do not seek such help or when they do, they

have probably reached "a point of no return."

Basic to problem-solving in marriage is the relative degree of commitment to the marriage by each of the partners. Here one encounters the principle of least interest, viz., "the one who cares more in any relationship is at a disadvantage vis-a-vis the one who cares less. The person who cannot tolerate quarrelling and bickering will give more concessions than the spouse to whom it means less" (Bernard, 1964, p. 730).

One of the ironies of life is that solving one problem may result in a new problem. One partner, may effectively bring about changes in the behaviour of the spouse only to find that the changed behaviour creates new problems. For example, in studies of wives of alcoholics who had learned to control their problem, the wives were greatly disappointed by the results. Some women found "that they preferred the man who, however difficult he might have been intoxicated, was more lovable when sober than the man who is sober always" (Bernard, 1964, p. 695).

It is against the background of this discussion that the findings of the present study must be considered.

Satisfaction/dissatisfaction with marriage and one's spouse (Items 62 and 63)

Expressions of dissatisfaction with one's marriage are probably the best indicators of marital maladjustment. Two items in the schedule (i.e. Items 62 and 63) have been designed to gauge present attitudes toward marriage and toward one's spouse. Present attitudes toward marriage were determined by asking the respondent whether he/she ever wished he/she had not married (Item 62). The distribution of the responses pertaining to this item are presented in Table 7.2.

TABLE 7.2

ATTITUDES OF HAPPILY AND UNHAPPILY MARRIED COUPLES
TOWARD MARRIAGE (in percentages)

Responses	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Frequently	0	0	28	33
Occasionally	16	14	31	39
Rarely and never	84	86	41	28
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

There is a significant difference between the number of happily married individuals and unhappily married ones who reported that they had "rarely" or "never" wished that they had not married (SM husbands 84%; SM wives 86%; UM husbands 41%; UM wives 28%). None of the SM husbands or wives had frequently wished that he/she had not married whereas 28% of the UM husbands and 33% of the UM wives had done so. These statistics indicate that there is an association between satisfaction with the state of marriage and marital adjustment.

Attitude toward one's spouse was determined by asking each respondent whether given the choice again, he/she would marry the same person, marry a different person, or not marry at all (Item 63).

The responses pertaining to this item are presented in Table 7.3.

TABLE 7.3

RESPONDENTS' CHOICE OF MARRIAGE PARTNER IF OFFERED
A SECOND OPPORTUNITY

Responses	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Marry the same person	94	96	20	17
Marry a different person	0	0	52	51
Not marry at all	6	4	28	32
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Disillusionment with the marriage partner was greater among unhappily married husbands and wives. This disillusionment was sufficiently great to motivate 28% of the husbands and 32% of the wives in the UM group into declaring that they would not marry at all if they were given a second chance. On the other hand, there were 20% of UM husbands and 17% of the UM wives who reported that they would marry the same person all over again inspite of the problems they were experiencing. A common view expressed among the spouses was that their partners were "very nice" persons on those occasions when they did not display such objectionable forms of behaviour as excessive drinking, gambling, nagging and suspicion.

Noteworthy also is the fact that 6% of the SM husbands and 4% of the SM wives would not marry at all if they were given a second chance. Although the statistics are reasonably insignificant, these findings are surprising in view of the happiness which these individuals were enjoying in their marriages. Further inquiry revealed that the majority of these individuals were essentially

career-oriented; they found that family responsibilities prevented them from giving sufficient attention to their own advancement.

The satisfaction of the SM couples with their spouses is reflected by the fact that none of them, if they were to marry again, would choose a different partner. The situation is quite different in the case of the UM couples : 52% of the husbands and 51% of the wives would marry someone else.

The interviews provided some valuable insight into the decisions relating to the choices that the spouses would make if they were given a second opportunity.

Some of the comments typical of those which were made by couples who had been embittered with their marriages are the following:

"After being married for a couple of months we realised that we were too different to be living together. The marriage was wrong right from the start."

"It was a hopeless marriage to start with but I just 'stuck it out' for the sake of our baby. I kept hoping that things would get better but this never happened. They just got from bad to worse. I can't see us remaining together for much longer."

Many of the conflicts arose because the couple lacked money to carry on everyday affairs. Often this was worsened by the husbands tendency to "drink the pay-packet away": "We argued about money, about not having enough in the house and about his excessive drinking. He was irresponsible as a husband and completely ignored his obligations."

Statements such as these were in sharp contrast to many of those which were made by happily married couples:

"I never regretted marrying my husband - not even for a moment."

"My wife and I understand each other completely."

"We are more in love now than when we **were first** married."

Other statements, some made by SM and others by UM couples, were less enthusiastic:

"I don't feel too pleased with some of my partner's personal habits. Still we are happy together."

"I feel that my wife does not understand me. I hope this comes right with time."

"I am dissatisfied about our relationship with my in-laws. They want to 'rule' our lives."

"I am unhappy about our financial position. My husband thinks that he alone has the right to decide on how he should spend our money.

I wish he would take my feelings into account for a change."

In summary, well adjusted couples were generally pleased that they had decided to marry and all of them would marry their present partners if they were asked to choose again. The maladjusted couples were far less pleased with their decision to marry in the first place. However, many of those persons who were in favour of marriage confided that they would prefer to "settle down" with some other partner.

Issues causing serious difficulties in the respondents' marriages (Items 64, 65 and 66)

It is reasonable to assume that couples who are experiencing marital happiness differ from those who are experiencing marital unhappiness, both in the

number and the kind of serious difficulties they encounter.

In order to test this hypothesis, twenty-four items were presented to SM and UM husbands and wives with the request that they check those items which they thought caused serious difficulties in their marriage.

In order to facilitate the analysis of the responses, the items in Table 7.4 have been re-arranged under the following five broad headings : Affectional and Sex Relationships, Economic Difficulties, Socially Disapproved Behaviour and Miscellaneous Items. This is a modification of the classification proposed by Locke (1951, p. 75).

The table lists the various items with the number of SM and UM husbands and wives who checked each of them.

TABLE 7.4

ISSUES REPORTED AS CAUSING SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN
RESPONDENTS' MARRIAGES (number of responses given to each item)

	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies	Husbands' Replies	Wives' Replies
<u>A. Affectional and sex relationships</u>				
1. Spouse paid attention to another person	2	4	8	12
2. Lack of mutual affection	0	0	21	23
3. Adultery	0	0	8	13
4. Unsatisfying sex relations	2	2	23	23
5. Venereal disease	0	0	0	0
6. Desire to have children	4	4	7	6
7. Sterility of husband	0	0	1	1
8. Sterility of wife	2	0	2	2
<u>B. Economic difficulties</u>				
1. Spouses attempt to control my spending money	0	0	22	15
2. Other difficulties over money	0	4	24	30
3. Non-support	0	0	0	8
4. Desertion	0	0	4	4
<u>C. Socially disapproved behaviour</u>				
1. Drunkenness	0	16	3	30
2. Gambling	0	2	2	12
3. Spouse sent to jail	0	0	0	2
<u>D. Individualistic behaviour</u>				
1. Do not have mutual friends	0	0	14	13
2. Selfishness and lack of co-operation	2	4	19	16
<u>E. Miscellaneous items</u>				
1. Inteference of in-laws	6	10	21	23
2. Ill health	4	2	5	5
3. Constant bickering	0	0	33	23
4. Different amusement interests	6	4	7	5
5. Religious differences	0	0	2	4
6. Differences regarding children	16	12	10	11
7. Cruelty to step children	0	0	1	1

The number of items checked provide an index of the prevalence of conflicts between the spouses. It was found that the SM men and women significantly had fewer conflicts than did the UM couples. This is reflected by the fact that the 50 SM husbands in the sample lodged a total of 44 complaints (i.e. 0,88 complaint per husband while the 100 UM husbands lodged a total of 237 complaints (i.e. 2,37 complaints per husband). In the case of the women, the 50 SM wives lodged a total of 64 complaints (i.e. 1,28 complaints per wife) while the UM wives registered a total of 282 complaints (i.e. 2,82 complaints per wife). The statistics also indicate that wives as a group registered a greater number of complaints than the husbands did. This is probably due to greater alertness on the part of women to the detrimental effects of unwholesome conditions upon the family since, by virtue of their role, they are the first ones to experience hardship.

There were distinct differences in the nature of serious marital difficulties encountered by SM and UM couples. An examination of Table 7.4 shows that some of the greatest differences lie in the area of affectional and sexual relationships. This area includes the following eight items : unsatisfying sex relations, lack of mutual affection, adultery, spouse pays attention to another person, desire to have children, sterility of husband, sterility of wife, and venereal disease. Both UM men and women checked the first four of these as difficulties much more frequently than did the SM couples. This suggests that the absence of these difficulties tend to promote marital adjustment while their presence is indicative of marital maladjustment.

Economic difficulties include the following : other difficulties over money, spouse's attempts to control the partner's spending money, desertion and non-support. All four items were checked more frequently by the UM husbands and wives than their SM counterparts. Non-support was a much more significant

difficulty for the UM than for the SM group, and for the UM women than for the UM men. Socially disapproved behaviours such as drunkenness and gambling feature high on the list of complaints made by the UM wives and to a much lesser extent by the SM wives. Although these complaints did cause serious problems in the relationship of the happily married couples it would appear that their detrimental effects were offset by the other benefits that were present in these marriages. This did not appear to be the case among the unhappily married couples. Indeed, in these marriages it is likely that these weaknesses aggravated an already problematic situation.

Individualism, as represented by lack of mutual friends, and selfishness and lack of co-operation, is not conducive to marital adjustment. A significantly greater proportion of UM husbands and wives marked these items as matters which have caused serious difficulties in their marriages than did their SM counterparts.

Constant bickering was checked by a sizeable proportion of UM wives and an even greater proportion of UM husbands. In contrast, not a single UM husband or wife checked this item. There appears no doubt, therefore, that this form of behaviour is detrimental to marital harmony.

Interference by in-laws was one item that featured high up on the list of complaints offered by all four sets of individuals in this study. However, it was mentioned more frequently by UM husbands and wives. It would seem that if a marriage is stable, interference by in-laws does not easily affect the marriage bond.

On the following seven items, appearing in Table 7.4, little or no difference was found in the responses of the SM and UM couples: religious differences,

desire to have children, sterility of husband, sterility of wife, ill-health, spouse sent to jail and cruelty to step-children.

Infidelity appeared as a theme in many accounts though the seriousness with which it was viewed by the spouse, particularly wives, differed. In one case its discovery was accepted philosophically: "I suppose all men are like that". In another case it led initially to violent quarrels and then to a kind of coolness that resulted in the spouses "not sharing beds" for prolonged periods of time. In yet another instance the discovery of infidelity served merely to make a bad situation worse.

One interviewee had a story with a happy ending: "I knew something was wrong when my husband became very cool towards me. Often he just sat in front of the T.V. set and simply stared at it - something that he didn't do before. And when I found out that there was another woman in his life, I felt very hurt. I would sit at work and tears would just keep coming down. I lost a great deal of weight. This went on for almost six months. Then something happened - I don't know what and I dare not ask - my husband started being his old loving self again. Things are now beginning to settle down nicely."

Respondents were requested to specify other areas (besides those already listed) which caused serious difficulties in their marriage. Some of these included: violence on the part of the husband; impotence; spouse wants "unnatural" sex relations; disagreement over "who should do what;" lack of understanding and consideration; differences in education and ability; spouse withdrawn and moody; spouse irresponsible and undependable.

The number of complaints listed by the SM group was decidedly smaller than the number listed by the UM group.

Overall, it was evident that married couples who are well adjusted in their relationship differed from those who are maladjusted in both number and kind of serious marital difficulties encountered.

Respondents were also requested to state what things in their marriage satisfied them most. Wives' responses included the following: "doing things together with my husband," "having children," "having a husband who understands my problems and feelings," and "having a husband who loves and respects me." Husbands' responses included the following: "having a wife who looks after me well," "having a loving and understanding wife," "having a wife who co-operates in saving to buy a house," and "having a wife who keeps our home neat and tidy and runs it efficiently." As expected the SM men and women listed many more things which satisfied them about their marriages than did the UM couples. An interesting response given by several unhappily married husbands and wives was "nothing in my marriage satisfies me."

When examined in overall terms the responses indicate that there is an association between the type and number of complaints made by spouses and marital adjustment.

Agreement and disagreement between the spouses (Item 67).

Item 67 comprises eleven questions relating to important matters in family life (see Table 7.5). The respondents were requested to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement between self and spouse on a five-point scale: always agree, frequently agree, agree sometimes/disagree sometimes, frequently disagree, always disagree. The responses given in this investigation are also presented in Table 7.5.

TABLE 7.5

DEGREE OF AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH SPOUSE ON GIVEN ITEMS (in percentages)⁽¹⁾

Items	Always and Frequently agree				Agree sometimes and Disagree sometimes				Frequently and Always disagree			
	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages		Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages		Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses		Responses	
	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W
Handling family finances (e.g. buying on instalment)	56	66	36	34	36	22	30	35	8	12	34	31
Matters of recreation (e.g. going for picnics)	58	64	42	37	34	30	27	30	8	6	31	25
Religious matters (e.g. offering of sacrifices)	50	56	48	53	36	26	30	27	14	18	22	20
Demonstrations of affection (e.g. frequency of kissing, embracing)	68	74	37	22	22	18	32	28	10	8	31	50
Friends (e.g. dislike of spouse's friends)	48	58	34	22	40	30	29	23	12	12	37	55
Intimate relations (e.g. sex relations)	72	76	26	30	22	14	21	23	6	10	53	47
Ways of dealing with in-laws	58	60	29	23	32	24	19	27	10	16	52	50
The amount of time that should be spent together	62	58	25	22	32	34	36	32	6	8	39	46
Table manners	64	70	43	38	36	30	39	47	0	0	18	15
Aims, attitudes, values, and things believed to be important in life	66	60	27	30	28	24	22	30	6	16	51	40
Children	64	58	43	39	28	34	39	33	8	8	18	28

(1) The responses of each set of husbands or wives in each of the two groups (SM and UM) add up to 100%

For the purposes of analysis the categories "always agree" and "frequently agree" have been combined; the same has been done in the case of the categories "frequently disagree" and "always disagree". The combinations help to make clearer the comparisons between the responses of the SM and UM groups as well as those between males and females.

A striking feature of the data presented in Table 7.5 is the marked discrepancy between the SM husbands and their UM counterparts, and the SM wives and their UM counterparts, in the category "always and frequently agree". On every item in the case of both men and women, there is a higher percentage of SM individuals who reacted positively.

At the other end of the scale a similar pattern is evident: a greater proportion of the UM husbands and wives "frequently disagree" with each other than do their SM counterparts. Once again the differences appear on all eleven items.

In the "agree sometimes and disagree sometimes" category the SM males are in the majority on almost all the items but the responses of the females, when compared to each other, follow a less consistent pattern.

Overall, it is clear that marital adjustment is associated with greater agreement between the spouses on the items listed in Table 7.5.

Both UM husbands and wives reported a good deal of disagreement in two particularly important areas of marital life viz., intimate relations, for example sex relations, and ways of dealing with in-laws. In contrast, there was considerable agreement between SM couples with respect to intimate relations and demonstrations of affection as measured by frequency of kissing and

embracing. These findings suggest that a relatively high degree of agreement between a couple in several areas of their lives helps create a harmonious intimate relationship between them.

The area of least disagreement between the UM husbands and wives was related to religious matters, the very item on which SM husbands and wives differ most. This is an interesting finding but one which is not easy to explain.

Conflict between spouses in both the SM and UM groups, in so far as children are concerned often centred on different styles of management. One parent frequently felt the other was too strict or too permissive or not consistent enough. In a few families the primary issue was nurturance : one parent complained that the other spouse was not emotionally responsive to the children.

Men and women reported some differences in child rearing behaviours. More fathers were perceived as having some form of firm control, ranging from an issue-oriented, reasoning approach to an authoritarian approach based on obedience. Only a few men were seen as being permissive.

In the interviews, men and women talked differently about child rearing. Women more frequently acknowledged that they or their husbands yelled or lost their tempers with their children. They described incidents in which children were beaten or punished severely by either parent. These incidents provoked shame, anxiety, and remorse, particularly in the SM group.

Men seldom reported these kinds of incidents. They tended to talk about child rearing in a problem-solving, issue-oriented manner; they presented it as a rational process. They seldom referred to any kind of emotional act, such as either parent yelling, screaming, spanking, or beating. Furthermore,

they tended to give less time in the interview to discussing the children's problems. They gave less information on child rearing and fewer examples of family incidents.

Spouses' responses to disagreements (Item 68)

It is often assumed that stubbornness, as indicated by not yielding in an argument, is associated with marital maladjustment; and that adaptability as indicated by readily yielding, is associated with marital adjustment.

In order to ascertain how disagreements are settled among the participants in this study, the following question was asked: "When disagreements have arisen, they usually have resulted in husband giving in; wife giving in; agreement by mutual give and take; neither giving in; no disagreements."

The responses are given in Table 7.6.

TABLE 7.6

SPOUSES' RESPONSES TO DISAGREEMENTS (in percentages)

	SM Couples	UM Couples
Husband usually gives in	10	18
Wife usually gives in	22	33
Agreement by mutual give and take	68	25
Neither gives in	0	24
No disagreements	0	0
TOTAL	100	100

The most striking feature is the high frequency with which the SM couples resolve their conflicts by mutual give-and-take as compared to the UM couples (SM 68% : UM 25%). Moreover, conflicts remain unresolved among 24% of the UM couples. None of the SM couples reported such deadlocks.

Some noteworthy differences in the patterns of resolving marital conflicts emerged in the course of the interviews. Often one or both of the UM couples tended to deny the existence of conflict and as a result it kept smouldering. The SM couples on the other hand, generally accepted the presence of a problem and "put their heads together" to find a solution. Some typical remarks made by SM couples are the following:

"When we have a disagreement, we openly share our feelings and decide how to resolve our differences."

"When we are having a problem, I can always tell my partner what is bothering me."

These couples are able to focus on the conflict area and "stay" with the issue; communication does not break down.

The UM couples, in contrast, more readily turned to friends, neighbours and relatives to help them find solutions. They were too easily inclined to feel that the situation was hopeless. In some instances, they engaged the children as allies and fought out their conflicts through the children. The UM couples, unlike their SM counterparts, often tended to blame each other and deny their own contribution to the conflict situation. Any criticism was seen as an attack as the following remark suggests: "Sometimes we have serious disputes over unimportant issues." Some of the spouses showed little consideration or respect for the feelings, opinions and interests of their partners; the partner was expected to do most of the changing; they tended

to hold out for their "rights" and thereby made compromises difficult. The UM couples also gave clear evidence (through their remarks) of more readily withdrawing physically or emotionally as a solution: "In order to end an argument, I usually give up quickly." "I would do anything to avoid conflict with my partner."

All the observations listed above contrast sharply with those generally made on SM couples. The well adjusted couples displayed greater maturity in the handling of problems and the solutions which they adopted were generally constructive and acceptable to both partners. They could understand each other's feelings about a particular issue. They were able to discuss their difficulties with each other in a thoughtful, rational way although they may have been initially very upset. In short, the impression gained was that the process of problem resolution promoted their growth.

The data in Table 7.6 also show that the wives in both the SM and UM groups gave in more frequently in arguments than did their husbands. This is not surprising since many Hindu women, inspite of their emancipation in recent years, still look up to their husbands as the ultimate authority in the home.

Overall, there can hardly be any doubt that an important distinguishing feature between good and poor adjustment in marriage is the manner in which couples resolve their conflicts.

Left mate because of conflict (Item 69)

It is not unusual for a husband or wife to leave the partner for varying periods of time if marital conflict becomes too intense, or if the person is unable to cope with them. Such an event in all likelihood occurs more

often among unhappily married couples.

The data collected in this study support this expectation. None of the SM couples reported leaving their spouses on account of marital problems but 38% of the UM couples reported doing so. The length of such separation varied from one day to about three months.

Jealousy (Item 70)

Jealousy, says Bowman (1974), is a fear reaction and it has a corrosive and damaging effect on marriage. It is self-defeating since the spouse of the jealous partner generally resents the lack of trust. Jealousy is often a symptom of immaturity and such a person is difficult to live with. This militates against good marital adjustment. (p. 290).

Seen against this background, it is expected that jealousy would be more prevalent among UM individuals than among SM ones. The wives in this study were asked if the husband was inclined to be jealous if they danced, talked or engaged in other kinds of association with those of the opposite sex. The presence of jealousy was reported much less frequently by the SM than the UM group (SM 38% : UM 55%). A clear indication that undue jealousy did not exist was given by 42% of the SM, in contrast to 29% of the UM couples. These findings are not surprising in view of the relatively larger percentage of UM wives who gave "spouse paid attention to another person" and "adultery" as serious difficulties in the marriage (See response to Item 64 in Table 7.4).

When asked whether they resented this feeling of jealousy on the part of their husbands, 11% of the UM wives and 47% of the SM wives said that they did not. Many of those wives who resented their husband's feelings of jealousy reported

that they disliked being distrusted and "policed all the time". Others felt humiliated and embarrassed by such behaviour.

Request for outside assistance (Item 71)

In order to determine whether there was any association between marital adjustment and the seeking of outside assistance for marital and psychological problems, the wives in the sample were asked whether they or their spouse sought help at any time from a welfare agency, court of law, or individuals such as a psychiatrist, priest, faith-healer or friend, for marital or psychological problems.

The responses indicated that every UM couple in the sample sought assistance from at least one of the sources mentioned above. Only 4% of the SM couples did so. This indicates one of several possibilities: (a) the marital problems of the SM couples were not serious enough to warrant outside assistance; (b) SM couples preferred to solve their own problems; (c) in general, the SM group was made up of individuals who enjoyed relatively good mental health.

Overall, there was a clear relationship between marital adjustment and seeking outside help for one's problems.

Talk of divorce (Item 72)

It is reasonable to assume that thoughts and talk about divorce would feature more prominently among unhappily married couples. To determine whether this was in fact so, the subjects in this study were asked four related questions:

Firstly, "Have you ever wanted a divorce?" : 66% of the UM and all of the SM couples reported that they had no such intention at any time in their

marriage.

Secondly, "Has the idea of divorce come up quite often?" : Of those unhappily married persons who indicated that they had thought about divorce, 65% admitted that the idea had come to their minds quite often. None of the SM couples were asked to answer this question since they had already indicated that thoughts of divorce had not occurred to them.

The following factors, says Goode (1970), seem to create a somewhat lesser propensity toward divorce in the upper socio-economic strata, the strata to which many SM couples belonged:

1. The network of social and family relations is more extended, more tightly organized, and exercises greater control over the individual.
2. The income differentiates between the wife and husband in the upper strata are greater than in the lower strata; consequently, the wife has more reason to maintain the marriage if she can.
3. Toward the upper strata, far more of the husband's income is committed to long-term expenditures, from which he cannot easily withdraw to support an independent existence.
4. The husband in the lower strata can more easily escape the child-support payments and other post-divorce expenditures because his life is more anonymous and legal controls are less effective.
5. The strains internal to the marriage are greater toward the lower strata: marital satisfaction is lower, romantic attachment between spouses is less common, and the husband is less willing to share household tasks when the wife is working (p. 143).

Thirdly, "Have you talked over with your spouse about the possibility of a

divorce": 18% of the wives, all of them unhappily married, indicated that they and their spouses had talked about the possibility of a divorce. None of the happily married couples had done so.

Fourthly, "Has your spouse ever wanted a divorce?" : 26% of the husbands, all belonging to the UM group, had wanted a divorce at some point in their married lives. None of the SM husbands wanted to end his marriage.

Comparison of the responses to the third and fourth questions above suggests that women may be less eager to see their marriages terminated. Experienced social workers offered the following reasons for this reluctance on the part of the wives : many of the women have negative self-concepts; they believe their husbands will reform; they fear economic hardship; they have children who need a father's economic support; they doubt whether they can get along alone; they believe that divorcees are stigmatized; and finally, it is difficult for women with children to find suitable employment.

Spouses who filed suit for divorce (Item 73)

Six percent of the husbands and 2% of the wives in the UM group went so far as to file suit for divorce. In all of the cases, however, the proceedings were stopped before they had reached an advanced stage. The statistics are too insignificant to draw any reliable conclusion.

Probability and possibility of the marriage ending in divorce (Items 74 and 75)

In 2% of the UM cases the likelihood of the marriage ending in divorce was a very real one while in another 2% the possibility was there. None of the SM couples saw any prospect of their marriage ending in divorce in the foreseeable

future. Once again, the statistics are too insignificant to draw any reliable conclusion.

Attempted Suicide (Item 76)

Suicide to a great extent is a personality-related problem. Eysenck (1975) reports that among five thousand threatened suicides, he and his associates found 50% depressives, 30% neurotics and a 20% mixture of schizophrenics, manics and psychopaths. Nearly all, at the time of their attempt were in a state of conflict : more than 50% of these conflicts were related to love, marriage or sexual conflict; the rest were related to authority, family, money, legal and vocational matters (p. 1079).

Since there appears to be a higher incidence of personality problems among individuals from the UM category, it may be expected that a greater number of them, compared to those from the SM group, have attempted suicide at some time in their lives.

An analysis of the data relating to Items 76(a) and (b) support this hypothesis. No case of attempted suicide was reported by those in the SM group. The situation in the UM group was quite different : 32% of the wives and 14% of the husbands had attempted to take their own lives at some time or other.

These statistics indicate that there is a possible association between attempted suicide and marital adjustment.

Spouses' reports of their feelings when they are not on good terms with each other (Item 77)

Anger and hatred, says Hollis (1949), at times enter every marriage. If they are not expressed openly then they are expressed covertly : "No two people's needs match so completely that there is never frustration, and whenever frustration exists, hostility exists, but the degree and manner of its expression vary enormously" (p. 18). Moreover, continues Hollis, in every marriage, both mature and immature, love needs are expressed and gratified. Childish dependence emerges in times of personal stress even between husbands and wives whose relationship is characteristically one of adult interdependence.

Locke (1951), in his study found that there is a positive association between marital adjustment and the couple's feelings of security. Couples who are strongly attached to each other and who feel secure about the permanence of their marriage are not inclined to become angry, irritated, and critical of the mate even in times of their disagreement; nor are they inclined to be lonely, miserable or worried during these times (p. 82). On the other hand, couples whose personal attachments are weaker and whose marriage is threatened with disruption, are inclined to hurt each other through angry, irritated and critical reactions.

In the present study SM and UM husbands and wives were requested to indicate the approximate degree of their feelings at those times when they are not on good terms with their partners. There were four possible answers : very, somewhat, a little, and not at all. One of these had to be checked for each of the following ten feelings : lonely, miserable, irritated, angry, insecure worried, hurt, inferior, self-confident and critical of spouse.

The responses are presented in Table 7.7.

TABLE 7.7

SPOUSES' REPORTS ON THEIR FEELINGS WHEN THEY ARE NOT ON GOOD TERMS WITH EACH OTHER⁽¹⁾ (in percentages)

	Very				Somewhat				A little				Not at all			
	SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W	H	W
Lonely	20	28	26	33	26	28	31	23	40	36	37	38	14	8	6	6
Miserable	14	30	28	36	30	30	28	24	38	28	32	32	18	12	12	8
Irritated	8	26	38	37	26	26	22	28	44	32	31	23	22	16	9	12
Angry	28	34	37	37	24	28	28	27	36	30	27	31	12	8	8	5
Insecure	14	18	25	28	30	32	31	37	42	40	35	28	14	10	9	7
Worried	18	22	30	28	32	36	36	32	40	34	30	37	10	8	4	3
Hurt	20	32	38	39	34	30	22	23	38	30	35	33	8	8	5	5
Inferior	10	16	17	21	36	38	24	31	42	36	36	41	12	10	23	7
Very Confident	8	0	15	0	6	26	9	25	50	32	38	30	36	42	38	45
Critical of Spouse	22	36	47	45	28	30	20	29	42	32	29	21	8	2	4	5

(1) The responses of each set of husbands and wives in each of the two groups (SM and UM) add up to 100%

Table 7.7 shows that there is a marked difference in the nature of the responses given by the SM couples as a group compared to those given by the UM couples. By and large, the UM's tended to report positively and the SM's negatively on the various items in Table 7.7. Thus on those occasions when happily married couples are not on good terms with each other, they are able to cope on their own, better than unhappily married couples can, under similar circumstances. The SM couples tend to be less lonely, miserable, irritated, angry, insecure, worried, hurt, inferior, lacking in self-confidence, as well as less critical of their spouses than the UM couples. The responses in the middle categories differentiated less clearly between well adjusted and mal-adjusted couples, though there was a tendency for a greater number of the SM's to answer "somewhat" and "a little".

SUMMARY

Conflict and strife are integral parts of most marriages. In the case of those couples whose basic relationship is sound, disagreements and conflicts can be stimulating. Indeed, they can add an important positive dimension to marital interaction. In those cases where couples do not enjoy a healthy give-and-take relationship, conflicts have the potential of driving them further apart.

The main findings of the present study may be summarised as follows:

Happily married couples express greater satisfaction with their decision to marry than unhappily married ones. Also, more of them, given the opportunity of choosing anew, would marry their present partner.

Although wives as a group, complain more frequently about their marriages, they are more reluctant than their husbands to terminate them.

Important areas of friction in marriage, particularly in unhappy ones, relate to affectional and sexual relationships, economic difficulties, interference by in-laws, and individualism (as is indicated by a lack of mutual friends and selfishness). Other problems which undermine marital stability include the following : violence on the part of the husband, impotence, spouse's demand for "unnatural" sex relations, disagreement over division of labour in the home, lack of understanding and consideration, differences in education and ability, spouse's withdrawn and moody behaviour, spouse's irresponsibility and constant bickering.

Aspects promoting marital adjustment include doing things together, love and understanding on the part of the spouse and domestic efficiency.

General agreement between the spouses in various areas such as the handling of finances, recreation, demonstration of affection, choice of friends, sexual relations, ways of dealing with in-laws, amount of time spent together, and the raising of children promote good adjustment among married couples.

A calm and constructive approach to problem solving, agreements reached by mutual give and take, a relative absence of jealousy, emotional maturity, and a stable personality are more characteristic of happily married than of unhappily married couples.

Happily married partners enjoy a feeling of security and they do not easily become angry, irritated or critical of their spouses. Moreover, they are

less inclined to be lonely, miserable or worried even on those occasions when they are not on good terms with their spouses.

Well adjusted spouses tend to remain together even during periods of conflict or crisis. They are less likely to entertain thoughts of divorce or suicide or of seeking outside assistance, if they can avoid doing so, in order to solve their problems.

XI Sexual Behaviour

Introduction

Sexual incompatibility and general marital incompatibility, says Hollis (1962), often go together (p. 98). Bowman (1974) express a similar view : "Sexual adjustment and personality adjustment are aspects of a single process ... Satisfactory adjustment sexually and in other ways go hand in hand, reacting one upon the other" (p. 301). Where there is failure, it may be cause or effect, depending upon circumstances. If the couple's adjustment in general is unsatisfactory, there may be a sexual element at the root of the difficulty. On the other hand, unsatisfactory sexual adjustment may be the result of non-sexual factors. Success in either increases the probability of success in the other, but neither guarantees the other (Clark and Wallin 1965, pp. 187-196; Humphrey 1983, p. 70).

Couples who are psychologically well-mated are likely to show a surprising tolerance for the things that are not satisfactory in their sexual relationships. The psychologically ill-mated show no such tolerance but instead may give exaggerated reports on sexual maladjustments. The relationship between dissatisfaction with the sexual side of marriage and serious marital problems

has been summed up by Dominian (1978) as follows : "The majority of persistently serious sexual complaints are the end result of personality conflicts manifesting themselves in this extremely sensitive area". Sexual dissatisfaction, in turn, aggravates the relationship thus setting up a vicious circle which may end in marital breakdown (p. 83).

First information about sex (Item 78)

The question of early sex education is an important one particularly if there is truth in the aphorism that first impressions are lasting impressions. Most authorities on child development now agree that children's questions about sex should be answered directly and honestly, taking into account the child's level of maturity. Even more important are the attitudes of parents toward sex. The child needs to feel that sexual relations are natural and pleasurable and to anticipate enjoyment of them in marriage (Hollis, 1962, p. 104). Too often prudishness and reticence that should have been outgrown inhibit the healthy expression of sex between husbands and wives. Psychoanalysts maintain that families in which parent-child relationships are unsound often fail to equip children with healthy attitudes toward sex. In a number of these cases, the parents themselves are sexually unhappy, poorly adjusted and unstable (Hollis, p. 105).

Another category of parents who may create problems for their children in the sexual area are those who in their concern to prevent premarital sex experience, build up in a growing girl feelings of inhibition which carry over to sex relations within marriage.

In order to determine the relationship between marital adjustment and the wholesomeness/unwholesomeness of their first information about sex, the

couples in this study were asked whether they rated their first information about sex as "wholesome" or "unwholesome". Their responses are given in the table below.

TABLE 7.8

NATURE OF THE FIRST INFORMATION ABOUT SEX (in percentages)

Nature of Information	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Wholesome	72	86	67	82
Unwholesome	28	14	33	18
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Contrary to expectations only a small difference was found between the responses of the SM and UM wives : 86% of the SM and 82% of the UM females reported that their first information about sex was wholesome. A similar trend was found amongst the men (SM 72% : UM 67%). These results must be treated with caution since "wholesome" and "unwholesome" are relative terms. Moreover, one cannot discount the tendency of the respondents to offer socially acceptable answers to the question that was posed.

Considered as a group, a greater proportion of women, compared to men, reported that their first information about sex was wholesome. This is not difficult to understand for, as Terman (1938) found, of those parents who take an active interest in their children's sex education, most of them especially the mothers, assist their daughters to a greater extent than they do their sons. The boys presumably have a freer access to sources of sex lore outside the home and in many instances this is far from wholesome (p. 243).

Source of first information about sex (Item 79)

Closely related to the wholesomeness/unwholesomeness of their first information about sex, is the source from which this knowledge was initially acquired. These data are presented in Table 7.9

TABLE 7.9

SOURCE OF FIRST INFORMATION ABOUT SEX (in percentages)

Sources of first sex information	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
From parent	0	8	0	6
From wholesome reading	38	20	23	14
From brother	4	0	3	0
From sister	0	8	0	6
From other relative	10	28	7	20
From other children	10	10	17	12
From other adult or teacher	26	20	21	18
From undesirable reading	12	0	17	8
From some other source	0	6	12	16
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

An examination of the data reveals certain interesting features:

- (a) A difference of at least 5% existed between SM and UM husbands in respect of the following sources : "from wholesome reading" (SM 38% : UM 23%), "from other adult or teacher" (SM 26% : UM 21%), "from other children" (SM 10% : UM 17%), "from undesirable reading" (SM 12% : UM 17%) and "from other source" (SM 0% : UM 12%).

- (b) A difference of at least 5% existed between the SM and UM wives in respect of the following sources : "from wholesome reading" (SM 20% : UM 14%), "from other relative" (SM 28% : UM 20%) and "from other source" (SM 6% : UM 16%).

It will be noticed that parents played only a small part in providing first information about sex to the females in both groups and no part at all in the early sex education of their sons.

One would have expected "other adult or teacher" to have played an even greater role than they did in providing early education about sex to all four groups in the sample. Perhaps the time for this has not yet arrived. As more enlightened attitudes toward sex evolve, it is possible that the teacher would play a more prominent role in the sex education of children. This would help counter the contribution of such undesirable sources as "other children", "undesirable reading" and "pornographic material". Table 7.9 also shows that a greater proportion of UM husbands and wives, compared to their SM counterparts obtained their first information about sex from undesirable sources.

Sexual information was obtained in a variety of ways. It ranged from simply listening to the sexual escapades of the "other girls" (or "other boys") to an active role in the sexual play by the respondent himself/herself.

A number of wives in both groups had only a superficial knowledge of the biological processes involved in sex. Indeed, some of those who did not have access to the "street talk" were completely ignorant of what sex was all about until they married. In these cases the husband invariably acted as tutor.

Spouse over-modest toward sex (Item 81)

The question on whether the spouse is over-modest and shy toward sex had five possible ratings : "very much", "a good deal", "some", "very little", "not at all".

The hypothesis was that marital maladjustment would be associated with the respondent's spouse being over-modest and shy toward sex.

The responses of those who participated in the study are given in Table 7.10. The categories "very much" and "a good deal" have been combined as have the categories "very little" and "not at all".

TABLE 7.10

OVER-MODESTY ON SPOUSE'S PART TOWARD SEX (in percentages)

Degree of spouse's over-modesty	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Responses	Wives' Responses	Husbands' Responses	Wives' Responses
Very much/a good deal	18	0	32	4
Some	22	2	26	8
Very little/not at all	60	98	42	88
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

In the SM group 98% of the wives reported that their husbands were not at all over-modest or shy toward sex, or if they were so, it was to a very limited extent. In contrast, 88% of the UM wives rated their husbands as being not over-modest toward sex, or if they were so, it was to a very limited extent.

The husbands' ratings of their wives showed a similar pattern. Sixty percent of the SM husbands placed their wives in the category "not at all over-modest" or if so, it was to a very small extent; this rating was given by 42% of the UM husbands in respect of their wives. This trend is reinforced by the data at the other end of the scale. None of the wives in the SM category, compared to 4% in the UM category, noticed "a good deal of" or "very much" modesty in their husbands toward sex. Similarly, 32% of the UM husbands, compared to 18% of the SM ones, reported that their wives were modest and shy toward sex, "very much" or "a good deal".

In overall terms the results indicate that more open communication in this important area of a couple's life is associated with good marital adjustment.

Strength of sex interest in comparison to that of spouse (Item 82)

Men and women differ with regard to the frequency and intensity of sexual relations. It is usual for each couple to make adjustments to each other, but it can, and does happen that a weak adjustment is made (Rip, 1978, p. 11).

The hypothesis relating to this item was that equal interest in sex is associated with marital adjustment and unequal interest with marital maladjustment. To what extent do SM and UM men and women differ with regard to sex interest in comparison with their spouses? In order to determine this, the interviewees in this study were asked whether they felt that the strength of their sex interest, compared to that of their spouse, was very much greater, much greater, about the same, much less intense, very much less.

The information which was gathered on this item is set out in the table below.

TABLE 7.11

RESPONDENT'S INTEREST IN SEX COMPARED TO THAT OF MATE

Degree of interest in sex compared to mate's	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husbands' Responses	Wives' Responses	Husbands' Responses	Wives' Responses
Very much greater/much greater	42	12	62	23
About the same	42	48	25	36
Very much less intense/ much less intense	16	40	13	41
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Happily married men (42%) and women (48%) reported "about the same" sex interest to a much greater extent than did unhappily married men (25%) and women (36%).

A larger proportion of the husbands in the UM group (62%), compared to 42% in the SM group, saw their interest in sex as being "much greater" or "very much greater" than that of their spouses. Similarly, 23% of the UM wives, compared to 12% of the SM ones, saw their interest in sex as being much greater than that of their husbands. The greater discrepancy between the UM spouses, considered together with the greater equality between the SM spouses, suggests that unequal interest in sex is associated with marital maladjustment.

Refusal of sex when desired by spouse (Item 83)

On the question whether a person refused sex when the spouse desired it, four possible answers were provided: frequently, sometimes, rarely and never. The expectation was that marital adjustment would be associated with regular compliance with the spouse's request for sex. The assumption was that sexual frustration would be associated with refusal on the part of the spouse and that it would also be associated with marital maladjustment.

TABLE 7.12

REFUSAL OF SEX WHEN DESIRED BY SPOUSE (in percentages)

Frequency of refusal to have sex	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband's Response	Wife's Response	Husband's Response	Wife's Response
Frequently	4	22	11	45
Sometimes	34	54	29	29
Rarely/Never	62	24	60	26
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100%	100%

Frequently refusing the spouse was reported by 22% of the SM wives; over twice this proportion was registered for UM wives (45%). A similar trend is found among the husbands : only 4% of the SM husbands, compared to 11% of their UM counterparts, reported that they frequently refused sex when their wives desired it.

At the other end of the scale, namely "rarely/never," hardly any differences exist between the UM and SM groups, husbands and wives.

In the "sometimes" category, there is a marked difference between the two sets of wives (SM 54% : UM 29%). There is a similar difference, though less marked, among the husbands as well (SM 34% : UM 29%).

On the whole, the statistics indicate that mutual accommodation to sex desires exists more frequently among happily married couples. They tend to comply with each other's request for sex to a greater extent than unhappily married couples. If a happily married wife sometimes (or rarely) refuses to have sex, her husband apparently understands her moods and respects her wishes. The same holds true when the husband occasionally refuses.

Sex satisfaction (Items 84 and 85)

Two questions on sex satisfaction were included in the interview schedule. These questions dealt with the degree of satisfaction a person had with the spouse and an estimate of satisfaction experienced by the spouse. Three alternate answers were provided for these questions : very enjoyable/enjoyable, tolerated and very disgusting/disgusting.

The responses of the participants in this study are given in Tables 7.13 and 7.14. Table 7.13 presents data relating to the extent to which "you generally obtain sex satisfaction with your spouse".

TABLE 7.13

DEGREE OF SEX SATISFACTION WITH SPOUSE (in percentages)

Degree of sex satisfaction with spouse	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband's Responses	Wife's Responses	Husband's Responses	Wife's Responses
Very enjoyable/enjoyable	96	64	90	39
Tolerated	4	30	10	39
Disgusting/Very disgusting	0	6	0	22
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Sixty-four percent of the SM wives, compared to only 39% of the UM wives, reported that they found sex satisfaction with their spouses "enjoyable/very enjoyable." A similar but less marked trend exists in the case of husbands (SM 96% : UM 90%). Sixty-one percent of the UM wives, compared to 36% of the SM ones, tolerated sex or found it disgusting or very disgusting, but 4% of the SM and 10% of the UM husbands admitted that they tolerated it.

Table 7.14 presents the data relating to the degree to which "you think your spouse obtains sex satisfaction with you."

TABLE 7.14

DEGREE OF SEX SATISFACTION OBTAINED BY SPOUSE (in percentages)

Degree of sex satisfaction obtained by spouse	Stable Marriages		Unstable Marriages	
	Husband's Response	Wife's Response	Husband's Response	Wife's Response
Very enjoyable/enjoyable	92	90	78	88
Tolerated	8	10	22	12
Very disgusting/disgusting	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

The SM and UM couples differed when estimating the sex satisfaction of their mates in much the same way as they did when rating their own satisfaction. The various percentages, however, differed. Ninety percent of the SM wives, compared to 88% of the UM ones, reported that they thought their husbands found sex with them to be "enjoyable or very enjoyable". A similar trend is evident in the case of the husbands (SM 92% : UM 78%). Twelve percent of the UM wives and 10% of the SM ones thought that their spouses tolerated sex with them. None of the husbands and wives thought that their spouses found sex with them disgusting or very disgusting.

Seen in conjunction with the data in Table 7.13 those wives who reported that they found sex with their spouses "disgusting" or "very disgusting" apparently concealed their real feelings from their spouses very well. Alternatively, the husbands rated their wives' attitudes more favourably than the wives themselves did.

When the information relating to Items 84 and 85 are taken together, it is reasonably clear that SM men and women rated their own, and estimated their spouses' sex satisfaction, as greater than that of the UM spouses. These findings suggest that marital adjustment is associated with the degree of satisfaction a person has with the spouse.

SUMMARY

Several writers have noted a close association between sexual incompatibility and marital maladjustment. Where mutually satisfactory sexual relationships are regularly available the spouses in a marriage may find the humdrum routines of a home less irritating and may accept them in their stride. On the other hand, where the sexual relationships are not equally satisfactory to both of the partners in the marriage, problems may arise not only in the sexual area but in other aspects of the marriage as well.

The present study shows a positive association between marital adjustment and the acquisition of early knowledge about sex from wholesome reading or some responsible adult, such as a relative or a teacher. Over-modesty toward sex, marked differences between spouses in the strength of their sexual interest, and frequent refusal for sexual intimacy by one spouse when the other desires it militate against happiness in marriage. The data in this study also suggest that marital adjustment is associated with the degree of satisfaction a person has with the spouse : a greater proportion of happily married couples compared to unhappy ones, report that they find sex with their partners enjoyable.

XII Potential Conflict Areas Between Spouses (Item 86)

Introduction

The information presented in this section has been derived from an analysis of the interviewees' responses to a series of statements compiled by Terman (1938, pp. 96-97). These statements which appear in Section XII of the Interview Schedule (Appendix A) relate to a wide variety of problems which husbands and wives experience in marriage. The problems range from financial difficulties to differences in the personalities of their spouses.

Although these aspects have already been considered in various parts of this report, they were often discussed in conjunction with other problems and, therefore, did not form cohesive units in themselves. In this section various statements relating to particular aspects were grouped together and presented under one of the following nine headings : financial problems, lack of love and competing interests, mental cruelty, verbal abuse, excessive demands, neglect of home and children, in-law problems, significant differences between spouses and annoying forms of behaviour. Data organised in this manner serves to highlight the role of these aspects in marital conflict and summarises much of the information that was discussed in the earlier chapters.

The husbands and wives who participated in this study were requested to complete the inventory according to the following instructions:

- (1) Omit those things which have not occurred in your marriage.
- (2) Draw a circle around :
 - (a) 0, for the things that have occurred in your marriage but have not interfered with your happiness;

- (b) 1, for the things that have made your marriage less happy than it should have been;
- (c) 2, for the things that have done MOST to make your marriage unhappy.

Their responses are presented in Table 7.15. In order to make reference easier, the original serial numbers assigned to the statements in the interview schedule have been retained.

TABLE 7.15

POTENTIAL CONFLICT AREAS BETWEEN SPOUSES
(Responses converted to percentages)

Statement No.	ITEMS	HAS OCCURRED BUT HAS NOT INTERFERED WITH MY HAPPINESS				THINGS THAT HAVE MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN				THINGS THAT HAVE DONE MOST TO MAKE MY MARRIAGE UNHAPPY			
		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies	
		H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
1. FINANCIAL PROBLEMS													
1	Insufficient income	12	16	10	6	8	10	14	12	2	2	13	24
2	Poor management of income	4	6	7	5	4	8	13	10	2	4	21	22
46	My husband is tight with money	-	14	-	1	-	8	-	5	-	6	-	16
50	My husband is unsuccessful in his job/business	-	2	-	0	-	0	-	5	-	0	-	18
57	My wife is extravagant	10	-	5	-	8	-	7	-	4	-	11	-
45	My husband lacks ambition	-	6	-	3	-	0	-	6	-	0	-	11
2. LACK OF LOVE/COMPETING INTERESTS													
16	My wife/husband is not affectionate	0	2	2	0	0	4	10	9	0	0	20	27
53	My wife pays attention to other men	0	-	3	-	0	-	3	-	0	-	6	-
51	My husband does not show affection for me	-	2	-	0	-	4	-	9	-	0	-	25
33	My husband pays attention to other women	-	10	-	0	-	10	-	5	-	2	-	6
18	My husband/wife is not faithful to me	0	2	0	0	0	4	4	4	0	0	4	9
24	My husband/wife is untruthful	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	6	0	0	7	20
36	My husband is always wrapped up in his job/business	-	6	-	5	-	6	-	4	-	4	-	4
59	My wife is too interested in social affairs	18	-	1	-	12	-	6	-	4	-	8	-
56	My wife is not interested in my job / business	10	-	7	-	6	-	10	-	2	-	10	-
52	My husband is bored if I tell him of the things that happen in my everyday life	-	14	-	1	-	0	-	11	-	2	-	4

Statement No.	ITEMS	HAS OCCURRED BUT HAS NOT INTERFERED WITH MY HAPPINESS				THINGS THAT HAVE MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN				THINGS THAT HAVE DONE MOST TO MAKE MY MARRIAGE UNHAPPY			
		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies	
		H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
<u>3. MENTAL CRUELTY</u>													
3	Lack of freedom due to marriage	4	6	7	5	4	8	13	10	2	4	21	22
17	My wife/husband is narrow-minded	6	6	4	3	0	2	7	4	0	0	16	21
27	My wife/husband is jealous	6	10	1	3	8	10	8	8	4	6	15	24
67	My wife is insincere	0	-	2	-	0	-	3	-	0	-	8	-
58	My wife lets her feelings be hurt too easily	8	-	4	-	14	-	10	-	6	-	6	-
<u>4. VERBAL ABUSE</u>													
15	My wife/husband is argumentative ("has a big mouth")	6	8	0	1	6	8	12	7	0	0	16	12
19	My wife/husband complains too much	8	6	1	0	6	4	6	3	0	0	18	10
22	My wife/husband criticises me	2	6	2	3	8	10	11	7	4	2	20	19
31	My wife/husband swears	0	4	1	1	0	0	4	4	0	0	2	10
<u>5. EXCESSIVE DEMANDS</u>													
21	My wife/husband is quick-tempered	2	6	3	4	0	4	6	6	0	0	11	11
28	My wife/husband is selfish and inconsiderate	2	4	1	0	2	2	4	7	0	0	10	16
32	My husband/wife is nervous or impatient	4	8	3	3	0	2	4	10	0	0	5	3
38	My husband is touchy and irritable	-	10	4	2	-	2	-	11	-	0	-	16
61	My wife wants to visit or entertain a lot	10	-	4	-	10	-	5	-	6	-	8	-

Statement No.	ITEMS	HAS OCCURRED BUT HAS NOT INTERFERED WITH MY HAPPINESS				THINGS THAT HAVE MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN				THINGS THAT HAVE DONE MOST TO MAKE MY MARRIAGE UNHAPPY			
		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies	
		H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
	<u>6. NEGLECT OF HOME OR CHILDREN</u>												
20	My wife husband is lazy	2	8	0	3	6	0	5	5	0	0	9	7
23	My wife husband spoils the children	8	6	6	9	8	8	6	6	4	2	1	8
34	My husband takes no interest in the children	-	6	-	0	-	4	-	7	-	2	-	8
35	My husband is untidy	-	8	-	3	-	4	-	5	-	0	-	3
39	My husband is not interested in the home	-	0	-	1	-	2	-	7	-	4	-	20
43	My husband is harsh with the children	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	4	-	2	-	5
54	My wife neglects the children	0	-	2	-	0	-	2	-	0	-	12	-
55	My wife is a poor housekeeper	4	-	5	-	4	-	5	-	2	-	11	-
62	My wife does not have meals ready on time	6	-	1	-	2	-	7	-	0	-	9	-
63	My wife interferes when I discipline the children	12	-	1	-	8	-	7	-	4	-	9	-
72	My wife is a poor cook	0	-	2	-	0	-	6	-	0	-	7	-
	<u>7. IN-LAW TROUBLE</u>												
6	Matters relating to in-laws	8	12	4	5	10	14	15	9	6	8	22	28

Statement No.	ITEMS	HAS OCCURRED BUT HAS NOT INTERFERED WITH MY HAPPINESS				THINGS THAT HAVE MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN				THINGS THAT HAVE DONE MOST TO MAKE MY MARRIAGE UNHAPPY			
		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies	
		H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
<u>8. SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES</u> <u>BETWEEN SPOUSES</u>													
4	My husband/wife is much older than I am	0	2	6	7	6	2	1	3	0	0	2	3
5	My husband/wife is much younger than I am	2	0	3	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	3
7	My wife/husband and I differ in education	2	2	15	16	4	4	6	8	2	4	14	11
8	My wife/husband and I differ in intellectual interests	4	2	14	14	6	8	9	11	2	4	9	9
9	My wife/husband and I differ in religious beliefs (practices)	0	0	4	4	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	1
10	My wife/husband and I differ in choice of friends	2	4	5	2	4	2	7	7	0	0	11	16
11	My wife/husband and I differ in preferences for amusements and recreation	4	8	11	6	8	12	7	13	2	4	7	10
13	My wife/husband and I differ in tastes in food	2	4	5	6	0	0	4	3	0	0	1	0
12	My wife/husband and I differ in attitude toward drinking	0	8	8	5	0	14	8	4	0	10	12	35
14	My wife/husband and I differ in respect of customs	0	0	5	6	0	0	4	2	0	0	1	1
41	My husband dislikes to go out with me in the evenings	-	12	-	1	-	6	-	10	-	0	-	12
48	My husband does not talk things over freely	-	6	-	0	-	2	-	10	-	10	-	31

State- ments No.	ITEMS	HAS OCCURRED BUT HAS NOT INTERFERED WITH MY HAPPINESS				THINGS THAT HAVE MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN				THINGS THAT HAVE DONE MOST TO MAKE MY MARRIAGE UNHAPPY			
		SM		UM		SM		UM		SM		UM	
		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies		Replies	
		H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's	H's	W's
	9. ANNOYING FORMS OF BEHAVIOUR												
40	My husband has vulgar habits	-	2	-	7	-	0	-	5	-	0	-	14
42	My husband is late to meals	-	28	-	2	-	0	-	5	-	0	-	8
44	My husband has poor table manners	-	2	-	4	-	0	-	2	-	0	-	2
49	My husband is rude	-	4	-	0	-	0	-	4	-	0	-	11
47	My husband has no backbone ("spineless)	-	4	-	2	-	4	-	7	-	4	-	14
25	My husband/wife is boastful	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	3	4
26	My husband/wife is easily influenced by others	4	4	2	1	6	4	5	11	4	4	21	19
29	My husband/wife is too talkative	0	0	2	4	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	8
60	My wife has annoying habits and mannerisms	2	-	1	-	10	-	11	-	6	-	9	-
64	My wife tries to improve me	14	-	3	-	14	-	7	-	4	-	17	-
65	My wife is a social climber	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	-	0	-	2	-
66	My wife is too interested in clothes	10	-	3	-	14	-	7	-	4	-	8	-
68	My wife gossips indiscreetly	4	-	3	-	0	-	6	-	0	-	9	-
69	My wife nags me	10	-	1	-	18	-	9	-	10	-	22	-
71	My wife is fussy about keeping the house neat	28	-	3	-	20	-	5	-	10	-	7	-
75	My wife 'pokes her nose' in my business	4	-	1	-	0	-	9	-	0	-	12	-
73	My wife is untidy in appearance	0	-	1	-	0	-	2	-	0	-	9	-
70	My wife interferes with my hobbies	0	-	0	-	0	-	5	-	0	-	3	-
30	My husband/wife smokes	0	12	0	10	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	6
37	My husband/wife gambles	-	18	-	2	-	6	-	2	-	6	-	13

Besides providing information for discussion under the nine headings appearing in Table 7.15, the data in this table also make it possible to gain further insight into marital conflict through a rank-order presentation of marital problems.

The analysis of the results pertaining to this section will therefore be presented under two broad headings as follows:

1. Discussion of problem areas in marriage.
2. Rank-order presentation of the frequency of husbands' and wives' complaints.

1. Discussion of Problem Areas in Marriage

In the discussion that follows emphasis has been placed on the data given in the third column entitled "things that have done most to make my marriage unhappy" since this aspect forms the main focus of the study. The first two columns, viz., "has occurred but has not interfered with my happiness" and "things that have made my marriage less happy than it should have been" are less relevant but do contain useful supplementary and comparative data.

- 1.1 Financial problems

An overall consideration of the responses given to the statements pertaining to the area "financial problems", shows that UM husbands, and more particularly UM wives, cited difficulties in this area as major factors responsible for their marital unhappiness.

More specifically, 37% of the UM husbands compared to 42% of the UM wives, recognised the existence of insufficient income in the home. However, 24% of these wives, compared to only 2% of their husbands saw this problem as being serious enough to cause definite unhappiness in their marriages.

The corresponding figures for the SM group indicate that these couples were relatively free from the anxieties which arise from insufficient income. Among this group 22% of the husbands and 28% of the wives noted that there was insufficient income in the home. However only 2% of the husbands and 2% of the wives believed that its effects were seriously detrimental to their relationship.

Other aspects in the financial area also took their toll on marital happiness. These included the following:

- (a) poor management of income : most of the serious complaints came from the unhappily married group (UM husbands 13% vs SM husbands 2%; UM wives 24% vs SM wives 2%);
- (b) husband's "tight-fistedness" with money : 16% of the UM wives, compared to 6% of the SM ones, strongly resented this characteristic in their partners;
- (c) husband's lack of success in their job or business created considerable dissatisfaction in 18% of the UM wives. The SM wives on the other hand made no such complaint;
- (d) wife's extravagance caused serious concern in 11% of the UM husbands and 4% of the SM ones.

1.2 Lack of love and competing interests

According to the statistics in Table 7.15, lack of love and competing interests play a bigger role in causing marital tensions among UM compared to SM couples.

Twenty percent of the UM husbands saw the lack of affection on the part of their wives as a major source of conflict in their marriages. An even bigger percentage of UM wives (27%) lodged a similar complaint against their husbands. It is noteworthy that none of the SM husbands or wives accused their spouse of lacking in affection to the point where it seriously jeopardised their marriage. There were 4% of SM wives who admitted that lack of love or competing interests on the part of their husbands made them unhappy but not to the extent that it caused them serious concern.

Two other major complaints lodged by UM wives (but by none of the SM wives) were "my husband does not show affection for me" (25%) and "my husband is untruthful" (20%).

The most serious complaint made by the UM husbands was "my wife is not affectionate" (20%) while that made by SM husbands was "my wife is too interested in social affairs" (4%). Ten percent of the UM husbands and 2% of the SM ones were greatly disturbed by their wives' lack of interest in their jobs or businesses.

1.3 Mental cruelty

The data in Table 7.15 suggest that the UM husbands and wives saw themselves as victims of mental cruelty more frequently than did the SM husbands and wives. The contrast between the two groups was particularly marked in the

following three items which were seen as having had serious repercussions on the husband-wife relationship:

- (a) "Lack of freedom due to marriage" (Husbands : UM 21% vs SM 2%;
Wives : UM 22% vs SM 4%).
- (b) "My wife/husband is narrow-minded" (Husbands : UM 16% vs SM 0%;
Wives : UM 21% vs SM 0%).
- (c) "My wife/husband is jealous" (Husbands : UM 15% vs SM 4%; Wives :
UM 24% vs SM 6%).

1.4 Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse occurred more often among UM husbands and wives. In fact, the complaints from SM husbands (4%) and SM wives (2%) were confined to only one of the four items related to verbal abuse, viz., "my wife/husband criticises me".

In contrast, at least 10% of the UM husbands and UM wives accused their spouses of being argumentative, critical, and full of complaints to the point that the marriages were adversely affected.

1.5 Excessive demands

The responses on the set of items under "excessive demands" followed the predictable pattern whereby the UM group, more particularly the wives, lodged the major proportion of the complaints. The complaints of the SM husbands were very limited : 6% objected to the fact that their wives wanted to visit and entertain beyond what they considered was reasonable.

None of the SM wives reported that their husbands made excessive demands on them.

In the UM group, 16% of the wives accused their husbands of being selfish and touchy while another 11% regarded them as being quick-tempered. The UM husbands, for their part, saw the quick-temperedness (11%), selfishness (10%), and predilection for visiting and entertaining (8%) as serious threats to their marital happiness.

1.6 Neglect of home and children

Once again the frequency and areas of complaints were lower in the case of the SM husbands and wives : 4% of the husbands reported that their wives spoilt their children and interfered when they tried to discipline them, while 4% of the SM wives took a serious view of their husband's lack of interest in the home.

The most frequent complaints lodged by UM wives related to their husbands' lack of interest in the home (20%), lack of interest in the children (8%) and the fact that they were lazy (7%).

1.7 In-law trouble

This area of married life has been considered at greater length in Chapter Six, Section V. Here it is sufficient to point out that in-laws figure prominently in the exchanges between husbands and wives. However, the extent to which they create problems varies : 8% of the SM husbands, 4% of the UM husbands, 12% of the SM wives and 5% of the UM wives reported that problems relating to in-laws did occur at some point in their married lives but they were not serious enough to interfere with their happiness. On the

other hand, 6% of the SM and 22% of the UM husbands as well as 8% of the SM and 28% of the UM wives spoke bitterly of the harm that was done to their marriages as a result of in-law interference.

1.8 Significant differences between spouses

Wide differences between spouses, as a factor responsible for marital disharmony, occurred more frequently among UM husbands and wives. The most serious complaints of UM wives related to differences in attitude toward drinking and the fact that the husband did not talk things over freely. The SM husbands, while agreeing that wide differences existed between themselves and their spouses, reported that these were not serious enough to have a detrimental effect on their marriage.

Areas in which differences caused serious problems in the UM marriages, judging from the wives' replies, were attitudes toward the husband's drinking (35%), his refusal to talk things over freely (31%) and his choice of friends (16%). Other differences which the wives perceived as problem-related, though reported less frequently, concerned the following : the husband's aversion to going out with his wife in the evenings (12%) as well as problems arising from differences in educational level (11%) and preferences for amusements and recreation (10%).

The UM husbands (14%) saw problems arising out of differences in educational level between themselves and their spouses as mainly responsible for their unhappiness. Several husbands (12%) also believed their wives exaggerated the seriousness and the harmful effects of their drinking. Other sources of disquiet mentioned by the UM husbands were the differences between themselves and their wives insofar as the choice of their friends was concerned (11%)

and the problems that arose as a result of differences in their intellectual interests (9%) and recreational pursuits (7%).

Also worthy of mention are the following points :

- (a) Significant differences in the ages of the spouses did not appear to have a detrimental effect on marriages to the extent that one would have expected.
- (b) Differences between the spouses with regard to religious practices and tastes in food were almost negligible as reasons for serious marital problems.

1.9 Annoying forms of behaviour

The UM couples reported a higher frequency of annoying forms of behaviour that characterised their spouses. Contrary to the trend that was present in the other subsections of Item 86, the husbands (both SM and UM) registered greater percentages of complaints than did the wives (both SM and UM).

The chief complaint of both sets of husbands was the fact that the wives nagged them (SM 10% : UM 22%). The SM husbands also complained, though less frequently, that their wives were "fussy" about keeping the house neat (10%), having annoying habits and mannerisms (6%), and being easily influenced by others (4%). The UM husbands lodged similar complaints and even added to them. They resented their wives' attempts to improve them (17%), and their tendency to interfere in their affairs (12%). A relatively high proportion (21%) complained that their wives were easily influenced by others. Some UM husbands also objected to their wives' untidy appearance (9%) while others felt that their spouses were too interested in clothes (8%). A small percen-

tage of SM wives (6%) objected strongly to their husbands' love for gambling, while 4% resented the fact that their partners allowed themselves to be easily influenced by others. The UM wives had similar objections against their spouses. In addition, they felt that their marriages were made unhappy by their husbands' rudeness (11%) and vulgar habits (14%), talkativeness (8%) and the fact that they smoked heavily (6%). Two wives would not have been as resentful as they were about their husbands' smoking had they not resorted to the regular use of dagga.

Seen in overall terms, the happily married couples tended to avoid saying things about their partners which might be interpreted as being uncomplimentary. The UM couples, on the other hand, appeared to be less generous in their ratings. This could be an honest assessment of the way in which they perceived the spouse's behaviour or it could be an over-reaction on the part of a spouse resulting from the bitterness felt toward him/her.

2. Rank-order Presentation of the Frequency of Husbands' and Wives' complaints

The data in Table 7.15 yields further information when they are processed and rearranged in rank-order. Such an arrangement furnishes information on the following:

- 2.1 Problems which Hindu husbands and wives most frequently (and least frequently) perceive as threats to their marriage;
- 2.2 A comparison between what the husbands and wives in the present study and in Terman's 1938 study most frequently (and least frequently) perceive as threats to their marriage. Such a comparison reveals cultural and generational influences on the perception of potential conflict

areas in marriage : besides being conducted on two groups that were culturally different from each other, the two studies were done 47 years apart from each other.

A complete list of the complaints of the husbands and wives in the present study, ranked in order of their frequency appears in Table 7.16. The rankings are based on the data given in the third column of Table 7.15 - i.e. "things that have done most to make my marriage unhappy" - since, as mentioned in the preceding section, this aspect forms the main focus of this study. The table also gives the ratings obtained by Terman. •

2.1 The present study : husbands vs wives

The most serious and frequently reported reasons for conflict between the spouses, according to the husbands, were nagging on the part of the wife and in-law interference. The wives, on the other hand, cited the husband's drinking and his reluctance to talk things over as the problems which are responsible for most quarrels.

An examination of the first ten items shows that both husbands and wives had five common complaints which did most to make their marriages unhappy. These are as follows : problems relating to in-laws, poor management of income, lack of freedom, lack of affection and jealousy. When the list is extended to twenty items, the number of common ones increases by the following five items : spouse easily influenced by others, spouse is critical, spouse is narrow-minded, insufficient income, spouse is not interested in the home.

Among those complaints which were reported least frequently as being serious problems in a marriage are the following : differences between the spouses with regard to tastes in food, respect for customs, and religious beliefs. The relative lack of differences between the spouses in these three areas is not unexpected since all the participants, being Hindus, were a homogenous group, both culturally and in respect of religion.

2.2 The present study vs Terman's study

When the first ten of the husband's responses in the present study and Terman's study are compared, five items are found to be common to both groups: viz., wife's nagging, in-law problems, wife too critical, poor management of income, and lack of freedom. When the comparison is extended to include the

top twenty items in the present study the number of items common to both sets of husbands increases to fourteen, viz., those five mentioned already as well as the following items: wife easily influenced by others, wife tries to improve me, wife is not affectionate, wife is jealous, wife is fussy about neatness, wife complains too much, wife is argumentative, insufficient income, and wife interferes when I discipline the children.

When the first ten of the wives' responses in the two studies are compared, five items are found to be common to both groups. These are : in-law problems, husband's reluctance to talk things over, lack of affection on husband's part, insufficient income, and poor management of income. When the comparison is extended to include twenty items, the number of items common to both sets of wives increases to thirteen, viz., those five mentioned already as well as the following items : attitude toward husband's drinking, husband does not show affection (although he cares for his wife), lack of freedom, husband is easily influenced by others, husband is too critical, husband is selfish and inconsiderate, husband is touchy and irritable, and choice of friends.

Further examination of the four sets of rankings given in Table 7.16 shows that two items viz., in-law problems and poor management of income are given as important causes of conflict by husbands and wives in both the studies. These two items cut across all barriers of culture, era and sex as recognised conflict points between husbands and wives.

The following items which the husbands in Terman's study ranked in the first twenty feature lower down the list in the present study (with the rankings given in brackets, first that of the present study, followed by Terman's) : wife is nervous or impatient (41 : 5), wife's feelings too easily hurt (21 : 2), wife is quick-tempered (28 : 9), preference for amusements (32 : 8),

TABLE 7.16

COMPLAINTS OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES LISTED
IN ORDER OF THEIR FREQUENCY

Husbands' Complaints	The present study	Terman's study	Wives' Complaints	The present study	Terman's study
Wife nags me	1	10	Attitude toward drinking	1	16
In-laws	2	4	H does not talk things over	2	7
W easily influenced by others	3	17	In-laws	3	2
W criticises me	4	3	H is jealous	4	40
Poor management of income	5	6	H not affectionate	5	20
Lack of freedom	5	7	Insufficient income	6	1
W tries to improve me	7	11	Poor management of income	6	4
H not affectionate	8	13	Lack of freedom	6	11
W is jealous	9	18	H does not show affection	9	10
W fussy about neatness	9	20	H not interested in home	10	33
W complains too much	11	16	H is easily influenced by others	11	19
W is argumentative	12	14	H tight with money	12	36
W is narrow-minded	12	34	H criticises me	13	5
Difference in education	12	26	H is narrow-minded	13	41
Insufficient income	15	1	H is untruthful	15	31
W extravagant	15	40	H gambles	16	50
W has annoying habits	15	33	H unsuccessful in his job	17	21
W visits and entertains a lot	18	38	H has no backbone	17	48
W is a poor housekeeper	19	21	Choice of friends	19	13
W interferes with my discipline	19	19	H selfish and inconsiderate	19	12
W neglects children	21	54	H touchy and irritable	19	15
W interferes in my business	21	42	Difference in education	22	26
Attitude toward drinking	21	25	H has vulgar habits	23	51
W too interested in social affairs	21	39	Preferences for amusement	23	5
W too interested in clothes	21	43	Intellectual interests	25	14
W's feelings too easily hurt	21	2	H is argumentative	26	8
W not interested in my job	21	31	H dislikes to go out with me	26	30
Choice of friends	28	15	H is quick tempered	28	9
W is quick tempered	28	9	H lacks ambition	28	39
Intellectual interests	28	22	H is rude	28	29
W selfish and inconsiderate	31	27	H complains too much	31	28
W gossips indiscreetly	32	32	H swears	31	42
W slovenly in appearance	32	48	H takes no interest in children	31	49
W is lazy	32	36	H too talkative	34	43
Preferences for amusements	32	8	H is late to meals	34	34
W does not have meals ready on time	32	35	H pays attention to other women	34	32
W is insincere	37	46	H smokes	34	44
W is untruthful	38	51	H always wrapped up in his job	34	27
W is a poor cook	38	53	H not faithful to me	39	41
W pays attention to other men	40	44	H is lazy	40	47
W nervous or impatient	41	5	H is harsh with children	40	25
W spoils the children	41	28	H bored with my small talk	42	18
W not faithful to me	43	56	H is boastful	43	37
W is boastful	44	45	H spoils the children	43	45
W interferes with hobbies	44	24	H considerably older	45	52
W considerably older	46	50	H nervous or impatient	45	3
W considerably younger	46	49	H is untidy	45	24
W a social climber	46	57	H has poor table manners	48	23
W swears	46	47	H considerably younger	49	53
Tastes in food	50	30	Religious beliefs	49	22
Respect for customs	50	12	Respect for customs	49	17
W too talkative	50	32	Tastes in food	52	35
W smokes	53	52			
Religious beliefs	53	29			
My wife gambles	53	-			

respect for customs (50 : 12). Most of these items appear to have a cultural link : in traditional Indian society the husband was seen as the ultimate authority in the home and whose decision was accepted by the wife in a submissive manner and without too much question. It would appear that relics of this tradition are still present in today's husband-wife relationship among Indians. The higher ratings on the above-mentioned items given by Terman's husbands as causes of friction between spouses suggest that there is a more equalitarian, democratic and questioning relationship between husbands and wives belonging to a fully westernised cultural group.

The following items which wives in Terman's study ranked in the first twenty feature lower down the list in the present study (with the rankings given in brackets, first that of the present study, followed by Terman's) : husband is nervous or impatient (45 : 3), preferences for amusement (23 : 6), husband is argumentative (26 : 8), husband is quick-tempered (28 : 9), respect for customs (49 : 17), and husband is bored with my small talk (42 : 18). The lower ratings given by Terman's wives on the above mentioned items as causes of marital conflict fit in with the pattern which emerged when the husbands' responses in the present study and Terman's study were compared : the perception of many of Terman's wives that their husbands are impatient, argumentative and quick tempered are more characteristic of a society in which individualism is highly valued and one in which one partner does not meekly accept the authority and decisions of the other. The same characteristics are accepted more philosophically by the relatively submissive, conformist Indian wife as a part of her dominant partner's makeup. Consequently from her point of view, such behaviours are expected and accepted as part and parcel of married life, particularly among more conservative couples.

SUMMARY

Several statements drawn from a list of complaints made by husbands and wives confirm earlier trends that financial problems, lack of affection and competing interests, mental cruelty on the part of the spouse, verbal abuse, excessive demands, neglect of home and children, problems related to in-laws, significant differences between spouses in various areas, and annoying forms of behaviour in the partner are all associated with marital unhappiness.

The most serious and frequently reported reasons for marital conflict, from the husband's point of view, were nagging on the part of the wife and in-law interference. The wives, on the other hand, cited the husband's drinking as the most problematic area in marriage; in-law interference and reluctance on the part of the husband to talk things over also caused great concern to wives.

A rank-ordered comparison of the responses of the husbands and wives in Terman's study (conducted forty-seven years ago) with those of the present study showed that, in overall terms, neither the differences in culture between the two sets of samples nor the passage of time has done very much to alter the basic issues over which husbands and wives quarrel.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduction

It would be appropriate to end a dissertation on the subject of marital conflict by presenting some of the views which the writer had developed as a result of this protracted enquiry. These views take into account data obtained from the present study, from leading writers in the field, marriage guidance counsellors, social workers and colleagues, as well as the experience gained in the course of counselling couples with marital problems. The section that follows is, therefore, an amalgam of a study of the relevant literature, personal research, first-hand observations and interviews.

The data which were obtained from this research have been analysed to identify those factors and circumstances which promote as well as retard healthy marital functioning among Hindu couples in Durban. Once the high-risk factors have been identified it would become possible to think in terms of remedial and preventive measures.

A logical starting point and one which will serve as a useful background for the discussion is a brief review of some of the more important findings and conclusions of this study.

2. General Conclusions Based On The Present Study

The present research has served to provide empirical information hitherto lacking in respect of various aspects relating to marital conflict among Hindu

South Africans. It must be noted that there is some overlap in the characteristics displayed by happily and unhappily married couples. Couples are not completely well adjusted or completely maladjusted in their marriages. Rather, most couples lie somewhere in between these two extremes. Thus they will display a mixture of characteristics. However, since some of the couples are relatively better adjusted than others, they tend to have mainly those positive characteristics which are related to good marital functioning.

2.1 Couples who are experiencing marital problems tend to marry at an earlier age, have a lower educational level, occupy lower rungs on the socio-economic and occupational ladders and are more likely, than happily married couples, to come from families where marital conflict and disturbances between the parents existed. Moreover, there is a greater likelihood of hasty unions, marriage against the parents' wishes, premarital pregnancy and a general lack of preparedness for the responsibilities of marriage. A greater number of their siblings are also experiencing (or have experienced) problems with their spouses. This suggests that the home situation has an effect upon children's subsequent functioning as marriage partners. Some emancipation from the parental home prior to, as well as after marriage, increases the chances that one will be able to adjust to the behaviour of the spouse and of the in-laws.

2.2 Security and stability of employment and income are important elements in successful marriages. A high proportion of couples are unhappy where the husband has been unemployed for a significant part of the time since marriage. Frequent changes relating to employment particularly in the case of the husband, is associated with lessened probabilities of success in marriage. Financial debts at the beginning of the marriage are also more common among the poorly functioning families, and the husband's employment pattern is irregular.

Disadvantaged housing is more typical of those who are experiencing marital problems. There is also greater friction between the partners when they share accommodation with others. In general, marital stability and a stable accommodation history go hand in hand. Unhappily married couples tend to have more frequent, haphazard and even forced moves and show less evidence of planning ahead.

2.3 The development of binding ties of affection, common interests and activities, similar attitudes and values, along with respect for the individuality of the partner begins prior to marriage and continues afterwards. Consequently, the experiences during the period of courtship and engagement are likely to be powerful forces making for or against the success of the marriage. The longer the courtship, the greater the probability that the wedding process will be well advanced prior to marriage and will continue after the event.

The unhappily married couples, in contrast to the happily married ones, tend to be characterised by greater age difference between the partners, a shorter acquaintance before marriage, more conflict during the acquaintanceship period, and a more idealised, less realistic set of expectations regarding married life.

2.4 There is no conclusive evidence of an association between marital adjustment and the number of children in a family. Children, if wanted by both parents, are an integrating influence. Where they are not wanted by one or both parents, they may be a disruptive factor. In the unplanned family situations the arrival of a baby generally increases the pressures that the young couple are already experiencing.

Premaritally pregnant teenagers also experience economic disadvantages especially when they lack parental support.

2.5 This study shows that unhappiness in marriage is associated with parental domination in the childhood years, too close or too little attachment with one's parents, and a negative attitude toward one's in-laws. Some conflict with one's parents but not too much, is apparently conducive to good marital adjustment. Living close to the wife's parents as well as visiting the in-laws together, help to maintain relative peace between a couple. However, sharing the home with the in-laws is apparently too close for comfort.

2.6 Participation in social life is related to good adjustment in marriage. A common circle of friends congenial to both partners is an important binding factor in marriage. The absence of friends or conflict over the choice of friends causes problems in the husband-wife relationship.

2.7 Marital adjustment is positively associated with both joint participation in outside interests and mutual respect on the basis of equality. Not surprisingly, conflict over activities which jeopardise a family's limited financial resources - such as drinking and gambling feature more prominently in the reports of unhappily married wives than happily married ones.

2.8 This study also shows that marital adjustment is associated with a number of personality traits, such as the ability to make decisions quickly, accept responsibility, discipline children, make friends easily, feel concern about what people say and think, control one's temper and regain one's composure quickly. Other positive qualities which hold one in good stead in marriage are determination, not being too easily influenced by others, delight in belonging

to organisations and being affectionate and considerate towards others.

Unhappily married spouses tend to be unduly moody, stubborn, selfish and jealous.

2.9 The marital partners in a healthy family are able to talk directly and openly with each other about their feelings, their wishes and their needs. They blame each other once in a while, not persistently. If one is hurt by something the partner has done, there is only an occasional withdrawal into the kind of silence that disturbs the marital pair, or an occasional talking about problems with their own parents instead of with the spouse. They also make consistent efforts to limit the scope and duration of marital conflicts and keep communication channels open for the resolution of conflicts which arise.

In contrast, and in keeping with expectations, one often senses an underlying tone of aggression and hostility when unhappily married couples communicate with each other. It would appear that they communicate mainly to attack the partner or defend themselves. Communicating for the purpose of expressing concern and tenderness for each other is rare.

2.10 Individuals in the happily married group often express satisfaction with the state of marriage and with their spouses. They also express general satisfaction with various aspects such as the manner in which the family's finances are handled, the family's recreational activities, the partner's choice of friends, sexual relations, ways of dealing with in-laws, the amount of time spent together, the spouse's table manners and his/her aims and values in life. A calm, constructive approach to problem solving, the ability to reach agreement by mutual give and take and having emotional maturity

and a stable personality - all these are valuable assets in any spouse.

Most of those who are unhappy complain, among other things, of financial difficulties, sexual problems, interference by in-laws, lack of mutual friends, lack of co-operation, violence, disagreement over division of labour in the home, the spouse's irresponsibility and his/her withdrawn and moody behaviour. Several of these characteristics are probably tied to earlier socialisation processes and leave their mark upon the personality and in this way influence later marital functioning.

2.11 In the sexual domain, it is advantageous to marital stability to have gained one's early knowledge about intimate matters from wholesome sources. Happily married couples also find each other sexually attractive and satisfying. Although not explicitly stated during interviews, it was clear that where extra-marital relations had existed, these were minimal and transitory and had not been allowed to jeopardise family solidarity.

Unhappily married individuals tend to be over-modest toward sex and several complain that, relative to themselves, their partners are over-sexed or under-sexed. Some feel irritated by their spouse's frequent refusal for sexual intimacy when they themselves desire it.

An observation that was made in the course of the interview and one that appears to distinguish fairly clearly between the two sets of couples is their approach and ability to cope with crisis situations. Both groups have their "rough spots" in marriage - financial, health, sexual and so on. But the well-adjusted couples, in contrast to the maladjusted ones, are able to pull together and encounter a stress situation with constructive action and an attitude of mutual support. One does not perceive this kind of approach and teamwork between the partners in

the unhappily married group. Their ability to meet each other's needs appears to be very limited especially when they are faced with crises.

Among Hindus, co-operation between husband and wife has not been helped by the newly-found assertiveness of many females. These girls are invariably raised in a more liberal and less rigid family atmosphere compared to earlier times. This has had a considerable impact on their psychological make up and attitudes. Unlike their sisters of a few generations ago, they are not readily disposed towards subjecting their own feelings and desires in order to fit in with those of their husbands.

3. Marriage In A Changing Society

Traditionally, Hindu marriage vows contained a pledge of mutual commitment to stay wed through sickness and in health and promises about loving, honouring, protecting and cherishing. Marriage was entered into seriously and was to last as long as the partners lived. It was expected that when problems and misfortunes arose, which inevitably would happen, the couple would deal with and triumph over them. People settled into "making marriage work" and accepted that they would not always be happy. This attitude was reinforced by the example of their own parents and reflected a widely held societal expectation.

In more recent times the scenario, as far as Indian South Africans are concerned, has changed radically. If the rising divorce rates are any indication, it would appear that marriage is not considered to be as permanent as earlier generations had believed. Major cultural and societal changes have occurred as a result of contact with western education and practices. With these changes, the demands on marriage have increased and they are qualitatively different from past requirements. Marriage is increasingly being considered more of a "personal" contract

than a sacred one. Moreover, the increasing demand for advanced training has resulted in postponement of marriage and thus to changes in attitude toward cultural restrictions such as pre-marital sex. The increasing use of the motor car has resulted in much greater mobility of young men and women while the wider use of contraception has greatly reduced the possibility of premarital pregnancy.

The independence of spirit also manifests itself in the tendency among young educated Indian girls to desire marriage to men who live far away from parental homes or men who can afford to set up house distinctly separate from their family households. This, they feel, would enable them to escape the control of the mother-in-law and thus provide them with the opportunity of maintaining their homes in the way they themselves wish.

Gainful employment has meant that women are less dependent on their husbands. They no longer have to be full-time housewives. This new independence has led to a more equalitarian relationship between husband and wife. Although, in most South African Indian homes, there is still a rough division of labour between men's and women's roles, it is not uncommon to find men assisting with domestic chores. Both the phasing out of the traditional pattern of authority and the overlap between men's and women's roles have led to changes in interpersonal relationships within the Indian family. Young females who have been employed prior to marriage are not always very eager to accept a change in their economic status after marriage. Their experience as wage earners has generally tended to create in them an independence and individualisation which is often frustrated by the new role they have to fill in marriage.

A significant number of the older generation believe that the cohesion of the family has suffered as a result of the growth of the spirit of individualism.

They support their view point by citing the increased rates of divorce and illegitimacy. They also claim that today's small unstable families cannot provide the emotional support that all family members need. As the competition between husbands and wives has grown, say orthodox Hindus, the home has become a battleground rather than a refuge from the pressures of the world.

As a counter to these arguments, the younger generation claim that the critics of contemporary life are confusing change with decay. While they readily admit that today's families are certainly different from those of forty or fifty years ago they say that there is every reason to believe that they are actually happier than those who lived in earlier generations. For them the rise in the divorce rate does not necessarily indicate that people are less satisfied with their marriages than they were in the past. They point out that in earlier years custom made it virtually impossible for Hindus to obtain a divorce; couples, therefore, stayed together no matter how unhappy they were. Seen in this light, it is argued that the increase in divorces is actually a healthy trend : it indicates that unhappy marital partners are no longer forced to stay together but are striking out on their own and are finding new, more compatible partners. Democratic individualism, says Kolb (1948), cannot be encouraged in business, industry and education while it is denied in the family (pp. 451-456).

From the foregoing, it is obvious that people no longer enter into marriage solely for the sake of physical survival. People are concerned about their emotional and psychological well being and they bring these concerns and expectations to the marriage. In many cases, however, they have not established or evolved their roles and relationships which are consistent with these needs.

Consequently, they enter marriage with false assumptions about what it is and what it can do. Marriages break down when people are unable to come to terms with what marriage is not and what they will have to do to make it work. They may, for instance, be fixated in traditional male and female roles that are no longer appropriate for their situation.

Another problem arises as a result of the oft-held view that the love marriage simply happens. According to the holders of this view if a couple are in love, then the other factors necessary for a successful relationship and marriage will automatically fall into place.

Moreover, there is no need to worry about problems ahead of time : whatever problems do come, the belief goes on, they can be worked out successfully by any couple who are truly "in love". Social workers complain that a number of these "couples in love" resist, when it is suggested that they make a conscious effort to guide and build their relationship. The young lovers insist that it is this very guidance and control that ruins a relationship. They prefer to "relax and let it happen". This attitude implies great tolerance on the part of each individual because what happens may not be something the other wants. Unfortunately, most people are tolerant only up to a point. Beyond that certain behaviours become unacceptable. At this stage one partner tries to bring about changes in the spouse and in their relationship. Usually this results in conflict because the partner may not want to change. Without agreed upon ways of handling conflict, unconscious games and strategies take over, and soon meaningful communication is lost. And when communication breaks down the partners are unable to give or get constructive feedback, negotiate bargains, make arrangements, or deal with their feelings of hostility, anger, hurt, fear, jealousy and so forth. When the course of the alienation process is far advanced, the

spouses tend to express derogatory attitudes toward each other, tend to have many complaints about the spouse and the marriage, and tend to exaggerate the deficiencies of the mate and the marriage (Humphrey, 1983, p. 7). The alienation process is generally a slow cumulation of conflicts and disagreements, accompanied by the psychological withdrawal of one or both spouses (Le Masters, 1957, p. 581). Locke's data (1951) support the view that just as time is required to build a love relationship, so is time required to tear it down (p. 358). The slow process is illustrated in Figure 8.1.

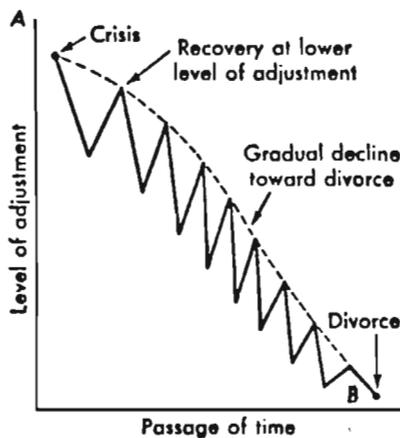


FIG. 8.1 : SCHEMATIC DRAWING OF THE PROCESS OF MARITAL FAILURE⁽¹⁾

In the case of some couples, it is possible that the process of deterioration began even before the marriage. As the conflicts increase the couple may struggle to resolve their problems, and to some extent they generally succeed in doing so, but, as the graph shows the level of recovery keeps dropping so that each crisis leaves them with less reserves than before (Le Masters, 1957, p. 582).

At some point one (or both) of the partners become indifferent. This often gives a false sense of improvement because the quarrels and conflicts seem to

(1) Source : Le Masters, E.E. (1957) : Modern Courtship and Marriage. Macmillan, New York, p. 582.

subside. Actually, says Le Masters, this is "the beginning of the end," and indicates that the person (or the couple) has ceased to care about what happens. At this point the final break or separation may come at any time. This is when they usually consult a lawyer. In some cases one partner may report that the failure was sudden. This could well be an indication that this person was unaware of what was happening to the marriage. The majority of divorced couples, however, know that their marriage is failing but find themselves helpless to halt the deteriorating process (Le Masters, 1957, p. 583). "The final action," says Goode, "is the result of a decision and action process that lasts on the average two years". (Goode, 1956, p. 179).

Although the divorce rate among Hindus is on the increase, there is still strong opposition to it within the community, especially among traditionalists. Deeply ingrained attitudes often present serious obstacles to couples who are experiencing a marriage crisis. Statements made during the interviews indicate that people find many reasons for not taking steps to free themselves from a marriage they believe is empty. Their inner knowledge that the marriage has effectively ended is opposed by all kinds of thoughts and principles which make them hold on and reluctant to leave. For example, strict beliefs that a marriage should never be dissolved may itself be a rigid attitude which traps them. Some people strongly resist all ideas of leaving because any loss of status or standard of living is unthinkable to them. Others express fears of the unknown, of being alone and of what would happen to the children. Still others, particularly women, fear the disapproval of family and friends.

It is a big decision to leave a marriage because it is the most complicated and distressing change a person is likely to make in his/her life. The effects can extend into almost every area of a couple's life, forcing changes in personal relationships, family networks and work patterns, and bring domestic

as well as emotional upheavals.

Interviewees who did think seriously about a divorce at some time in their marriage reported that they are gripped by many fears and apprehensions at that time and that these had such a paralysing effect that they chose to remain in an empty marriage.

In spite of the reservations mentioned above, several informed professionals believe that the barriers to divorce among Hindus are gradually fading away and that viable alternatives to remaining in an unhappy marriage are being increasingly considered.

Although loneliness and social isolation may still follow divorce, certain of the practical difficulties of life on one's own have been eased, and this is particularly so for the male partner, for the everyday provisions and conveniences found in a modern industrial society can make for a fairly comfortable bachelor life. For the woman, too, although there may still be severe emotional trauma, the effects of which may persist for a considerable period after the divorce, there are now more viable alternatives to remaining unhappily married, although the day-to-day care of and responsibility for dependent children will tend to reduce the options open to women after divorce. Nevertheless, increased educational opportunities have opened up a wider range of employment possibilities to a woman, so that, after a divorce, she is now in a better position to support herself financially.

The structural modifications in Hindu society have brought about changes in the marital relationship. Perhaps the most striking of these has resulted from the decline in the extended family network. This decline has resulted

in the small family unit of husband, wife and children, namely, the conjugal family, becoming increasingly the chief source of emotional support and gratification for its members. In particular, the notions of romantic love, and of a marriage based upon exclusive love between husband and wife have meant that men and women are increasingly emphasising the importance of the marital relationship, with each partner being expected to recognise and satisfy the emotional needs of the other. According to Dominian, "modern marriage is committed to the goals of independence, freedom and the attainment of the highest standards of personal fulfilment" (p. 14). And if this is so, then it is not surprising that the conjugal family unit is increasingly being dissolved, since it now bears a heavy burden of demand and, relative to the extended family, appears a fragile unit. Tension and conflict are bound to arise in the normal course of events when two people try to live together, but in modern marriage with its high expectations of personal happiness, relatively more tension and conflict seems inevitable, and the conjugal family unit would seem to be equipped with few buffers to withstand such strains.

A major effect of the weakening of community control over the marriage relationship has been the reduction in motivation of husbands and wives to adapt to each other. If divorce is no disgrace and remarriage is easy, the pressure to adapt is not great.

On the other hand, certain attitudes of husband and wife help maintain a marital relationship. The will to make the marriage succeed is increased because of concern about the welfare of the minor children and the children's opposition to an impending separation of the father and mother. The father realises that divorce involves virtual separation from his children as well as from his wife. Consequently, the breakup of the home tends to be delayed as long as there

remains any prospect of continuing the marital relation or until the children are older.

One possible consequence of divorce which has aroused some concern particularly amongst some of the agencies engaged in marital therapy and counselling needs to be mentioned. It has been suggested that the provision of easier divorce may, for some people, prevent the emotional development and self-discovery, which, it is believed, usually takes place in the context of close, personal, on-going relationships. It is thus feared that the provision of easier divorce may, in turn, make it easier for those with marital difficulties to avoid discovering that the causes of their marital unhappiness may well have roots in their own unresolved emotional difficulties and are not solely caused by living with an unsuitable marriage partner.

The writer's experience gained from counselling couples with marital problems has convinced her that, given time and support, many couples can be helped through their marital difficulties to a deeper understanding of themselves and their spouses.

The search for emotional fulfillment has led to many new methods to gain this end. For example, sensitivity training, encounter groups, family enrichment weekends, sex therapy, sexuality workshops, communication improvement groups, massage and bodily awareness training, psychodrama, feminine and masculine liberation groups, and many more experiential activities have sprung up in recent years to help married couples enrich their lives.

Past marital services have been essentially remedial in nature. When a couple had a marital problem, they could seek help from numerous sources. However, marriage enrichment places the emphasis on the preventative concept

of facilitating positive growth. In other words, the goal is to help couples with "good" marriages further improve their relationship.

"Marriage enrichment programs are generally concerned with enhancing the couple's communication, emotional life, or sexual relationship, fostering marriage strengths and developing marriage potential while maintaining a consistent and primary focus on the relationship of the couple" (Otto, 1975, p. 137).

Many marriage improvement programmes and techniques are emerging especially in certain overseas countries. Some of these are discussed by writers such as Barker (1981), Stuart (1980), Engelkes and Vandergoot (1982), Zimbardo (1985), and Pietrofessa and his associates (1984). The following programmes and techniques appear to be particularly popular:

1. Courses on marriage and the family : These are offered by certain institutions of higher learning. The courses aim to help people gain a better understanding of the institution of marriage, through studying marital communication, economics of marriage, child rearing, and so on.
2. Encounter groups : These consist of group interactions, usually with strangers, where the masks and games used by the marital partners to manipulate one another and conceal real feelings (that may be unpleasant to one or both), are stripped away. The group actively confronts the person, forcing him (or her) to examine some of his (or her) problems and the faulty methods that might have been used to solve or deny problems. There is a great deal of emotion released by such groups.

3. Family enrichment weekends : These involve the entire family in a retreat type setting where they work together to improve their family life. The family may concentrate on learning some new activities that can be shared . They may listen to lectures, see films, and share other learning experiences together. They may interact with other families, learning through the experiences of others. They may participate in exercises designed to improve family communication or general family functioning.
4. Female and male liberation groups : These groups focus their discussions and exercises around helping people escape from stereotyped sex roles and liberate the parts of their personalities that have been submerged to the sex role. For example, women may work to become more assertive, feeling that the typical feminine role has always been too passive. Men, on the other hand, may work to be more expressive of feelings, since the typical masculine role has repressed emotional display and worked against the man being communicative of his feelings.
5. Married couple's communication workshops : These workshops may be ongoing groups or weekend workshops in which communication is the centre of attention. Role playing, learning how to fight fairly, understanding communication processes, and actively practising in front of the group, all help the couple toward better communication. An important aspect of this is the comments made by the group after a couple communicates about something that causes a problem for them.
6. Massage and bodily awareness training : This training is often a part of sexuality workshops. It is aimed at developing the couple's awareness

of their own bodies as well as teaching each the techniques involved in physically pleasuring the other through massage. The art of physical relaxation is part of bodily awareness training.

7. Psychodrama : This is a form of psychotherapy which is used to dramatise problems by acting them out with other group members as the players. In the case of marriage enrichment, it is used to help individuals in the family better understand the roles of other family members. This is accomplished mainly through timely changes of role by the individuals participating in the drama under the direction of the group leader. Shifting roles also help each player understand how the other person in the drama feels and sees the situation.
8. Sensitivity training : This training consists of exercises in touching, concentrating and heightening awareness, and empathy for the feelings of one's mate, which increase each mate's sensitivity for the other as well as increasing self-awareness.
9. Sex therapy and sexuality workshops : These focus on a couple's sexual relationships. Sex therapy is used to overcome sexual problems. Sexuality workshops are designed more to help couples improve this aspect of their relationship rather than to cure severe problems. The goal is to heighten sexual awareness so that the couple's sexual relations may be enriched. Films, discussion, mutual exploration, sensitivity and massage and bodily awareness techniques are all used to reduce inhibitions and expand the couple's sexual awareness.

Unfortunately with popularity comes misuse. The large demand for these techniques may bring untrained and, occasionally, unscrupulous people into

the fields of counselling and marriage enrichment. It is therefore important for the authorities to monitor the situation carefully and exercise the necessary control by ensuring that those who practise these techniques fulfill certain minimum requirements. If an individual's vulnerability is exploited by another, serious psychological damage can result (Pietrofessa et al., 1984, p. 372).

4. Recommendations

The consistency of the findings in the various areas which were investigated in this study provide certain pointers for action. And this need for action becomes all the more urgent when one considers that there are many deficiencies in the field of marriage and family service. It is these deficiencies that recently prompted a committee of experts on family life to remark about the lack of a national family programme and the absence of uniformity in the training of marriage and family workers. According to their report : "Services are unco-ordinated and in many cases programmes are offered on an ad-hoc basis. Under these circumstances the present day's problems and needs of marriage and family life are not being coped with ... In view of the rather unsatisfactory state of marriage and family life in the Republic of South Africa, the limited service rendering, and the importance of a healthy marriage and family life, in the development of the quality of life of the community, the formulation of a national programme is justified" (Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, 1985, p. 59). Such a programme becomes the responsibility of the central government since one of its main functions is the protection of the family through its policies which have a bearing on family life. These policies relate to family planning, housing, employment, welfare, health, education, community development and settlement. However, the central government needs the support of a whole range of professions, organisations and

disciplines, both public and private, if any national family programme is to succeed. The broad aim of such a programme should be the ungrading of the quality of family life in the Republic's various communities, giving due regard to the particular needs and cultural background of each community. It is clear from the findings of this study and the increasing tendency toward the breakdown of family life among Indians (of which Hindus form a substantial proportion) as reflected in the rising incidence of divorce, illegitimate births, child neglect and family violence, that this community would benefit considerably from any national family programme that may be implemented. It should never be forgotten that the family is a fundamental social unit and everything possible should, therefore, be done to ensure its effective functioning. Those families that are not functioning satisfactorily need to be assisted without, however, making them over-dependent. The members of such families must ultimately develop for themselves those skills that are necessary for a stable life.

Besides the central government various other bodies have a role to play in uplifting the quality of family life in the Republic. These include the universities and other tertiary institutions, schools and welfare, cultural, religious and service organisations as well as the media and the business sector. The contributions of each of these are not mutually exclusive; in fact they overlap at certain points.

The contributions which can be made by these groups will now be discussed. The focus will be on those aspects which have particular relevance for this study and its findings.

4.1 The Central Government

It is recommended that the Central Government

- (a) Promote a national family program, train personnel, co-ordinate the efforts of public and private agencies and encourage research.
- (b) Alleviate poverty and improve poor living conditions. This involves providing adequate housing, combating malnutrition and poor health, upgrading educational levels and reducing the high unemployment and dependency rates. Such improvements will help minimise the stress which harassed couples experience.
- (c) Provide subsidies so that the services of other professionals, besides social workers, can be utilised to ungrade the quality of family life.
- (d) Improve educational, counselling and guidance services which fall under its control. The appointment of social workers in schools and institutes for child and adult guidance are cases in point. Courses can also be offered by means of continuing education and the training of those people who can take the lead regarding marriage and family life in a particular community. In several of these areas the central government would have to enlist the support of the universities, especially where the training of personnel and research are involved.
- (e) Continue modernising marriage and divorce laws so that they keep abreast of the needs of the times.

4.2 Universities

It is recommended that universities

- (a) Widen the scope of existing courses, as well as develop new courses for

the training of personnel who intend to work in the area of marriage and family welfare. The services of experienced counsellors attached to such bodies as FAMSA can be enlisted.

- (b) Serve as a catalyst for generating and disseminating information which would help promote healthy marriage and family life in the communities which they serve. Adult education may comprise courses of lectures, panel discussions by experts in the different fields connected with marriage, or discussion groups led by educators. The purpose of all these courses is the same, namely, to learn as much as possible about the exacting business of being a husband or wife in contemporary society.
- (c) Undertake research relating to family life and marital enrichment. Some examples of research areas which are suggested by this study include the implications which the quality of the parent-child relationship have for the marital happiness of the offspring; the effect of parental remarriage upon the emotional development of the offspring; the relationship between the personality traits of the marriage partners and marital conflict.
- (d) Consider the possibility of establishing research institutes to study marriage and marital problems in a systematic and integrated manner. Such an institute, with an well-rounded programme, would attract to its staff a whole range of specialists from different disciplines, all of whom have the common goal of enhancing the quality of family life in the community.

4.3 Schools

It is recommended that schools

- (a) Offer a programme in family guidance and human relations. Sex education can be presented as a part of such a course. This would help to ward off community attack which may arise if a sex education programme is presented on its own.
- (b) Equip high school pupils with the kind of knowledge which would enable them to choose their partners wisely and lead the kind of married life which they would find satisfying and fulfilling.
- (c) Teach pupils problem-solving strategies so that they are able to handle conflicts, which are an inevitable part of life, in a constructive manner.
- (d) Inculcate in pupils a desire for healthy leisure-time and recreational pursuits. This would help counter in later life the attractions of such potentially damaging past-times as drinking, drug taking and gambling.
- (e) Make pupils aware of the advantages of postponing additions to the family until the couple have adjusted to each other and have consolidated themselves in various ways, for example, emotionally and financially - so that they can cope with the stresses and demands that accompany the arrival of children.
- (f) Invite outside agencies and professionals to assist with family and marital guidance programmes.
- (g) Involve parent-teacher associations in these programmes as well.

4.4 Welfare, Cultural, Religious and Service Organisations

It is recommended that the above-mentioned organisations

- (a) Co-ordinate their programmes for promoting marriage and family life at national, regional and local levels.
- (b) Educate the community so that its members adopt those attitudes and patterns of behaviour which promote healthy and relatively conflict-free marriages.

There is need, for instance, to guide certain tradition-oriented Hindu husbands into accepting their wives as equals; also, that they should not differentiate rigidly between "men's work" and "women's work". These husbands need to perceive marriage as a responsibility to be shared between themselves and their wives, particularly in those cases where female partners are employed outside the home.

There is also a need to counsel parents and prospective parents-in-law about the dangers of being over-possessive and of interfering in the marriages of their offspring. Where feasible, newly married couples should be encouraged to set up their own homes.

There is a third important area in which many members of the Hindu community may be assisted : life, as it exists today, makes it necessary for them to shed their prejudice against divorce, a phenomenon which is now on the increase. Getting on in one's life, having a new start, growth and the learning of new insights into one's self, are some of the arguments which may be offered in support of divorce. Even children may be better off with one parent than living under daily

conflict.

It is acknowledged that age-old and deep-seated beliefs die hard : no amount of coercion can eradicate them in an instant. The best chance of success lies in persuasive communication.

- (c) Inform couples of the importance of seeking professional help early should serious problems threaten to disrupt their marriage. This move may be compared to the line taken in heart and cancer campaigns - namely, that successful treatment depends on early diagnosis. Unfortunately, this seems to run counter to the current practice of concealing marital problems. In this regard it appears that professional workers are facing the same problems encountered by those who were fighting against tuberculosis and venereal disease several decades ago.
- (d) Persuade medical clinics and those doctors who work as a team to enlist the help of social workers trained in the handling of mental problems. In keeping with the trend of delegating certain duties to nurses, laboratory technicians, occupational therapists and medical social workers, the handling of problems which are marriage-oriented could be referred to those who have been specially trained to handle difficulties in this specific area.
- (e) Widen the scope of their programmes so that, in addition to their well established rehabilitation function, welfare agencies also move toward the prevention of family problems, divorce counselling and marriage enrichment. Some of the many marriage improvement techniques which may be used with profit include sensitivity training, encounter groups, family enrichment weekends, sex therapy, sexuality workshops, communi-

cation improvement groups, massage and bodily awareness training and psychodrama.

- (f) Revise their knowledge and therapeutic services regularly so that welfare agencies are able to offer couples the benefit of the most recently developed skills and techniques in the area of marital functioning.
- (g) Consider extending office hours and negotiating with industrial and labour authorities for flexible hours of employment and on-site services relating to social and family problems. In this way it would become possible to reach wage workers who have difficulty in making office appointments.

4.5 The Media

It is recommended that the mass media

- (a) Create a climate of public concern with regard to marriage and family life.
- (b) Publicise the ways in which marriage can be improved. Greater use can be made of specialists in this regard. Attention needs to be drawn to the disruptive effects of alcohol and drug abuse on marriage and family life.
- (c) Refrain from presenting an over-romanticised picture of parenthood and motherhood in particular. A more realistic awareness should be created of the exacting demands which child-raising makes on the emotional resources, energy, time and finances of parents as well as the constraints it places on their personal independence and freedom of movement. Deglamourising parenthood in this way will not discourage those who truly

want to care for children but it may act as a deterrent in the case of those with unrealistic expectations.

4.6 Business and Industry

It is recommended that business and industry

- (a) Place greater stress in their employee assistance programmes on those factors which enhance the quality of married life.
- (b) Make the dual role of the working wife/mother easier through the establishment of child care facilities, provisions for part-time employment and flexible working hours. Child care centres would help give couples with young children more time for one another and more time to work positively on their marriage. Many couples simply do not have time for their marriage in the early child-rearing, work-oriented years. Later, when they have time, because the children are finally capable of independence, and economic stability has been achieved, there is often not enough left of the marriage which can be salvaged.

5. Conclusion

This research has shown that marital breakdown cannot be explained solely in terms of poverty, nor in terms of character disorders, nor solely in terms of inadequate neighbourhood. Rather, it would appear that a combination of factors, together with an impoverished problem-solving strategy, poor communication between partners and a general lack of confidence between them, are responsible for marital breakdown.

It is important that social work practice and research continue as partners to develop and test theory and new methods of service. Only in this way can the family service field learn how to help most effectively, the hundreds of troubled families who each year turn to agencies for help. Perhaps, in the process, the field can also contribute increasingly to the basic understanding of one of man's core problems - that of how to resolve conflicts, whether between marital partners, between groups at the community level, or between nations.

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APPENDIX

CONFIDENTIAL

SCHEDULE NO.

WA/PA

MARITAL STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

I. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA PERTAINING TO HUSBAND AND WIFE

[†]To be filled in by husband and wife separately

	HUSBAND'S REPLIES	WIFE'S REPLIES
1. Age at present		
2.(a) Age at marriage		
(b) Number of years married		
3. Linguistic group (Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati)		
4. Highest educational level attained		
5. Occupation		
6. Monthly salary		
7. State of physical health (Good, Average, Poor)		
8. Are you an only child?		
9. Of your brothers and sisters, are you - the eldest?		
the youngest?		
10. Is your mother alive?		
.... If not, <u>your</u> age when she died		
Is your father alive?		
.... If not, <u>your</u> age when he died		
11. Were you married previously?		
.... If YES, did the previous marriage end by death, divorce, desertion?		
12. Have any of your brothers or sisters had or are having serious marital problems? (Indicate "Yes" or "No")		

17. Amount saved by couple since marriage _____

18. During your marriage the chief breadwinner has been :

Irregularly employed	Always employed but constantly changing jobs	Regularly employed

19. If wife worked, the husband :

Approved	Disapproved

20. Do you own your present home?

Yes	No

21. Total number of different houses in which you lived since your marriage _____

22. On the whole do you feel that the total income has met the economic needs of the family :

Very adequately	Adequately	Inadequately	Very inadequately

23. Do you feel that the husband's efforts to provide for the economic needs of the family have been :

Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory

III COURTSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

+ Items 24-28 to be answered by wife only

24. How did you come to meet your spouse?

Introduced by parents	
Introduced by a relative (other than your parents)	
Introduced by a friend	
Met at work	
Met at school /university/technikon	
Other (Specify) _____	

25. For how long did you know your spouse before your marriage?

Less than one month	
Less than six months	
About a year	
About two years or more	
Since childhood	

26. What was the length of time that elapsed since both of you agreed to marry each other and the actual marriage?

Less than one month	
Less than six months	
About a year	
About two years	
Three years or more	

27. How frequently did you see your spouse during courtship?

Once a month	
Twice a month	
Once a week	
Twice a week	
Almost everyday	

28. To what extent were there conflicts between you and your spouse BEFORE marriage?

None	
A little	
Moderate	
A good deal	
Very great	

31. Did
- you
- want the child (or the children)?

Yes	No

32. In cases where there are no children yet, does :

The husband want children?

Yes	No

The wife want children?

Yes	No

33. If you have had children by a partner other than your husband, has your husband readily accepted them?

Yes	No

34. If your husband has had children by a partner other than yourself, have you readily accepted them?

Yes	No	N/A

V PARENTAL INFLUENCES ON MARITAL ADJUSTMENT+ Items 35-46 to be filled by husband and wife separately

- 35.(a) Do you feel that in your parental home you :

WIFE'S REPLY	YOUR FEELING	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Never had your own way about something	
	Usually had your own way	
	Had your own way about everything	

(b) The main form of discipline in my parental home was :

Wife _____

Husband _____

36.(a) Indicate the amount of CONFLICT which was present between the following persons BEFORE your marriage :

WIFE'S REPLY				DEGREE OF CONFLICT	HUSBAND'S REPLY			
Your father and mother	You and your father	You and your mother	You and your husband		Your father and mother	You and your father	You and your mother	You and your wife
				None				
				Very little				
				Moderate				
				A good deal				
				Very great				

(b) Main reason for conflict : WIFE _____

HUSBAND _____

37.(a) Indicate the amount of ATTACHMENT (or AFFECTION) which was present between the following persons BEFORE your marriage :

WIFE'S REPLY				DEGREE OF ATTACHMENT	HUSBAND'S REPLY			
Your father and mother	You and your father	You and your mother	You and your husband		Your father and mother	You and your father	You and your mother	You and your wife

(b) Reason for attachment (or affection) WIFE _____

HUSBAND _____

38. Would you say that your childhood was :

WIFE'S REPLY	DEGREE OF HAPPINESS	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Very happy	
	Happy	
	Average	
	Unhappy	
	Very unhappy	

39. What was the marital status of your parents at the time of your marriage?

WIFE'S REPLY	MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Married (Both living)	
	Separated	
	Divorced	
	Both dead	
	Mother dead	
	Father dead	

40. What was the occupation of your father at the time of your marriage ?

WIFE _____
HUSBAND _____

41. What was the financial status of your parents at the time of your marriage?

WIFE'S REPLY	PARENTS' FINANCIAL STATUS	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Very wealthy	
	Wealthy	
	Well-to-do	
	Comfortable	
	Meagre	
	Poor	

42. Would you say that, BEFORE your marriage, the attitude of your parents towards your spouse was one of :

WIFE'S REPLY	YOUR PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOUR SPOUSE	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Approval	
	Indifference	
	Disapproval	
	Did not know	

43. Would you say that their attitude changed AFTER your marriage?

WIFE'S REPLY	RESPONSE	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Yes	
	No	

- 44.(a) If the attitude did change, was it :

WIFE'S REPLY		HUSBAND'S REPLY
	For the better	
	For the worse	
	Unchanged	

- (b) Possible reason for this change : WIFE _____

HUSBAND _____

45. What is your present attitude towards your mother-in-law?

WIFE'S REPLY	ATTITUDE	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Like her very much	
	Like her mildly	
	Dislike her mildly	
	Dislike her very much	
	No attitude, as she is dead	

46. What is your present attitude towards your father-in-law?

WIFE'S REPLY	ATTITUDE	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Like him very much	
	Like him mildly	
	Dislike him mildly	
	Dislike him very much	
	No attitude, as he is dead	

[†] Items 47-52 to be filled in by wife

47.(a) During marriage, did you and your husband live with your parents?

Yes	No

(b) If so, for how long ?

Less than six months	
About a year	
About eighteen months	
About two years	
More than three years	
Still living with them	

(c) How did you feel about living with your parents?

Happy	Fairly Satisfied	Unhappy

(d) How did your spouse feel about this arrangement?

Happy	Fairly Satisfied	Unhappy

(e) If you have moved out, why did you do so? _____

48.(a) During marriage, did you and your husband live with his parents?

Yes	No

(b) If so, for how long?

Less than six months	
About a year	
About eighteen months	
About two years	
More than three years	
Still living with them	

(c) How did you feel about living with his parents?

Happy	Fairly Satisfied	Unhappy

(d) How did your spouse feel about this arrangement?

Happy	Fairly Satisfied	Unhappy

(e) If you have moved out, why did you do so? _____

49.(a) How far away do you live from your parents? _____ km

(b) How far away do you live from your husband's parents? _____ km

50. Number of times a year you and your spouse see :

(a) Your parents ? _____

(b) His parents ? _____

51. Number of times a year :

(a) You see your parents? _____

(b) Your spouse sees his parents? _____

52. Besides you and your spouse and your children, who else is living with you? _____

VI GENERAL PERSONALITY PATTERNS

+ To be filled in by husband and wife separately

53.

WIFE'S REPLIES				NUMBER OF FRIENDS	HUSBAND'S REPLIES			
Almost none	A few	Seve=ral	Many		Almost none	A few	Seve=ral	Many
				How many friends of the SAME SEX did you have BEFORE MARRIAGE?				
				How many friends of the OPPOSITE SEX did you have BEFORE MARRIAGE?				
				How many friends of the SAME SEX did you have AFTER MARRIAGE?				
				How many friends of the OPPOSITE SEX did you have AFTER MARRIAGE?				
				How many friends do you and your spouse have in common?				

VII COMPANIONSHIP AND COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN SPOUSES

+ To be filled in by husband and wife separately

NOTE TO INTERVIEWER : Please use a (W) to indicate the wife's response, and an (H) to indicate the husband's response. If both partners give the same response, please place both letters in the same box.

54. Do you and your spouse engage in outside interests together?

All of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them

55. In leisure time do you prefer to be

"On the go"	To stay at home

56. Do you think that your intelligence as compared to that of your spouse is

More	Less	Equal

57. Do you feel that in comparison with your spouse you are generally

Superior	Inferior	Equal

58. Indicate with an (X) your feeling toward the following activities :

WIFE'S RESPONSES					ACTI= VITY	HUSBAND'S RESPONSES				
En= joy it very much	En= joy it	Indif= ferent to it	Dis= like it	Dis= like it very much		En= joy it very much	En= joy it	Indif= ferent to it	Dis= like it	Dis= like it very much
					Reading					
					Gambling					
					Drinking					
					Dancing					
					Watching Televi= sion					
					Parties					
					Listen= ing to the radio					
					Music					
					Sports					

⁺ To be filled in by either husband or wife

59.

In the following chart there is a list of activities in which the husband or wife may take the lead, i.e. one is more dominant than the other.

Indicate in the appropriate space with an (X) whether the husband or the wife takes the lead.

ACTIVITIES	WIFE TAKES THE LEAD	HUSBAND TAKES THE LEAD
Making family decisions		
Disciplining children		
Handling family money		
Affectionate behaviour		
Religious behaviour		
Recreation behaviour		
Meeting people		

VIII PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PERCEIVED BY SPOUSE

⁺ To be filled in by husband and wife separately

On the scale below indicate with an (X), the personality traits of your spouse.

60.

MY HUSBAND			TRAITS	MY WIFE		
has the trait very much	has the trait some= what	does not have the trait at all		has the trait very much	has the trait some= what	does not have the trait at all
			Able to make decisions readily			
			Assumes responsibility readily			
			Dominating, presses his opinions and ideas on others			
			Sociable, makes friends easily			
			Determined			
			Strict with children			
			Affectionate			
			"Gives in" in arguments			
			Has sense of humour			
			Gets angry easily			
			Gets over anger quickly			
			Cares about what people say and think			
			Likes belonging to organisations			
			Easily influenced by others			

64. Mark all the things which you think have caused SERIOUS difficulties in your marriage :

WIFE'S REPLY	ITEMS	HUSBAND'S REPLY
	Spouse's attempt to control my spending money	
	Other difficulties over money	
	Religious differences	
	Different amusement interests	
	Lack of mutual friends	
	Constant bickering	
	Interference of in-laws	
	Lack of mutual affection (no longer in love)	
	Unsatisfying sex relations	
	Selfishness and lack of co-operation	
	Adultery	
	Desire to have children	
	Sterility of husband	
	Sterility of wife	
	Venereal disease	
	Spouse paid attention (became familiar with) another person	
	Desertion	
	Nonsupport	
	Drunkenness	
	Gambling	
	Ill-health	
	Spouse sent to jail	
	Cruelty to step-children	
	Differences regarding children	

Any other reason? (Specify) _____

65. What things annoy and dissatisfy you most about your marriage?

WIFE _____

HUSBAND _____

66. What things in your marriage satisfy you most?

WIFE _____

HUSBAND _____

* Items 67-76 to be filled in by interviewer with the help of husband or wife

67. State the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your spouse on the following items.

Please give an answer for each item.

ITEMS	Always agree	Frequently agree	Agree some-times Disagree some-times	Frequently disagree	Always disagree
Handling family finances (eg. buying on instalment)					
Matters of recreation (eg. going for picnics)					
Religious matters (eg. offering of sacrifices)					
Demonstrations of affection (eg. frequency of kissing, embracing)					
Friends (eg. dislike of spouses friends)					
Intimate relations (eg. sex relations)					
Ways of dealing with in-laws					
The amount of time that should be spent together					
Table manners					
Aims, attitudes, values, and things believed to be important in life					
Children					

+ Items 68-76 to be filled in by wife

68. When disagreements have arisen, they usually have resulted in :

Husband giving in	
Wife giving in	
Agreement by mutual give and take	
Neither giving in	
No disagreements	

69. (a) During the present marriage, how many times have you left your spouse because of conflict? _____

(b) How many times has your spouse left you? _____

(c) How long was the longest time of such a separation :
 Years _____ Months _____ Days _____

70.(a) Do you feel that your spouse is overly jealous about your talking, dancing, or other kinds of association with members of the opposite sex :

Yes	No	Uncertain

(b) Do you resent this ?

Yes	No

71.(a) Have either you or your spouse sought help at anytime from a welfare agency, court of law, or individuals such as a psychiatrist, priest, faith-healer or friend, for marital or psychological problems?

Yes	No

(b) If yes, please explain _____

72.(a) Have you ever wanted a divorce?

Yes	No

(b) Has the idea of divorce come up quite often?

Yes	No

(c) Talked over with your spouse about the possibility of a divorce?

Yes	No

(d) Has your spouse ever wanted a divorce?

Yes	No

73.(a) Have you ever filed suit for divorce?

Yes	No

(b) Has your spouse ever filed suit for divorce?

Yes	No

74.(a) Do you seriously think that your marriage will PROBABLY end in divorce :

Yes	No	Uncertain

(b) If so, how long from now ? _____ YEARS _____ MONTHS

75. Do you think that there is a POSSIBILITY that your marriage will end in divorce :

Yes	No	Uncertain

76.(a) Have you attempted suicide at any time?

Yes	No

If yes, state reason _____

(b) Has your spouse (to the best of your knowledge) attempted suicide at any time?

Yes	No	Uncertain

If yes, state reason _____

⁺ To be filled in by husband and wife separately

77. At those times when you and your spouse are not on good terms, how do you feel?

WIFE'S REPLY				FEELINGS	HUSBAND'S REPLIES			
Very	Some= what	A little	Not at all		Very	Some= what	A little	Not at all
				Lonely				
				Miserable				
				Irritated				
				Angry				
				Insecure				
				Worried				
				Hurt				
				Inferior				
				Self-confident				
				Critical of spouse				

XI SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

NOTE TO INTERVIEWER : PLEASE INTERVIEW HUSBAND AND WIFE SEPARATELY WHEN FILLING IN THEIR RESPONSES

The following questions relate to sexual behaviour. It is generally agreed that personal sex relations are very important in adjustment or maladjustment in marriage. We are hoping that you will answer these questions honestly and accurately. As promised earlier, your identity will remain unknown.

NOTE TO INTERVIEWER : Wherever there are boxes please use a (W) to indicate the wife's response, and an (H) to indicate the husband's response. If both partners give the same response, place both the letters in the same box.

78. How do you rate your first information about sex?

Wholesome	Unwholesome

79. Where did you get your first information about sex?

From parent	From wholesome reading	From brother	From sister	From other relative
From other adult or teacher	From other children	From undesirable reading	From some other source	

80. Do you consider your present knowledge of sex adequate for marriage?

Yes	No	Doubtful

81. Do you feel that your spouse is over-modest and shy toward sex?

Very much	A good deal	Some	Very little	Not at all

82 Do you feel that the strength of your sex interest, as compared with that of your spouse is :

Very much greater	Much greater	About the same	Much less intense	Very much less intense

83. Have you ever refused sex when your spouse desired it?

Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

84. To what degree do you generally obtain sex satisfaction with your spouse ?

Very enjoyable	Enjoyable	Tolerated	Disgusting	Very disgusting

85. To what degree do you think your spouse obtains sex satisfaction with you?

Very enjoyable	Enjoyable	Tolerated	Disgusting	Very disgusting

XII POTENTIAL CONFLICT AREAS BETWEEN SPOUSES

86. NOTES

- (1) Omit those things which have not occurred in your marriage.
- (2) Draw a circle around :
 - (a) 0, for the things that have occurred in your marriage but have not interfered with your happiness;
 - (b) 1, for the things that have made your marriage less happy than it should have been;
 - (c) 2, for the things that have done MOST to make your marriage unhappy.

+ Items 1-32 to be answered by both spouses separately

ITEM NC.	ITEMS	YES, BUT HAS NOT INTER= FERED WITH MY HAPPINESS		HAS MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD BE		HAS DONE MUCH TO MAKE MY MAR= RIAGE UNHAPPY	
		Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies	Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies	Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies
1.	Insufficient income	0	0	1	1	2	2
2.	Poor management of income	0	0	1	1	2	2
3.	Lack of freedom due to marriage	0	0	1	1	2	2
4.	Wife/Husband much older than I am	0	0	1	1	2	2
5.	Wife/Husband much younger than I am	0	0	1	1	2	2
6.	Matters relating to in= laws	0	0	1	1	2	2
<u>MY WIFE/HUSBAND AND I DIFFER</u>							
<u>IN</u>							
7.	Education	0	0	1	1	2	2
8.	Intellectual interests	0	0	1	1	2	2
9.	Religious beliefs	0	0	1	1	2	2
10.	Choice of friends	0	0	1	1	2	2
11.	Preferences for amuse= ments and recreations	0	0	1	1	2	2
12.	Attitude toward drinking	0	0	1	1	2	2
13.	Tastes in food	0	0	1	1	2	2
14.	Respect for customs	0	0	1	1	2	2
<u>MY WIFE/HUSBAND</u>							
15.	Is argumentative ("Has a big mouth")	0	0	1	1	2	2
16.	Is not affectionate	0	0	1	1	2	2
17.	Is narrow-minded	0	0	1	1	2	2
18.	Is not faithful to me	0	0	1	1	2	2
19.	Complains too much	0	0	1	1	2	2
20.	Is lazy	0	0	1	1	2	2
21.	Is quick-tempered	0	0	1	1	2	2
22.	Criticises me	0	0	1	1	2	2

ITEM NO.	ITEMS	YES, BUT HAS NOT INTERFERED WITH MY HAPPINESS		HAS MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD BE		HAS DONE MUCH TO MAKE MY MARRIAGE UNHAPPY	
		Wife's Replies	Husband's Replies	Wife's Replies	Husband's Replies	Wife's Replies	Husband's Replies
23.	Spoils the children	0	0	1	1	2	2
24.	Is untruthful	0	0	1	1	2	2
25.	Is boastful	0	0	1	1	2	2
26.	Is easily influenced by others	0	0	1	1	2	2
27.	Is jealous	0	0	1	1	2	2
28.	Is selfish and inconsiderate	0	0	1	1	2	2
29.	Is too talkative	0	0	1	1	2	2
30.	Smokes	0	0	1	1	2	2
31.	Swears	0	0	1	1	2	2
32.	Is nervous or impatient	0	0	1	1	2	2
+ Items 33-52 to be answered by wife only							
<u>MY HUSBAND</u>							
33.	Pays attention to other women	0		1		2	
34.	Takes no interest in the children	0		1		2	
35.	Is untidy	0		1		2	
36.	Is always wrapped up in his job/business	0		1		2	
37.	Gambles	0		1		2	
38.	Is touchy and irritable	0		1		2	
39.	Is not interested in the home	0		1		2	
40.	Has vulgar habits	0		1		2	
41.	Dislikes to go out with me in the evenings	0		1		2	
42.	Is late to meals	0		1		2	
43.	Is harsh with the children	0		1		2	
44.	Has poor table manners	0		1		2	
45.	Lacks ambition	0		1		2	
46.	Is tight with money	0		1		2	

ITEM NC.	ITEMS	YES, BUT HAS NOT INTER= FERED WITH MY HAPPINESS		HAS MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD BE		HAS DONE MUCH TO MAKE MY MAR= RIAGE UNHAPPY	
		Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies	Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies	Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies
47.	Has no backbone	0		1		2	
48.	Does not talk things over freely	0		1		2	
49.	Is rude	0		1		2	
50.	Is unsuccessful in his job/business	0		1		2	
51.	Does not show his affection for me	0		1		2	
52.	Is bored if I tell him of the things that happen in my every= day life	0		1		2	
+Items 53-75 to be answered by husband only							
<u>MY WIFE</u>							
53.	Pays attention other men		0		1		2
54.	Neglects the children		0		1		2
55.	Is a poor house= keeper		0		1		2
56.	Is not interested in my job/business		0		1		2
57.	Is extravagant		0		1		2
58.	Lets her feelings be hurt too easily		0		1		2
59.	Is too interested in social affairs		0		1		2
60.	Has annoying habits and mannerisms		0		1		2
61.	Wants to visit or entertain a lot		0		1		2
62.	Does not have meals ready on time		0		1		2
63.	Interferes if I dis= cipline the children		0		1		2
64.	Tries to improve me		0		1		2
65.	Is a social climber		0		1		2
66.	Is too interested in clothes		0		1		2

ITEM NO.	ITEM	YES, BUT HAS NOT INTER= FERED WITH MY HAPPINESS		HAS MADE MY MARRIAGE LESS HAPPY THAN IT SHOULD BE		HAS DONE MUCH TO MAKE MY MAR= RIAGE UNHAPPY	
		Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies	Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies	Wife's Replies	Hus= band's Replies
67	Is insincere		0		1		2
68.	Gossips indiscreetly		0		1		2
69.	Nags me		0		1		2
70.	Interferes with my hobbies		0		1		2
71.	Is fussy about keep= ing house neat		0		1		2
72.	Is a poor cook		0		1		2
73.	Is untidy in appearance		0		1		2
74.	Has had much poor health		0		1		2
75.	"Pokes her nose" in my business		0		1		2