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BOWEN, GARY LEE

SEX-ROLE PREFERENCES AND MARITAL QUALITY IN THE MILITARY

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

PH.D. 1981

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SEX-ROLE PREFERENCES AND MARITAL QUALITY
IN THE MILITARY

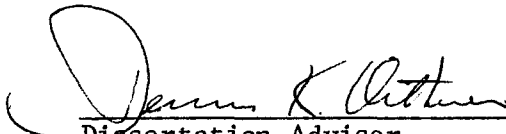
by

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

Greensboro
1981

Approved by


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APPROVAL PAGE

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

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Date of Acceptance by Committee

February 02, 1981
Date of Final Oral Examination

BOWEN, GARY LEE. Sex-Role Preferences and Marital Quality in the Military. (1981) Directed by: Dr. Dennis K. Orthner. Pp. 126.

The purpose of this study was to examine the sex-role preference patterns of military husbands and wives and to assess how these preferences are related to the quality of the couple's relationship. To accomplish this aim, a fourfold typology of sex-role preference patterns was constructed, and a scale was developed to assess the quality of the marital relationship. The marital quality scale developed was designed to be used as an overall index of marital quality, as well as to be divided into five subscales--affectional expression, marital leisure agreement, general marital consensus, marital satisfaction, and communication apprehension--to permit a more detailed analysis of the marital relationship. An eclectic version of social exchange theory was used as the overarching theoretical orientation in the study, and testable hypotheses were derived from the framework for empirical analysis.

The data for the study were collected from personal interviews with a probability sample of 331 couples (662 persons) on nine United States and seven European bases. The sample was stratified to proportionately represent the families in different geographical locations and command responsibilities. Nearly 70 percent of the couples contacted agreed to participate.

The results of the study documented the importance of sex-role preference patterns as an explanatory variable in marital research. Not only were significant differences obtained between marital types on the overall marital quality scale, but on three of its five subscales as well--affectional expression, general marital consensus, and marital satisfaction. As hypothesized, the couples reporting the lowest marital quality were those in which the husband was traditional and the wife was modern. Moreover, the findings supported the independence of the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and marital quality. When the variance due to family social standing, family life cycle, and wife employment pattern was held constant in three separate two-way analysis of variance comparisons, the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality remained strong and significant.

The results from the study were discussed in the context of past research which failed to find a significant relationship between sex-role preferences and marital quality. Implications of the findings for clinical practice and programming were offered, and suggestions were made for future research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful appreciation is expressed to the many people who were instrumental in the completion of this research project. Special thanks go to Dr. Dennis Orthner for his valuable assistance and guidance as committee chairman. Dr. Orthner's own dedication to the fostering of family life through empirical study was an inspiration to the author throughout the course of his graduate study. Appreciation is also expressed to Dr. Rebecca Smith, Dr. E. M. Rallings, and Dr. Tom Draper for their encouragement, stimulating comments, and constructive suggestions.

Gratitude is expressed to the Office of Chief of Chaplains, United States Air Force, for their support in this research effort. The data for this study were collected by Family Research and Analysis, Inc., under USAF Contract F33600-79-C-0423. Also, the author is indebted to the families who gave generously of their time and interest in answering questions regarding military family life. Their concern with the quality of family life in the military made the effort even more worthwhile.

Finally, the author expresses the deepest love and appreciation to his wife, Donna; his parents, Lynwood and Augusta Bowen; his maternal grandmother, Jessie Lee Whitlow; his parents-in-law, Leonard and Temple Green; and his two children, Christopher and Natalie, for their patience, consistent encouragement, and support during the entire course of his graduate study.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Family life throughout the United States is changing and the military services are no exception. Once the bastion of single men, the military has emerged as an institution with many families attached to it. Military members with families now comprise more than half of the total forces of the Army, Navy, and Air Force--and their numbers are increasing (Carr, Orthner, & Brown, 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; Orthner & Nelson, 1980).

The dramatic rise in the number of married individuals in the armed forces has also been accompanied by a pronounced shift in the internal structure of military marriage. In the military community, as in the civilian society, the role relationships and protocol between the sexes are being redefined (Goldman, 1973; McCubbin, Marsden, Durning, & Hunter, 1978). No longer do many of these families fit into the traditional mold of military husband, dependent homemaker wife, and children (Carr et al., 1980). There is an increasing number of marriages in which the partners, especially wives, are breaking away from the bonds of military traditions and stereotypical role patterns (McCubbin et al., 1978). The trend is toward a convergence on new, more egalitarian sex-role patterns (Carr et al., 1980; Finlayson, 1976; McCubbin et al., 1978; Stanton, 1976; Stoddard, 1978; Worthington, 1977).

In spite of general agreement that sex-role preferences are changing, little is actually known about the consequences of this change for the institution of marriage. This is true not only in the military sector, but in the civilian sector as well. This study attempted to fill this void by investigating the relationships between the sex-role preference patterns of military husbands and wives and marital quality. Given the changing profile of military families, it is no longer reasonable to assume that all families can be held together by traditional expectations, strictly delegated family roles, and lack of marital sociability (Orthner & Bowen, 1980). Since relationships today are increasingly being built upon mutual affection and intimate association instead of instrumental roles (Mace, 1979; Orthner, 1981), the quality of the marital relationship now becomes a critical issue (Lewis & Spanier, 1979).

Recently, there has been an upsurge of interest among military leaders in family issues. This interest parallels the growing recognition of the interdependency between military effectiveness and family functioning (Bennett, Chandler, Duffy, Hickman, Johnson, Lolly, Norbo, Omps, Popsin, Seeberg, & Wubbena, 1974; Carr et al., 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; Janowitz, 1960; McCubbin et al., 1978; Stanton, 1976). It is now recognized that the extent to which people are satisfied with their family life is reflected in their job performance and ultimately tied to the decision to stay in the military.¹ Given the importance of the family's role in the military mission, it is imperative that military leaders and policy-makers have a clear understanding of the factors that influence marital quality, an

important index and determinant of family functioning and family stability (Dean & Lucas, 1974; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Locke, 1951; Scanzoni, 1975a; Spanier, 1976, Spanier & Cole, 1976; Spanier, Lewis, & Cole, 1975). Only then can traditional military assumptions concerning families be revised and sound policies and programs designed that meet the needs of military families and which support the mission requirements of the military. The present study is but an intermediate step in this process.

Purpose of the Study

The search for correlates of marital quality has been a pervasive interest in the field of family sociology.² Despite the plethora of studies that have been done with this concept in the civilian sector (see Hicks & Platt, 1971; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Spanier & Lewis, 1980 for evaluative reviews of research in this area), family investigators are still uncertain as to the significance of the variables operating within a marriage that contribute to a high quality relationship (Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Spanier, 1972; Spanier & Cole, 1976). Nowhere is this more true than in studies of marital quality in the military (Croan, Katz, Fischer, Smith-Osborne & Dutton, 1980; McCubbin & Dahl, 1974).³ The purpose of this study was to examine the sex-role preference patterns of Air Force husbands and wives and to assess how these preferences are related to the quality of the couple's relationship, i.e., do spouses with congruent sex-role preferences (e.g., both traditionally oriented) perceive a higher quality marriage than

husbands and wives with incongruent sex-role preferences (e.g., husband modern, wife traditional)? What influence does the particular pattern of sex-role preference congruency/incongruency have on the couple's level of marital quality? By seeking answers to these questions, this study's goal was to provide a firmer picture of the interactional patterns of family life which lead to a high or low quality marriage. The findings of this investigation are considered critical not only theoretically, but as a matter of policy as well.

Previous Research

Research investigating the quality of the marital relationship has generally not taken into consideration the factor of spousal sex-role preferences. Until recently, the study of the family has almost exclusively stressed the rigidity, inflexibility, and fixed nature of sex roles determined by sex (Mandle, 1979; Scanzoni, 1979d). Since there was presumed to be little variation in the sex-role preferences of men and women, there was little reason to include these preferences in studies of marital quality. However, in light of the recent evidence documenting the trend toward increasing variation in the sex-role preferences of men and women (Mason, Czajka, & Arber, 1976; McCubbin et al., 1978; Orthner, 1980; Paralius, 1975; Sexton, 1979; to name but a few studies), they now become potentially an important explanatory variable in marital research (Scanzoni, 1972, 1975a). Berry (1979), for instance, concluded that "sex roles, which lie at the heart of all social life, are a subject neither scientists nor policy-makers can continue to ignore" (p. 2).

While the changing nature and importance of sex-role preferences to sociological analysis may be recognized in a general way, the relationship between the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives and marital quality has not been well explored.⁴ Only two studies were located that had examined this relationship. Both utilized civilian populations in their respective sample designs.

Scanzoni (1975a) in an investigation of sex roles, economic factors, and marital solidarity in black and white marriages, concluded that the respective sex-role preferences of husbands and wives had little direct effect on their level of reported marital satisfaction. He did suggest, however, that sex-role preferences may be indirectly linked to marital satisfactions via education and related socioeconomic indicators. He concluded the following:

Persons who are better educated tend to be more economically and maritally satisfied and to experience greater marital stability. They also tend to maintain more egalitarian or less traditional role structures. In other words, it appears that education and role structures supply part of the structural context within which ongoing processes of exchange occur between husbands and wives. That is, as husbands and wives exchange economic and socioeconomic benefits, they do so within a context of marital role expectations regarding particular life-styles. These include the wife's autonomy both in and out of the home, as well as the traditional centrality of male interests, and so forth. (Scanzoni, 1975a, p. 143)

These findings suggest the potential importance of controlling for social status variables in the future analysis of this relationship.

In a more recent study, Snyder (1979) found the role orientation of spouses to have little impact on either their evaluations of global marital distress or marital adjustment. Neither relationship was statistically significant ($p > .01$). In concluding, Snyder recommended

that additional research be conducted to test this relationship in different settings and with different populations.

There were several important gaps in these studies. First, the unit of analysis in these studies was the individual spouse, not the couple. Despite the fact that information was gathered from both spouses in each of the studies reviewed, no effort was made to transform the data to reflect the pair qua unit. This disparity may have led to incorrect conclusions, especially since the intent was to draw inferences and to make conclusions about the marital unit itself. This criticism is especially pertinent in respect to the independent variable--sex-role preferences. Since the realization of Actor's preferences depends on the simultaneous reaction of others to these preferences, the study of sex-role preferences in marriage should reflect the interdependency of the relationship between husband and wife (Blalock & Wilken, 1979). In sum, only when the couple is the unit of analysis can valid and reliable inferences be drawn about the marriage. This requires not only obtaining the perceptions of both spouses toward the variables of interest, but analyzing these data to reflect the couple as a joint reality.

Second, neither Scanzoni nor Snyder adequately controlled for or specified the potential effects of confounding variables on the relationship between sex-role preferences and marital quality. Although Scanzoni did recognize the covariation between indicators of social status, marital satisfaction, and the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives, he failed to specify the exact nature of this relationship. This left many important questions unanswered, e.g., is the

relationship between sex-role preferences and marital quality more pronounced for higher-status couples than for couples with lower social status? Future studies that examine this relationship should recognize and test for the potential effects of variables that may have a suppressor effect or create spuriousness in the relationship between sex-role preferences and marital quality.

Finally, the dependent measure of marital quality in the investigations by both Scanzoni and Snyder failed to reflect the multifaceted nature of the marital relationship. By limiting themselves to narrow dimensions of the marriage (e.g., marital satisfaction), neither study had the potential to capture the complexity that may exist in the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. For instance, although the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives may not have an effect on marital satisfaction per se, they may have a substantial impact on another component of the relationship, e.g., marital consensus. More comprehensive, multidimensional measures of the marital relationship are required in future studies that allow for the simultaneous assessment of a broad range of dimensions in marriage.

Plan of Analysis

This study proposed to fill in some of the gaps that have been characteristic of past research investigating the relationship between the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives and marital quality. First, the unit of analysis in this study is the married couple. Even though both sex-role preferences and marital quality are at the core

of individual assessment, it is logically possible and theoretically meaningful to construct valid measures that reflect the pair qua unit (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980; Spanier & Cole, 1976). By recognizing that the couple is a reality quite apart from the individuals that comprise it, the investigator is able to make inferences and draw conclusions to the couple per se. Numerous social scientists have stressed the importance of this approach (Cartwright, 1979; Durkheim, 1938; Hodgson & Lewis, 1979; Hunt, 1978; Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980; Schram, 1979; Spanier, 1972, 1973, 1976; Spanier & Cole, 1976). As Straus (1977) concluded, for instance, "the heart of sociological analysis is the interpretation of social processes, purposive acts, and the structure of relationships which emerge from these interactions" (p. 9).

The second addition that this study makes to the earlier research (i.e., Scanzoni, 1975a; Snyder, 1979) is to test for the potential impact that three key sociological variables have on the relationship between sex-role preferences and marital quality. These variables are the following: (1) family social standing; (2) family life cycle; and (3) pattern of wife employment. These variables in the analysis were selected because of their consistent identification in the research literature with the two main variables in the analysis: sex-role preferences and marital quality. For example, the pattern of wife employment (e.g., unemployed, employed part-time, employed full-time) has been correlated with both preferences toward sex roles (e.g., Mason et al., 1976; Scanzoni, 1979d; Scanzoni, 1980; Thornton & Freedman, 1977), and the qualitative aspects of the marital relationship

(e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Hoffman & Nye, 1974; Locksley, 1980; Orden & Bradburn, 1969). The inclusion of these variables in the analysis should enable the investigator to better decipher and understand the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and their perceptions of the quality of the marital relationship.

Third, the dependent variable used in the present analysis is marital quality, an umbrella-like term that reflects the complexity of examining the qualitative aspects of the marital relationship. The term, marital quality, encompasses five aspects of the marital relationship consistently demonstrated to be associated with the qualitative evaluation of marriage at the empirical level: marital companionship, affectional expression, marital consensus, communication apprehension, and marital satisfaction. Since each of these dimensions is a separate subscale that comprises the overall measure of marital quality, the investigator can present a more detailed analysis of the relationship under investigation.

The investigator, however, will go beyond the standard procedure of presenting the scale and its components and their respective reliability and validity. Although the marital quality scale will be defined and operationalized as reflecting these five dimensions in the following section, a final working definition, designed to assess the presence of the suggested components, will be determined by factor analysis, and presented in Chapter III.

Finally, the last addition that this study makes to earlier research is to extend the analysis of the relationship between

sex-role preferences and marital quality to the military community. The present investigation utilized a probability sample of Air Force couples on 16 different bases in the continental United States and Europe. Numerous investigators (Burr, Hill, Nye, & Reiss, 1979; Christensen, 1964; Hill, 1976) have stressed the importance of increasing the generalizability of existing findings.

Concept of Marital Quality

The study of the quality of marital relationships has a history dating back to Hamilton's (1929) classic study of marital adjustment. Since that time, numerous attempts have been made to conceptualize and assess the quality of the marital union. A variety of terms have been promulgated in the process, the most common being "marital satisfaction," "marital happiness," "marital success," "marital adjustment," and "marital stability." While these concepts all represent qualitative dimensions and evaluations of the marital relationship (Lewis & Spanier, 1979), there is a great deal of ambiguity and often overlap in the way these concepts are defined, as well as in the scales designed to measure them (Burr, 1973; Croake & Lyon, 1978; Edmonds, Withers, & Dibastista, 1972; Hicks & Platt, 1971; Laws, 1971; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Lively, 1969; Spanier, 1972, 1976). Table 1 presents some of the more common terms and definitions that have been developed and published over the years.⁵ A cursory examination of these definitions indicates the overlap among them even though the same term may be the object of definition (e.g., marital adjustment). Consequently, past family researchers may have been using

Table 1

Terms and Definitions Used to Describe the Quality
of Marital Relationships: Selected Studies
From 1929 to 1979

Study	Term	Definition
Hamilton (1929)	Marital Adjustment	No definition.
Cottrell (1933)	Marital Adjustment	"... a process in which marriage partners attempt to re-enact certain relational systems or situations which were obtained in their own earlier family groups."
Terman (1938)	Marital Happiness	"... subjective rating of the happiness in the marriage."
Locke and Williamson (1958)	Marital Adjustment	"... the presence of such characteristics in a marriage as a tendency to avoid or resolve conflict, a feeling of satisfaction with the marriage and with each other, the sharing of common interests and activities, and the fulfilling of the marital expectations of the husband and wife. "... an adaptation between husband and wife to a point where there is companionship, agreement on basic values, affectional intimacy, accommodation, euphoria, and certain other unidentified factors."

Table 1 (Continued)

Study	Term	Definition
Locke and Wallace (1959)	Marital Adjustment	"... accommodation of a husband and wife to each other at a given time."
Orden and Bradburn (1968)	Marital Happiness	"... a resultant of two independent dimensions, a dimension of satisfactions and a dimension of tensions.... Satisfactions are positively related to marriage happiness, and tensions are negatively related to marriage happiness. Tensions and satisfactions are, however, virtually independent of each other."
Renne (1970)	Marital Satisfaction	"... expressed satisfaction among people presently married."
Burr (1970, 1973)	Marital Satisfaction	"... a subjective condition in which an individual experiences a certain degree of attainment of a goal or desire."
Burr (1973)	Marital Stability	"... the continued existence versus the termination of marriage."
Burgess, Locke, and Thomas (1971) (also 1948, 1950, 1973)	Marital Adjustment	"... a union in which the husband and wife are in agreement on the chief issues in marriage They are in harmony."
Miller (1976)	Marital Satisfaction	"... an internal, subjective feeling state which is evaluative of a marriage."

Table 1 (Continued)

Study	Term	Definition
Gilford and Bengtson (1979)	Marital Satisfaction	"... (the) spouses' evaluation of their relationship on two general dimensions: positive interaction and negative sentiment."

identical terms for what were very different constructs, the result being that these constructs had very different connotations to the persons who were the focus of study (Gilford & Bengtson, 1979). Not only does this lead to confusion with regard to the operationalization and measurement of these concepts (Spanier & Cole, 1976), but restricts the comparability and generalizability of results as well (Gilford & Bengtson, 1979). Given the conceptual morass surrounding the concepts used to describe the quality of the marital relationship, it is not surprising that marriage and family texts have been so reluctant to define what any of these terms mean (Spanier & Cole, 1976).

Because of the ambiguity and confusion that have resulted from past definition and use of these concepts, some social scientists have suggested that terms such as marital adjustment, satisfaction, and happiness be abandoned in the literature (Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Lively, 1969; Spanier & Cole, 1976). Lively (1969), for instance, argued that "the dangers of semantic distortion resulting from such terms . . . may be sufficient to justify their elimination from the

literature" (p. 108). Despite this advice, however, a plethora of studies have continued to be published using the entire range of marital terms characteristic of past research (e.g., Albrecht, 1979; Cole, Cole, & Dean, 1980; Hudson & Murphy, 1980; Jeries, 1979; Locksley, 1980; Szinovacz, 1979; Wachowick & Bragg, 1980). Thus, although it is possible to argue against the continued use of these terms, it is likely from a pragmatic standpoint that some researchers will continue to employ them as dependent measures in marital research.

Several investigators, however, have advocated for the development of a more "inclusive concept" which encompasses the entire range of marital terms (i.e., marital "satisfaction," "happiness," "adjustment," and so forth) currently used in marital research (Bowerman, 1964; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Spanier & Cole, 1976). Spanier and Cole (1976), for instance, have argued persuasively that such a perspective would allow the focus of concern to return from the conceptual dungeon of debating the distinctions between the old concepts to its proper place--namely, the functioning of the marital dyad. Drawing a similar conclusion to that of Spanier and Cole (1976), David Klein (cited in Spanier & Cole, 1976) was the first to propose the concept "marital quality" as an alternative concept to those traditionally employed in marital research. This is the term that will serve as the dependent concept in the present study. Although it is not argued that the use of this term is a panacea for the definitional and measurement problems that exist in this area of research, it is argued that its utilization offers a potentially valid approach for empirically assessing the qualitative dimensions of the marital relationship.

Following the lead of Lewis and Spanier (1979), marital quality is defined for purposes of this study as:

A process which at any point in time represents the subjective evaluation of a couple's relationship. The range of evaluations constitutes a continuum reflecting numerous characteristics of marital interaction and marital functioning. High marital quality, therefore, is associated with a high level of marital companionship, affectional expression, marital consensus, and marital satisfaction, and a low degree of communication apprehension. (p. 269)

Several points pertinent to the above definition of marital quality require elaboration. First, marital quality is conceptualized as a multidimensional concept which incorporates five qualitative and evaluative dimensions of the marital relationship. These components are all thought to be key criteria which influence the qualitative evaluation of marital quality. Although neither mutually exclusive nor collectively exhaustive (Lewis & Spanier, 1979), these components have been consistently demonstrated to be highly correlated with the quality of the marital relationship at an empirical level (Hicks & Platt, 1970; Lewis & Spanier, 1979). Thus, it is assumed that findings on the dimensionality of any one of these components bear on the dimensionality of marital quality.

Second, the definition of marital quality conceptualizes the marriage as a joint reality. Thus, the concern is with the marital dyad as a functioning group rather than individual adjustment to marriage.

Furthermore, this definition does not convey a fixed picture of nominal categories. Rather, marital quality exists on a continuum ranging from "high" to "low." Placement on the continuum in turn represents a composite picture that incorporates many criteria.

Lastly, the definition of marital quality proposed in this study acknowledges marital quality as a process involving constant metamorphosis. Although this idea is accepted, it is assumed that marital quality can be evaluated at a given point in time. Thus, consistent with this point of view, marital quality is considered to be a qualitative dimension which can be evaluated at any point on a continuum ranging from "high quality" to "low quality."

In this study, the operational definition of a high quality marriage is one wherein the couple has a low score on the five components of the marital quality scale. A low score here defines a marriage characterized by a high level of marital companionship, affectional expression, marital consensus, marital satisfaction, and low degree of communication apprehension. On the other hand, a low quality marriage is one wherein the couple has a high score on the five components of the marital quality scale. This operational definition of the dependent measure is clearly consistent with the proposed definition of marital quality.

Concept of Sex-Role Preferences

Historically, the concept of sex roles has received little attention by sociologists (Scanzoni & Fox, 1980; Tomeh, 1978). Few articles were devoted to the topic in the empirical literature, and the area itself was considered a minor one in the specific area of family studies and in the larger realm of social and behavioral science. In contrast, the decade of the seventies has witnessed a virtual explosion of sex-role studies (Scanzoni & Fox, 1980). The increasing

attention accorded by sociologists to the study of sex roles has been largely a response to two events: the revival of feminism, and the declining influence of "functionalism" throughout sociology (Scanzoni, 1979d). The concurrence of these two events was not necessarily independent.

Prior to the seventies, functionalism reigned as the dominant theoretical base for sex-role research (McDonald, 1978). Within this perspective the differentiation of male and female roles in society (and in the family, in particular) was viewed as normative and essential for adequate personality development, proper sex-role identification, and the maintenance of group or social stability (e.g., Parsons & Bales, 1955; Pitts, 1964; Spiegel, 1968). Since sex-role differentiation was seen as prescribed by social norms and of great importance, sex roles were simply not viewed as an issue. In other words, both men and women knew their places and roles were assigned without ambiguity. Since there was little variation in male-female roles, it made little sense to introduce this variable into social science models. As Collins (1975) concluded:

The sociology of the family . . . has been the bastion of functionalism, framing its analysis against an ideal system in which men, women, and children all nicely fit in their places. (p. 225)

Although it is likely that the functionalist conception of sex roles merely mirrored the existing arrangement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the fatal flaw of this perspective was to freeze this arrangement and to assume that because it was normative (or functional), it must continue to be there (Scanzoni, 1979a).

Given the recent revival of feminism and the increasing salience of sex-role issues, however, the functionalist perspective has become less relevant as a theoretical base for sex-role research, and thus, has fallen into disrepute. In essence, it is just not capable of capturing or explaining the changing role relationships between the sexes or answering the kinds of questions raised by these changes. As a consequence, other theoretical perspectives (e.g., exchange theory, conflict theory) have been introduced (or better said, reintroduced) which are more compatible with contemporary views of social organization. Stimulated by the relevancy of sex-role issues in social science today, these theoretical developments have led to an increasing concern with the concept of sex roles as a critical notion in family studies. In sum, it is these two changes--the revival of feminism and the decline of functionalist thinking--that help account for the present centrality of sex roles as a concept in social science and the recent proliferation of sex-role studies.

The broad concept of sex roles has been studied in at least three main senses in sociology (Scanzoni & Fox, 1980; Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). The first applies to the macrolevel of analysis, and has been described by Hochschild (1973) as the "politics of caste perspective" (p. 251). Others have described this same construct as "gender differentiation" (Collins, 1971, 1975; Holter, 1970; Jaggar & Struhl, 1978) or as "sex stratification" (Nielsen, 1978, p. 10). The essential idea behind this construct is that men enjoy greater rewards, power, and resource differentials than women simply because of their gender. The result is strata which are seen as the basis of

exploitation of the lower class (females) by the high class (males) (Hochschild, 1973; Lipman-Blumen, 1976). Thus, the key focus of this perspective is on power, its distribution, and use. Consequently, analogies are often drawn from this perspective paralleling the plight of women with blacks and other disadvantaged minorities.

The second and most common perspective in the field of sex roles may be described as the division of labor by sex (Hochschild, 1973). This perspective is closely akin to role theory (Biddle & Thomas, 1966), and tends to focus on such concepts as socialization (Ihinger-Tallman, 1979), identification (Lynn, 1969), role conflict (Marks, 1974; Sieber, 1975), and role differentiation (Lipman-Blumen, 1976; Mandle, 1979). Most of the studies from this perspective are concerned with the role differentiation of men and women in the home and in the economy and the norms which govern the division of labor by sex.

The third sense in which the concept of sex roles is used is what Holter (1970) calls sex-role preferences or sex-role norms. For purposes of this study, these terms are used interchangeably. This is the perspective that will be taken in the present study.⁶ From this perspective, sex roles are defined as essentially "sets of preferences, rewards, tastes, and goals that an individual learns because he or she happens to be either male or female" (Scanzoni, 1978, p. 6). Although learned from parents and significant others in childhood and adolescence, they are not conceptualized as fixed in any functional sense; they are variables, and thus, may change in response to a variety of family and extra-familial influences (Scanzoni, 1978;

Scanzoni & Fox, 1980). These variables indicate the degree to which men and women prefer or desire the sets of rewards and costs that flow from current patterns of gender stratification and division of labor in a society (Scanzoni & Fox, 1980). Thus, following Holter (1970), and the empirical work of Scanzoni (1975a, 1975b, 1978), sex roles are defined for purposes of this study as:

Clusters of preferences regarding certain rewards and costs for persons who happen to be female and clusters of preferences regarding certain rewards and costs for persons who happen to be male. (Scanzoni, 1978, p. 6)

These preferences are conceptualized to lie on a continuum with some men and women preferring a high degree of interchangeability and lack of clear-cut role definitions. Persons at this end of the continuum reject the traditional division of family duties based on sex, and believe that men and women should have equal access to the rewards of occupational participation. For purposes of this study, persons at this end of the sex-role preference continuum are labeled "modern" (Scanzoni, 1978).

The opposite end of the continuum reflects "traditional" sex-role preferences. (No value judgments are intended by these labels.) Persons with traditional orientations toward sex roles indicate a preference for the continued role differentiation between husbands and wives, with occupational and household duties being ascribed chiefly on the basis of sex (Scanzoni, 1978).

Based on the modern-traditional continuum it is suggested that contemporary marriages can be divided into at least four alternative types: husband and wife each modern (MM); husband as modern and wife

as traditional (MT); husband as traditional and wife as modern (TM); and husband and wife each traditional (TT). Whereas MM and TT couples agree on sex-role preferences, MT and TM couples do not. These spouses have contrasting sex-role preferences. Each of these marriage types will be described below:

MM: These marriages are characterized by a congruency in the spouses' rejection of traditional separation of family duties and a greater belief in the sharing of family responsibilities. In these marriages, the interests of the wife are as important as those of the husband and children. These interests include the right of the woman to have equal access to the rewards of a career.

MT: The key to this marital arrangement is the discrepancy in husband and wife sex-role preferences. In these marriages, the husband recognizes the rights of his wife to pursue her own interests and his joint responsibility for household obligations. Wives in these arrangements, however, see their own interests as being subordinate to the interests of their family, the husband, in particular. They see their husbands as head of the household and consider themselves primarily responsible for the household and children.

TM: Although similar to the foregoing type of relationship in terms of sex-role pattern discrepancy, these marriages reflect the reverse situation in which the wife is modern and the husband is not. Wives in these relationships value their right to pursue self-interests and to relegate equal

responsibility to the husband for household and childcare responsibilities. Husbands, however, feel that their interests should have first priority, superseding any conflicting interests that the wife or children may have. In addition, they are likely to reject household and childcare responsibilities even when time permits.

TT: These marriages are analogous to what Scanzoni (1979a) referred to as a "fully structured" or "spontaneous consensus" situation (p. 305). In other words, there exists a "consensus" on the respective interests of husband and wife. At the top of this hierarchy is the husband's job for he is seen as the primary family provider. On the other hand, wives are considered primarily responsible for household and children. Although the wives may have their own interests, they are subordinated to the needs and interests of the husband, and oftentimes to the children as well. Husbands in these families are regarded as heads of the households, and the wives are less influential in making decisions.

This framework provides a convenient conceptual tool for comparing and contrasting traditional forms of marriage with new emerging ones. It has a distinct advantage of allowing the researcher to move beyond the description of the marital relationship using a single continuum (Rubin, Hill, Peplan, Dunkel-Schetter, 1980; Snyder, 1979) to provide a more complex picture of these systems. By carefully delineating a conceptual area, the typology fulfills a fundamental role in science (Fitzpatrick, 1979; Olson, Sprenkel, & Russell, 1979).

Operationally, the preference toward sex roles for each spouse is determined by an index of eleven items selected from the sex-role instruments of Scanzoni (1975b) and Tomeh (1978). This index measures the sex-role preferences of each respective spouse in terms of the norms that structure them. On the basis of their score on this index, it is possible to conclude that persons are to a greater or lesser degree traditional in their sex-role preferences. Spouses who scored above the median for their respective gender group were assigned to the "traditional" group; those who scored below the median were assigned to the "modern" group. Four separate groups resulted from this procedure--husband modern, husband traditional, wife modern, wife traditional. Spouses were then paired together to result in the fourfold classification scheme of marriage types defined above. Although essentially an operational approach to classification, the resulting typology does require the a priori schema on which to base a typology.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations of the study were recognized. First, the independent and dependent variables in this study defy simple conceptualization and measurement. There exists no consensus among family sociologists as to definition or operationalization of either concept, and it would be overly optimistic to expect this study to be an exception to the rule.

Second, this study fails to control empirically for social desirability or the conventionality of response. This problem has

been noted, particularly in research on marital quality (Edmonds, 1967; Edmonds, Withers, & Disbastista, 1972; Snyder, 1979). Recent evidence and critiques, however, have suggested that this issue may have been overexaggerated (Clayton, 1975; Dean & Lucas, 1974, 1978; Spanier, 1976). Dean and Lucas (1978), for instance, found controlling for social desirability via partial correlation techniques had little effect on the correlations between communication and marital adjustment. Although the issue of conventionalization is far from settled, this investigator does recognize the potentially confounding influence that it may have on the valid measurement of the major variables in this analysis, especially marital quality.

Third, some variables likely to have a suppressor effect or produce spuriousness in the relationship between the independent and dependent variable may not be included in this analysis. Therefore, all causal influences from the data should be recognized as tentative and open to further study.

Lastly, this study being cross-sectional can only provide estimates of the impact of sex-role preferences on marital quality at one point in time. Given that both the sex-role preference patterns and marital quality of couples are in ever-changing process, it is important for future research to test this relationship longitudinally. Moreover, longitudinal analysis will allow the investigator to control better for the possibility of cohort effects, probably the most severe limitation of using cross-sectional data (Spanier, Lewis, & Cole, 1975).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research on the Military Family in
Historical Perspective

For years, research on the military family has been relegated to the backwaters of social science investigation (Farish, Baker, & Robertson, 1976; McCubbin, Dahl, & Hunter, 1976; Moskos, 1976). Possibly one reason for the neglect of the family in prior research efforts has been the relatively small percentage of married personnel in past years. As recently as 1953, for instance, the marriage rate for military members was as low as 38 percent (Goldman, 1976). Therefore, research emphasis has been concerned historically with the single man (McCubbin et al., 1976). The significance of the military family within the military organization has been traditionally denied or of little concern to the institution (Little, 1971; McCubbin et al., 1976).

Only recently has the military family emerged as an important area of research and investigation (Farish et al., 1976; Orthner & Bowen, 1980). This change in perception parallels the rising proportion of married personnel in the total force and the growing recognition of the interdependency between military effectiveness and family functioning (Bennett et al., 1974; Carr, et al., 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; Janowitz, 1960; Little, 1971; McCubbin et al., 1976;

Stanton, 1976). It is now recognized that the extent to which people are satisfied with their family life does influence their well-being, and is reflected in their job performance and ultimately tied to the decision to stay in the military. Thus, the military family has come to be regarded as an essential component in the development of short- and long-range military policies (Little, 1971; McCubbin et al., 1978). After all, these families are now a vital part of the mission support system upon which the military depends. Therefore, the growth and implementation of research designed to help families is not only humanitarian, it is also based on the premise that what is good for military families is good for military effectiveness as well (Orthner & Bowen, 1980).

Critique of Military Family Research

In contrast to the long history of interest in theory building within the general field of family sociology (Broderick, 1971; Burr, 1973; Burr et al., 1979; Christensen, 1964), research on the military family has not been accretive. There has been minimum evidence of cumulating generalizations, and little effort directed toward theory construction (McCubbin et al., 1976). The result has been a theoretical eclecticism, leading to an accumulation of research wide in scope but shallow in depth (McCubbin et al., 1976).

Although the present status of research within the field is partially attributable to the relative novelty of military family research and the non-proliferation of reports (Farish et al., 1976), other factors are also at work. For one, the nature of research

conducted in the past has been more policy oriented than theoretically relevant. In other words, military researchers have been led to study narrowly focused policy issues defined as critical by members of the military organization rather than addressing themselves to issues of theoretical concern (Little, 1971). The result has been to set aside well-defined and theoretically based variables in favor of more obvious or unobtrusive variables which policy-makers define as influential and acceptable (McCubbin et al., 1976). As a consequence, researchers have found it difficult to build upon past research and contribute to a body of knowledge (Coates & Pellegrin, 1965). In suggesting future military family issues that may be of more theoretical concern, especially to family investigators in more academic settings, Reuben Hill (1976) concluded the following:

. . . academicians might ask of military family researchers: How do families form in the military, i.e., what is the process of marital selection to assure that the wife of a career military man fits into the system? What is the allocation of tasks and duties within the household in early marriage and after children come? How are the father's home assignments of househusbandry and child care, and his spousal responsibilities, handled during his frequent absences? What outlets are there for meeting the sex needs and companionship needs of the military wife? What styles of communication and problem-solving characterize husband-wife and father-child interactions in military families? Is there more intergenerational continuity than rejection of the military career by adolescents and young adults, as there seems to be of the paternal career in civilian families? How does satisfaction with marriage over the family life cycle among military couples compare with civilian couples? The latter appear to follow a predictable curvilinear pattern: high satisfaction in early marriage, declining over the burdened years of child rearing, and rebounding in the postparental period?

. . . Perhaps such research will suggest new services and concessions for families that will make military careers of men and women more compatible with the pressing mission of their families. (p. 15)

In sum, the inclusion of more theoretically relevant variables into the design of future military family research may encourage researchers to build more upon past research, both military and civilian. This should help lead researchers away from the theoretical eclecticism of the past toward the accumulation of a body of knowledge that lacks in neither breadth nor depth. More importantly, this is not a futile academic exercise. It should assist in the development of military policies that are theoretically derived, objectively defensible, and relevant to the needs of military families.

Before theory construction can be attempted, however, there is a need to conduct research that is theoretically based, well designed, and properly executed. Unfortunately, past military family research has been lacking on all three counts. In an excellent critique of studies dealing with families in the military system, McCubbin et al. (1976) made the following observations:

First, not only are the studies that set out to test specific hypothesis few in number, but also many start and end as broad clinical observations, studies with untested, common-sense assumptions. Second, for most studies, researchers employed samples from available local populations, samples that were not necessarily representative. Readers have thus been forced to establish generalizations based on conclusions drawn from varying types of samples. Third, many of the studies were ex post facto and, therefore, dependent upon data collected retrospectively. (p. 315)

Nowhere are these observations more pertinent than in studies of marital quality in the military. Even in the ambitious effort of Woelfel and Savell (1978) to examine critical aspects of military life and their relationship to marital satisfaction, there were severe sampling limitations and critical problems in research design.

In summary, the present state of military family research is indeterminate at best. To date, there have been far more questions posed than answered. This should not be interpreted, however, in a negative sense; it merely reflects the growing vitality of the field. It does suggest that there is presently a need for fresh inquiries which are accretive and which incorporate more sophistication into their sampling and research designs. Despite the criticisms that have been leveled against past research efforts, the importance of these studies must be underscored. By offering a provocative source for the formulation of testable hypotheses, they represent an invaluable contribution to military family research and fertile ground for eventual theory construction (McCubbin et al., 1976).

Marriage Trends in the Air Force

Historically, the majority of active-duty Air Force personnel have been unmarried, especially in the enlisted ranks (Goldman, 1976; Little, 1971). Since World War II, however, there has been a steady increase in the number of married personnel in the Air Force, as in all the military services (Carr et al., 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; Orthner & Nelson, 1980). Air Force members who are married now comprise more than two-thirds (66.3 percent) of the total force--and their numbers are increasing (Carr et al., 1980). When compared to the other branches of the armed forces--Army, Navy, Marine Corps--the Air Force is found to have the highest concentration of married personnel.

Marriage trends in the Air Force parallel those of the civilian sector of society to the extent that the marriage rate for both groups has increased since 1950 (Goldman, 1976). The rate of increase within the Air Force community, however, has exceeded that for the civilian population. Compared to the 46 percent increase in marriage rates among Air Force personnel between 1953 to 1974, the increase for the general population was more moderate--10 percent during the same time period (Goldman, 1976; Statistical Abstract, 1977).

Although the percentage of married personnel in the Air Force has risen for both officers and enlisted men since World War II, the most dramatic increase has been in the enlisted category. From 1953 to 1974, the percentage of married officers rose slightly, from 84.4 percent to 84.9 percent, while the change for the enlisted men was more significant, from 40.5 percent to 64.2 percent (Goldman, 1976). Despite the dramatic increase in marriage rates for enlisted personnel since 1953, they continue to remain well below the marriage rate for the civilian population (Goldman, 1976). This marriage rate for civilians stood at 74.8 percent in 1974 (Goldman, 1976; Statistical Abstract, 1977). The officer segment of the Air Force has traditionally had a higher concentration of married personnel within its ranks than either the enlisted category or the civilian population at large. This reflects the traditional importance of marriage to the career advancement of the officer (Goldman, 1976; Janowitz, 1960; Little, 1971).

The most conventional marriage pattern in the Air Force has been for the husband to be the only family member in service. The majority of Air Force couples today continue to fit this pattern. As of 1978, the percentage of Air Force men with a civilian wife was 58.9 percent of the total force (Carr et al., 1980). This marriage pattern is especially prevalent within the officer ranks. Among the officer husbands, 83 percent were married to civilians, while among the male enlisted personnel, 60.2 percent were married to civilians (Carr et al., 1980).

Within the past few years, however, women generally have increasingly begun to reevaluate their sex-role preferences and to seize upon the opportunities and options available to members of American society. As a consequence, women have increasingly entered the Air Force to pursue career alternatives. This trend has resulted in the emergence of new family patterns within the Air Force community. The most common alternative pattern to the conventional Air Force marriage defined above is the dual-career marriage (Carr et al., 1980; Williams, 1978). By dual career is meant a situation where both spouses are members of the military. At the present time, approximately 4.5 percent of Air Force personnel are married to other military members (Carr et al., 1980). Most common are marriages between enlisted Air Force women and enlisted Air Force men. Marriages between male officers and enlisted females are least prevalent.

Although less popular than the dual-career marriage, a second emerging alternative to the traditional military husband, civilian

wife marriage is the marriage between an Air Force wife and a civilian husband. This pattern presently accounts for slightly less than one percent of the total force in the Air Force. The highest proportion of these marriages is among women officers. Of these women, 34.6 percent are married to civilian husbands. In comparison, only 22.9 percent of the married enlisted fit this pattern (Carr et al., 1980).

In summary, the internal structure of the Air Force community is changing. Married members now predominate in both the officer and enlisted ranks and changing social patterns have created new Air Force family arrangements. Although it is expected that the conventional marriage pattern of Air Force husband and civilian wife will continue to predominate among Air Force families, it is likely that this family type will decline proportionately as the number of female Air Force personnel continues to increase (Carr et al., 1980).

Changing Role of Women in Society and the Military

The status of women has closely paralleled their position and role in the economic structure of society. According to Gough (1971), women have been subordinate to men in certain key areas of status, mobility, and public leadership from the beginning. However, before the agricultural revolution, this was largely a matter of survival based chiefly on the unalterable fact of long child care, rather than made-made cultural impositions (Gough, 1971). Reciprocity rather than domination was the norm between the sexes.

With the rise of individual and familial property, durable crafts and agriculture, accompanied by growth of class society marked by male dominance in the ruling class, women's subordination increased. It eventually reached its depth in the patriarchal families of the great agrarian states (Gough, 1971). Rather than reciprocity between the sexes, domination and exploitation became more characteristic (Gough, 1971; Humphrey, 1975; Martin & Voehies, 1975; Schlegel, 1977).

From their analysis of contemporary forms of marriage and family encountered in Western European society during the nineteenth century, Marx and Engels concluded that the bourgeois family was a degenerate institution characterized by "the enslavement of women, by infidelity, and by prostitution" (Liegle, 1975, p. 2). Engels' description was as follows:

The "modern family" is based upon the open or disguised domestic slavery of the woman In the great majority of cases today the husband must be the earner, the breadwinner of the family, at least in the propertied classes, and that gives him a dominant position which needs no special legal privilege. (Engels, 1902, p. 89)

Even more strongly, Engels likened conventional marriage to prostitution. The wife differs from the common prostitute "only in that she does not offer her body for money by the hour like a commodity, but sells it into slavery for once and all" (Engels, 1902, p. 86). In other words, to Marx and Engels the husband personified the exploiting capitalist, and the wife the oppressed proletarian (Alt & Alt, 1968).

In the last decade or two, the women's liberation movement (Adler, 1975; Huber, 1973; Stanford, 1974) has had a profound influence on the notions about what activities and roles are appropriate for men and women.⁷ Increasingly, women and men alike are coming to behave as persons rather than as males or females. This results in behavior which seems most appropriate at the time regardless of traditional expectations, duties, rights, and responsibilities. The shift is toward greater sex-role equality and flexibility.

A plethora of recent studies have documented this trend (Bayer, 1975; Duncan & Duncan, 1978; Iglehart, 1979; Mason et al., 1976; McCubbin et al., 1978; Paralius, 1975; Scanzoni, 1976, 1978, 1980; Scanzoni & Fox, 1980; Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980; Thornton & Freedman, 1978). Mason et al. (1976), for instance, concluded after examining five separate surveys between 1964 and 1974 that there had been a consistent trend toward sex-role egalitarianism in women's attitudes since the mid-1960's. More important, this change was not limited to one particular substratum of the population. In every major segment of the population, the proportion of women supporting the traditional pattern of sex-role preferences declined. More recently, Scanzoni (1978) reported further support for this trend. Using a longitudinal design, he found a noticeable shift in the sex-role preferences of women in the direction of stronger preferences for gender equality. In summarizing his findings, Scanzoni (1978) concluded that "there appears to be a general trend in American (and Western society) toward more egalitarian (less traditional) definitions of gender roles" (p. 19).

Incidentally, there is also evidence to suggest that men, too, have begun to reexamine the gender rigidities that have been characteristic of past generations (Bayer, 1975; Parelius, 1975; Scanzoni, 1976; Sexton, 1979).⁸ It is also clear though that men continue to be more traditional than women (Komarovsky, 1976; Sexton, 1979). Since the altering of traditional sex-role patterns may actually demand a loss of power and privilege for men, it is understandable why they may have less interest in departing from the normative guidelines that have circumscribed gender-role preferences in the past (Aldous, 1974; Rice, 1978; Steinman, 1974). On the other hand, it could be that men have not yet perceived the potential benefits (e.g., labor-force flexibility, higher standard of living from dual-career/dual-worker marriages, more intimate relationships between the sexes, and so forth) that modern sex-role preferences may entail (Scanzoni, 1978, 1980).

The trend toward egalitarian sex-role preferences in the United States has been accompanied by fairly drastic changes in the demographic and role profile of women. Compared to women in previous generations, women today are marrying somewhat later, delaying child-bearing within marriage, and having fewer children (Blake, 1974; Glick, 1975, 1977, 1979; McCubbin, 1977; Van Dusen & Sheldon, 1976). Moreover, more women are seeking education beyond high school, increasingly entering the labor market, and moving into more prestigious, higher paying occupations (Arnott, 1972; Giele, 1978; Hayghe, 1978; Hoffman, 1979; Reubens & Reubens, 1979; Scanzoni & Fox, 1980).

It is important to note as well that women are no longer just working solely for monetary reasons. Although salary remains important, many women today are also seeking the same intangibles that men had traditionally sought from employment--self-esteem, status, security, and so forth (Sexton, 1979; Van Dusen & Sheldon, 1976).

The military establishment has not been immune to the trend toward less traditional, more egalitarian sex roles. In fact, the major issue facing the armed forces of the United States today is sexual integration (Adams, 1980). As the recruitment base of the military has expanded to offer more diverse career options for women, women have increasingly become more fully integrated into the military system (Larwood, Glasser, & McDonald, 1980). According to the latest statistics, "there are now more than 150,000 women in the United States military--more than 7 percent of all personnel" (Adams, 1980, p. 50). Although legal restriction and societal resistance still deny women certain job assignments in the service (e.g., combat), it is without doubt that women are playing an ever expanding role in the military (Adams, 1980; Hunter & Million, 1977; McCubbin et al., 1978; Savell, Woelfel, Collins, & Bentler, 1979). Worthington (1977) summarized these findings by concluding that:

. . . the myth that female fulfillment is limited only to the role of wife, homemaker and mother is being exploded Women today are seeking jobs as military aircraft pilots, senior officers commanding all male units, and now, our nation's military academies have accepted female cadets. (p. 67)

McCubbin et al. (1978) hypothesized that the changes in the role of women within the military community will have important implications for the military system as well as for the military family:

It may be hypothesized that as women do become incorporated more fully into the military system, sex-role stereotypes will tend to erode as men and women relate to one another in a variety of superior/equal/subordinate job relationships. It may also be hypothesized that service members will begin to relate to their spouses and children in a less sex-stereotyped manner. Double standards of sexual behavior will fade, and the military itself will gradually cease to be a cult of masculinity. (p. 49)

To conclude, sex-role preferences are becoming less traditional in every major segment of the population, especially among women. Even in the most secure of male bastions, the military, role relationships and protocol between the sexes are being redefined. Although women have been historically subordinate to men, women are now beginning to crumble many of the past barriers that have traditionally denied them equal status to men. The position of women in the military offers a striking example of the changing role of women within the occupational and bureaucratic structure (Goldman, 1973). In the final analysis, these changes should have profound implications for the roles of men and women in society and the relationship between them. The effects on the family unit and the entire society are likely to be substantial (McCubbin et al., 1978).

Changing Role of the Military Wife

The military wife has not been isolated from the societal changes that have resulted in a changing concept of the role of women in society and the military. According to McCubbin et al. (1978):

. . . slowly and painfully, many of today's military family members, especially wives, are breaking away from the bonds of military traditions and stereotyped sex roles to develop themselves more according to their own wishes and abilities. (p. 49)

In other words, they are less willing than in the past to subordinate their individual needs and desires for the "good of service" and the needs of their spouses' military careers (Hill, 1976). Not only is the dual-career marriage becoming more commonplace (Carr et al., 1980; Williams, 1978), but an ever increasing percentage of military wives is seeking employment outside the home (Goldman, 1976; Stanton, 1976). In fact, civilian wife employment is now the modal pattern in the Air Force (Orthner, 1980). Although many of the wives are working for financial reasons (e.g., to help offset inflation or to raise the family's standard of living), it is also clear that the supplementary motivation of greater independence and influence in the family plays an important part in influencing their decision to work (Stanton, 1976).

Despite the general consensus that the sex-role preferences of military wives are becoming less traditional (Finlayson, 1976; McCubbin et al., 1978; Stanton, 1976; Stoddard, 1978; Thomas & Furning, 1977; Worthington, 1977), there is evidence that suggests that the trend toward sex-role egalitarianism for the military wife may have been overstated (Dobrofsky & Batterson, 1977). Since this evidence is often cited to document the unchanging and dependent status of the wife in the military, it is important to the review and critique of its findings.

In a study of the military wife and feminism in the Air Force, Dobrofsky and Batterson (1977) found military wives to exhibit low levels of awareness and interest in the women's movement. In support

of this finding, the authors cited the following excerpts as typical responses from survey participants:

. . . we [the military] are a blend of all colors-religious-personalities and we have proved that all barriers can be overcome I don't knock your world but don't think I'll sit quietly by as you try to blast mine I like what I have and have much satisfaction in [a] happy family and no divorce hanging over my house.

Being a military wife one must be most careful when expressing an opinion because the outcome can be unhappy results for the husband. One is not an individual when married in the service, only an extension of one's husband, not only in body but also in mind (p. 678)

Although most of the survey respondents agreed that women should have "equal pay for equal work," the authors concluded that there were a minority of pro-feminists among the military wives. Therefore, at present, "military wives appear to be generally unavailable for recruitment by the feminist movement" (p. 683).

Several qualifications to these findings, however, must be mentioned. For one, sampling limitations in the study limit greatly the generalizability of its findings. Specifically, respondents were a non-probability sample of 180 military wives stationed at a midwestern Air Force base. Not only may this sample be unrepresentative of wives in the military, but in the Air Force as well. Moreover, it is possible that women may hold egalitarian sex-role preferences (e.g., "equal pay for equal work") without necessarily being informed of or committed to the women's liberation movement. Lastly, even if the findings of the study are taken at face value, they do not disconfirm the fact that sex-role preferences are becoming less traditional among military wives. In agreement with Clavan (1979), "often it is

the atypical or the deviant social phenomenon that points to future change" (p. 317). Jessie Bernard (1968) also made this point in discussing the state of women in modern culture. She wrote:

In discussing changes over time, it is important to remind ourselves of the enormous stability of social forms. The model or typical segments of population show great inertia: they change slowly What does change, and rapidly, is the form the nontypical takes. It is the nontypical which characterizes a given time: that is, the typical, which tends to be stable, has to be distinguished from the characteristic or characterizing, which tends to be fluctuating. When we speak of the "silent generation" or the "beat generation" or the "anti-establishment generation," we are not referring to the typical member of any generation but to those who are not typical. (p. 6)

Thus, although it is possible that the trend toward sex-role egalitarianism among military wives has not been as dominant as among other strata of women in society, especially singles, it is concluded that there is sufficient documentation to suggest that military wives are coming to adopt less traditional, more egalitarian sex-role preferences.⁹ Moreover, it is this trend that points to future changes within the military community.

The trend toward contemporary roles for military wives contrasts dramatically with the prescribed role that has been expected of them by military tradition (Finlayson, 1976; McCubbin et al., 1978; Stoddard, 1978). Some investigators (Stanton, 1976; Stoddard & Cabanillas, 1976; Worthington, 1977) have suggested that greater egalitarianism among military wives could be seen as quite threatening to an institution as historically tradition-bound, hierarchal, and rigid as the military. In other words, they feel that the new images and roles of military wives may upset the balance of marriage and

create the potential for a wider range of frequent and serious conflicts between spouses. Stoddard and Cabanillas (1976) concluded, for instance, that:

. . . it could be that the future strains within the [military] organization will not be those of race, ethnicity, and sex integration of military personnel on the job, but rather those developing in the houses of military personnel between husbands and wives. (p. 153)

Despite this growing concern, there has not yet been any systematic investigation within the military community into the question of the effect that the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives have on the marriage. Obviously, this question invites ongoing research. Only by careful study can the military begin to approach a meaningful understanding of how and under what conditions changing sex-role preferences in the military influence the institution of marriage.

A Theoretical Perspective

On the basis of past research, there has been little evidence to suggest how sex-role preferences and marital quality might be related. To help organize, understand, and explain this relationship, an eclectic version of social exchange theory is used as the overarching theoretical orientation in the study. The intent here is to explore this framework with the aim of generating testable hypotheses for analysis. Although the essentials of the framework have been outlined elsewhere (Blau, 1964; Edwards, 1969; Heath, 1976; Homans, 1958, 1961; Nye, 1978, 1979; Scanzoni, 1978; Thibaut & Kelly, 1959; Turner, 1978), a brief review of its main focus and essential components is in order before exploring its applicability to the current issue.

Social exchange theory assumes that human actors seek to obtain rewards (tangible and intangible), and attempt to avoid costs (tangible and intangible). Thus, human behavior is not random, but purposive and goal-directed. The pursuit of these goals brings actors into interdependence with one another. In other words, the realization of Actor's preferences depends on the simultaneous reaction of others to these preferences or goals. Based on their exchange, actors either perceive their associations as fair (subjective evaluation that Other has reciprocated justly relative to their input) or unfair (Other has imposed a cost/reward ratio that Actor deems as inequitable or unjust).¹⁰ Adams (1965) proposed the following equation for determining equity or fairness in social exchanges:

$$\frac{A's \text{ Rewards} - A's \text{ Costs}}{A's \text{ Investments}} = \frac{B's \text{ Rewards} - B's \text{ Costs}}{B's \text{ Investments}}$$

When the interaction between parties is defined as fair, or when the personal profit from interaction is rewarding, Homans (1950, 1958, 1961) and Blau (1964) hypothesized that there is a building up of positive sentiments, and the relationship continues to grow and develop. On the other hand, if the exchange is costly, the sentiment tends to be negative, and the relationship is likely to either slow down in growth and development or be terminated.

It is not implied, however, that the exchange pattern in the relationship is static in any "functional" sense. Interactional patterns may change through either implicit or explicit bargaining to permit one or both parties to experience greater rewards and fewer

costs (Chadwick-Jones, 1976; Scanzoni, 1978). Moreover, exchanges may not have an immediate pay off. Specifically, Actor may provide Other with a reward trusting that Other will reciprocate in some future transaction. This indebtedness is interpreted as binding actors together and giving solidarity to the social structure. Lastly, social exchanges do not occur in a vacuum, but within a larger social network. Prevailing social norms (e.g., toward sex-role differentiation) and alternative suppliers of rewards play an important part in the process of social exchange by shaping, defining, and reinforcing definitions of what is fair or just (Scanzoni, 1979c).

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the application of exchange theory to research on marital quality (Bagarozzi & Wodarski, 1977; Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Burr, 1973; Edwards, 1969; Levinger, 1965; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Schafer & Keith, 1980; Waller & Hill, 1951). At the most general level, exchange theory presumes that marital quality will be dependent upon the relative perceptions that husbands and wives have toward the ratio of rewards and costs in the marriage (Bagarozzi & Wodarski, 1977; Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). Although these evaluations may be unconscious, Scanzoni (1975b) concluded that, nonetheless, they are assumed to be operative.¹¹ Thus, consistent with the premises of exchange theory, high quality marriages may be conceptualized as equitable reciprocal exchanges (Bagarozzi & Wodarski, 1977; Walster, Walster, & Berschied, 1978). Since sex-role preferences reflect one set of rewards and costs that men and women bring into the marital relationship (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980), the respective pattern of these

preferences for a particular couple should have direct implications for the quality of the marital relationship.

The major hypothesis in this study is that the respective sex-role preferences of husbands and wives are related to the level of marital quality perceived in the marriage. Based on the fourfold typology of marriage types described above (i.e., MM, MT, TM, & TT), this hypothesis is made up of three distinct predictions.

Prediction I is that there are no significant differences between marriages where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences, either MM or TT, in their level of marital quality. This prediction is based on the assumption that spouses who are both traditional (TT) or both modern (MM) share a strong consensus over their common goals or what Coser (1956) called the basic rules of the relationship (Scanzoni, 1978). By validating each spouse's interpretation of social reality, this consensus is assumed to facilitate the development of a relationship which both spouses define as equitable or just (Byrne, 1971; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975).

Prediction II is that there are no significant differences between marriages where the husband is modern and the wife is traditional (MT), and those where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences in their level of marriage quality. This prediction is based on the assumption that although these couples have incongruent sex-role preferences, these preferences are, nonetheless, compatible. Although nontraditional men honor the rights of the wife to pursue independent interests, and realize their joint responsibility for household tasks, they would probably find it reinforcing, for example,

to know that they could pursue their interests fully if they chose to do so. On the other hand, although women in these marriages see their interests as subordinate to the interests of the family, the husband, in particular, they would probably find it equally reinforcing to know that they could pursue careers and receive help at home if they so desired (Grush & Yehl, 1979). Thus, since the term "equity [itself] emphasizes balancing rewards and constraints in a way that is felt to be fair even if not identical" (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975, p. 422), these couples are likely to establish a relationship which both spouses define as equitable or just.

Prediction III is that marriages comprised of a traditional husband and a modern wife (TM) have significantly lower marital quality than those with either similar partners (MM, TT) or where the husband is modern and the wife is traditional (MT). This prediction is based on the assumption that these couples not only have incongruent sex-role patterns, but incompatible ones as well. Since it is to the wife's greater advantage to depart from traditional sex-role preferences, it is likely that these wives would be more consciously engaged in role making and more directed toward resocializing their husbands into adopting more egalitarian, less traditional sex-role preferences (Aldous, 1974). But if she is modern, and he is traditional, he is not likely to have a great deal of empathy or appreciation for what she is trying to do or say (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). This is likely to lead to irreconcilable differences over basic rules that would make the marital relationship quite conflictual and punishing (Grush & Yehl, 1979). Thus, these marriages would be more likely to be defined as inequitable, especially by the wife.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Sample

In 1979, under the sponsorship of the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, Dr. Dennis Orthner (1980) conducted a survey of married couples in which one or both persons was an Air Force member. The data for the study were collected from personal interviews with a probability sample of 662 persons (331 couples) on nine United States and seven European bases. The married men and women were randomly selected at each base from lists of randomly generated Air Force personnel supplied by the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center (AFMPC). The sample was stratified to proportionately represent the families in different geographical locations and command responsibilities.

The sample included 44 dual-military couples, four civilian husband/military wife couples, and 283 military husband/civilian wife couples. The modal couple was white (85 percent), dually employed (62 percent), and in their first marriage (85 percent). The mean length of marriage was 8.7 years, ranging in duration from less than one year to 33 years. Husbands in the sample were slightly older than the wives. The average of the husbands was 33.5 years, compared to 31.2 years for the wives. Further, husbands had completed, on the average, one year more schooling than the wives. The mean years of

schooling for the husbands and wives were 14.1 years and 13.1 years, respectively. Of the couples with children (77 percent) over one-half (58 percent) had one or more children under age six. Further characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 2.

Data Collection

Separate interview questionnaires for husbands and wives were designed and pretested by the investigator in in-depth interviews with 25 Air Force husbands and wives from a Continental United States (CONUS) base. These questionnaires requested information on a number of items, including the respondent's background, job responsibilities and attitudes, and family relationships. Each questionnaire was designed to take one hour to complete. The pretest interviews permitted the family members an opportunity to comment on the questions they were being asked. Based on these comments, ambiguous, value-laden, or poorly conceptualized items were either deleted or revised to be used in the final study. Final reviews of the questionnaires were conducted by selected military family researchers, the survey branch of AFMPC, and the professional division of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, USAF.

All of the interviews were conducted privately by professionally trained civilian interviewers. These interviewers were selected from the community in which the sampling bases were located, and were trained in workshops to handle the interviews professionally. The importance of confidentiality was stressed, and no person was selected as an interviewer who was in a position to jeopardize or threaten the interests of the respondents.

Table 2
Demographic Profile of Sample Families

Characteristic	Percentage
Number of Children	
None	23
One or Two	58
Three or Four	18
Five or More	2
CONUS Location	69
Religious Preference	
None	8
Catholic	25
Protestant	66
Jewish	1
Housing on Base	49
Nonwhite Families	15
Civilian Wife Employed	53
Full-Time	67
First Marriage	85
Marriage Pattern	
Dual-Military	13
Civilian Husband Couples	1
Civilian Wife Couples	86
Number of Years Married	
Less Than Five Years	32
Five to Ten Years	24
Ten to 15 Years	20
15 to 20 Years	11
20 or More Years	13
Age of Husband	
Under 20 Years	0
20 to 25 Years	12
25 to 30 Years	21
30 to 35 Years	30
35 to 40 Years	23
40 Years or Older	14

Table 2 (Continued)

Characteristic	Percentage
Age of Wife	
Under 20 Years	1
20 to 25 Years	17
25 to 30 Years	28
30 to 35 Years	30
35 to 40 Years	14
40 Years or Older	10
Education of Husband	
Less Than 12 Years	2
12 Years	43
13 to 16 Years	26
16 Years	12
17 Years or More	17
Education of Wife	
Less Than 12 Years	11
12 Years	40
13 to 16 Years	30
16 Years	16
17 Years or More	3
Rank of Husband	
Enlisted	75 (N=244)
Officer	25 (N=83)
Rank of Wife	
Enlisted	93 (N=41)
Officer	7 (N=3)

Each of the couples selected for the study was contacted by personal letter, indicating their random selection, identifying the purposes of the study, and soliciting their cooperation. All respondents were assured that their participation was voluntary and that their responses were to be completely anonymous. Nearly 70 percent of those contacted agreed to participate, even though both husbands and wives

had to agree to participate to be included. Most of the remainder declined because of scheduling problems.

Husbands and wives were interviewed separately and by different interviewers. All of the respondents were assured that their responses would never be revealed to their partners. The interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the respondents and conducted in their homes or at a neutral location on base, usually the base chapel. After each interview had been completed, the interview schedule was sealed in an envelope and returned to the investigator. To preserve confidentiality, all individual identifiers were deleted from the schedule upon receipt and replaced by a random identification number. A thank-you letter was sent to each participant.

Research Measures

Measure of Marital Quality: The Dependent Variable

The Marital Quality Scale (MQS) is a 27-item Likert-type scale designed to assess the quality of the couple's relationship as a functioning group (see Appendix A). The scale has a theoretical range of zero to 122 and is divided into five theoretically and empirically derived components: affectional expression, marital leisure agreement, general marital consensus, marital satisfaction, and communication apprehension (see Table 3 for the means and standard deviations for the MQS and its subscales). Each of these components is described briefly below.

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations for the Marital
Quality Scale and its Subscales^{a,b}

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Affectional Expression Subscale	2.69	1.61	324
Marital Leisure Agreement Subscale	4.50	1.42	328
General Marital Consensus Subscale	4.04	1.26	328
Marital Satisfaction Subscale	1.20	1.00	329
Communication Apprehension Subscale	2.41	1.04	329
Marital Quality Scale	2.80	0.91	328

^aScale range for the Marital Quality Scale and its subscales: 0-8.

^bLower score = higher evaluation of the marriage.

1. Affectional Expression (AE). Items in this component of marital quality reflect the couple's degree of satisfaction with their physical love and sex relations, and their level of agreement concerning demonstrations of affection and sex relations.
2. Marital Leisure Agreement (MLA). These items assess the degree of agreement or disagreement that the couple has concerning friends, leisure interests, and the amount of time spent together.
3. General Marital Consensus (GMC). Items in this component of marital quality deal with the degree of agreement or

disagreement that the couple experiences in a broad range of marital interests (e.g., handling family finances, philosophy of life, career decisions).

4. Marital Satisfaction (MS). These items assess the couple's overall satisfaction with the quality of marital interaction, the frequency of disagreements, the couple's ability to resolve disagreements when they occur, and the oftenness that divorce or separation is considered.
5. Communication Apprehension (CA). Items in this component of marital quality reflect potential communication apprehension situations in the marital environment. Each of the items maintains a general orientation and relates only to spouse-spouse interaction.

One of the originally hypothesized components of marital quality, marital companionship, could not be empirically verified when a factor analysis was performed.¹² However, four items initially thought to be indicators of marital consensus were combined and verified as a separate factor, which has been labeled above as marital leisure agreement.¹³ Table 4 lists the item communality with the MQS, the subscale affiliation of each item, and the factor loading for each item on each subscale factor. The items are numbered to correspond to the MQS presented in Appendix A.

The procedures used to develop the final MQS and to test the adequacy of the proposed definition of marital quality are presented in outline form below. This process is an extension of that used by Spanier (1976) in his development of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Table 4
 Scale Commuality, Subscale Affiliation, and
 Subscale Factor Loading of Marital
 Quality Scale Items

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

Table 4 (Continued)

Variable Number	Communality	Subscale	Factor Loadings				
			General Marital Consensus Factor	Marital Satisfaction Factor	Communication Apprehension Factor	Affectional Expression Factor	Marital Leisure Agreement
20	.26	Marital Satisfaction	.03	.49	-.02	-.08	.09
21	.56	Marital Satisfaction	.22	.60	.16	.19	.16
22	.50	Marital Satisfaction	.13	.40	.37	.24	.22
23	.52	Marital Satisfaction	.15	.65	.05	.11	.03
24	.42	Marital Satisfaction	.33	.53	.02	.11	.13
25	.53	Marital Satisfaction	.28	.65	.05	.11	.00
26	.54	Marital Satisfaction	.13	.49	.13	.31	.32
27	.54	Affectional Expression	.05	.37	.20	.59	.11

1. A pool of 34 items was originally selected and included on the questionnaires to comprise the MQS. Each of the items selected for inclusion in the scale had been demonstrated in prior research efforts to be valid and reliable indicators of one of the dimensions of marital quality defined above (Dean & Spanier, 1974; Locke & Williamson, 1958; Powers & Hutchinson, 1979; Scanzoni, 1975a; Spanier, 1971, 1976).
2. After the data were collected, the items comprising the MQS were recoded and scored for both husbands and wives on a scale from zero to four. Questions with alternative wording were scored in the opposite direction; low scores indicated high marital quality.
3. Husband and wife responses to the individual scale items were recomputed to represent a couple reality. This was accomplished by averaging the respective responses of the husbands and wives to each scale item to obtain a mean couple score. Both Scanzoni (1979f) and Spanier and Cole (1976) have suggested this procedure to be theoretically meaningful and empirically valid.^{14, 15} However, to test the empirical validity of using a couple score in the present study, both correlation coefficients and discrepancy score means were calculated for sample husbands and wives on the MQS in addition to each of its subscales (see Table 5 and Table 6). Each of the correlation coefficients calculated was statistically significant ($p < .000$), and discrepancy score means ranged from a

Table 5
Correlations of Husband-Wife Scores for the
Marital Quality Scale and its Subscales

	Correlation (r)	p	N
Affectional Expression Subscale	.28	.000	324
Marital Leisure Agreement Subscale	.28	.000	328
General Marital Consensus Subscale	.26	.000	328
Marital Satisfaction Subscale	.53	.000	329
Communication Apprehension Subscale	.19	.000	329
Marital Quality Scale	.38	.000	328

Table 6
 Summary Scores (M) and Standard Deviations (SD)
 For the Marital Quality Scale and its
 Subscales by Gender^{a, b}

	Husbands			Wives			Husband-Wife Discrepancy		
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N
Affectional Expression Subscale	1.42	1.02	329	1.25	0.99	326	0.17	1.20	324
Marital Leisure Agreement Subscale	2.36	0.85	331	2.14	0.92	328	0.23	1.07	328
General Marital Consensus Subscale	2.11	0.77	331	1.97	0.81	328	0.17	0.96	328
Marital Satisfaction Subscale	0.60	0.54	331	0.60	0.60	329	-0.00	0.56	329
Communication Apprehension Subscale	1.32	0.66	331	1.10	0.68	329	0.22	0.86	329
Marital Quality Scale	1.47	0.54	331	1.33	0.56	328	0.13	0.61	328

^aScale range for the Marital Quality Scale and its Subscales: 0-4.

^bLower score = higher evaluation of the marriage.

minimum of .00 to a maximum of .23 on a four-point scale with standard deviations in a tolerable range of acceptance. These results provided empirical justification for the validity of combining the respective marital quality scores of husbands and wives to form a composite score in the present investigation.

4. The composite scale items were then factor analyzed to assess the adequacy of the proposed definition of marital quality, determine the presence of hypothesized components, and to make a final determination of the items to be included in the scale.¹⁶ Items with low factor loadings (below .40) were deleted from the scale. Twenty-seven items remained in the MQS after seven were suggested as inappropriate by the factor analysis.
5. The subscales of marital quality that emerged from the factor analysis (affectional expression, marital leisure agreement, marital consensus, marital satisfaction, and communication apprehension) were each computed to have a theoretical range of zero to eight. This was accomplished by summing the items identified with each respective scale by the factor analysis and then dividing by the number of scale items.
6. The level of marital quality for each couple was determined by the averaging of the 27 items that comprise the MQS.
7. The desirability of weighting the items comprising the MQS was considered, but decided against after empirical

comparisons were made. When the items were weighted by their factor loadings and the total scale scores correlated with the unweighted scale scores, the correlation was .98 ($p < .000$). Thus, there was no empirical basis for the use of weighted items in the present analysis.

8. The validity of the MQS was examined in two ways. Items included in the scale were first examined for content validity.¹⁷ Items selected for inclusion on the questionnaires were considered for their relevancy to the evaluation of contemporary family life, their consistency with the nominal definition of marital quality, and lastly for the clarity of their wording and response format. Lastly, the construct validity of the scale was established through factor analysis.¹⁸ As discussed above, four of the five originally hypothesized components of marital quality were confirmed by the analysis. Thus, the MQS appeared, at least in part, to measure the theoretical construct defined earlier.
9. Reliability was determined for each component subscale of marital quality, as well as for the total MQS by using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (1951), a conservative estimate of internal consistency. These coefficients were summarized in Table 7, and indicated that the total scale and its components had high enough reliability to justify their use in the present investigation.

Table 7
 Reliability Estimates for the Marital Quality
 Scale and its Component Subscales^a

Scale	Reliability	Number of Items
Affectional Expression Subscale	.75	3
Marital Leisure Agreement Subscale	.73	4
General Marital Consensus Subscale	.81	7
Marital Satisfaction Subscale	.83	8
Communication Apprehension Subscale	.82	5
Marital Quality Scale	.91	27

^aCronbach's Coefficient Alpha is used as the reliability estimate.

In sum, the MQS designed for this study is a valid and reliable measure of the quality of the marital relationship, and has a distinct advantage of allowing the researcher the option of using either the overall measure of marital quality (determined by averaging the 27 items that comprise the total scale) or selecting one of its subscales (confirmed and defined by factor analysis) for more specific data. Thus, the investigator has the opportunity to present a more detailed analysis of the quality of the marital relationship.

Measure of Sex-Role Preference Patterns:
The Independent Variable

Included in the questionnaire is the 11-item Sex-Role Preference Scale (SRPS), a Likert-type scale with five response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (see Appendix B). Each of the items that comprise the SRPS has been shown in prior research efforts to be a valid and reliable indicator of the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives (Scanzoni, 1975b; Tomeh, 1978). Testing the reliability of these sex-role items, Tomeh (1978), for example, reported coefficients of reproducibility equal to .84 for the non-traditional wife-mother role items, and .85 for the nontraditional husband-father role items (Pearson's r , $p < .001$). In a study of sex roles and fertility, Scanzoni (1975b) reported the predictive validity of these items to be .50 or better. These results allow the investigator to feel confident that the items selected for inclusion in the SRPS are both accurate and consistent in their assessment of the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives.

These items are all short statements expressing either a "traditional" or "modern" sex-role preference. Traditional preferences suggest that a woman's primary purpose is to be responsible for household and childcare tasks, subordinating her own interests for the well-being of the family, the husband, in particular. Within marriage, traditionalists assign men as head of the household and primarily responsible for making major decisions. Modern preferences, on the other hand, stress equality between the sexes, each spouse having the right to pursue the benefits relative to the occupational

system. Within marriage, household and childcare responsibilities become interchangeable.

The procedures followed to assign individual sex-role preference scores to husbands and wives in the sample and to construct the four-fold typology of sex-role preference patterns defined earlier are outlined below.

1. Individual husband and wife scores to the SRPS were obtained first by recoding alternatively worded items in a "modern" direction, then averaging the summated responses of each spouse to the 11 items that comprise the scale (see Table 8 for the means and standard deviations for husbands and wives to the SRPS and each of its component items). The highest possible score on the SRPS is four with lower scores indicating a "modern" response pattern, and higher scores a "traditional" response set. Thus, this scoring procedure resulted in each spouse being placed on a sex-role preference continuum ranging from high modernity to high traditionality.
2. Following the procedure of Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, Inc. (1977), spouses who scored above the median point for their respective gender group were assigned to the "traditionalist" group; those below the median were placed in the "modern" group. Two groups respective to each gender category (male, female) resulted from this procedure: Husband modern, husband traditional, wife modern, wife traditional.

Table 8
Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD) for
Husbands and Wives to the Sex-Role
Preference Scale and Each of its
Component Items^{a, b}

Items	Husbands (N=329)		Wives (N=329)	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.*	1.71	1.25	1.37	1.18
2. In marriage, the wife and husband should share making major decisions.	0.38	0.54	0.31	0.55
3. A man should expect his family to adjust to the demands of his profession.	2.36	0.89	2.26	0.92
4. If his wife works, a husband should share equally in the responsibilities of childcare.	0.69	0.62	0.62	0.68
5. A woman should be able to make long-range plans for her occupation in the same way that her husband does for his.	1.11	0.91	1.21	0.97

Table 8 (Continued)

Items	Husbands (N=329)		Wives (N=329)	
	M	SD	M	SD
6. If a child gets sick and his mother works, the father should be just as willing to stay home from work and take care of the child.*	1.12	1.00	1.49	1.07
7. A wife should realize that her greatest rewards and satisfactions come through her children.*	1.92	1.13	2.07	1.14
8. The husband should be the head of the family.	2.50	1.08	2.44	1.20
9. Qualified women who seek positions of authority should be given as much consideration as equally qualified men.	0.60	0.70	0.52	0.69
10. Do you feel a preschool child is likely to suffer if the mother works?*	2.54	1.85	2.22	1.90
11. Do you feel a marriage is incomplete without children?	1.68	1.94	1.50	1.90
SRPS	1.51	0.53	1.45	0.55

^aScale range for the SRPS and each of its component items: 0-4.

^bLower score = Greater sex-role preference modernity.

*Significant at the .05 level (t-test for differences between husband-wife scores).

3. For purposes of analysis, respective spouses were then paired together to form a typological framework of four mutually exclusive and exhaustive marital types:
- o Husband and wife each modern (MM)
 - o Husband as modern and wife as traditional (MT)
 - o Husband as traditional and wife as modern (TM)
 - o Husband and wife each traditional (TT)

The fourfold classification scheme of marriage types and the numbers and percentages of the sample in each are presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Sex-Role Preference Patterns and the Numbers and
Percentages of the Sample in Each Arrangement

Sex-Role Preference Patterns	N	Percentage
Husband and Wife Each Modern (MM)	109	32.9
Husband as Modern and Wife as Traditional (MT)	55	16.6
Husband as Traditional and Wife as Modern (TM)	60	18.1
Husband and Wife Each Traditional (TT)	107	32.3
Total	331	100.0

It is assumed that this typology will facilitate more relevant assessment of the relationship between the sex-role preferences of husbands and wives and marital quality than has been characteristic of past research, providing more statistical power in both empirical description and prediction.

Measure of Family Social Standing:
A Control Variable

Each couple was assigned a family status score based upon the rank of either the husband or wife, depending on their respective marriage pattern. The status scores of couples with an Air Force husband and civilian wife were determined by the rank of the husband. On the other hand, the status scores of couples with an Air Force wife and civilian husband were defined by the rank of the wife. Lastly, the social status scores of dual-career marriages were determined by the spouse with the highest rank.

The military rank of each index spouse was recoded into one of five groupings for analysis: low-grade enlisted (E1-E3), mid-grade enlisted (E4-E6), high-grade enlisted (E7-E9), low-grade officer (O1-O3), high-grade officer (O4-O10). (See Table 10 for a breakdown of the Air Force rank structure.) The groupings and the numbers and percentages of the sample in each group are presented in Table 11.

The use of rank as an indicator of the social standing of military families is considered justifiable given the formal stratification system of the armed forces which is defined almost exclusively by rank. Dobrofsky (1977) made the following observation:

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

In sum, rank is an important feature of the military organization, playing a meaningful role in determining the social standing of the family within the military hierarchy.

Table 10
Rank Structure of the Air Force

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

Table 11
Family Social Standing and the Numbers and
Percentages of the Sample in Each Group

Group	N	Percentage
Low-Grade Enlisted (E1-E3)	29	8.8
Mid-Grade Enlisted (E4-E6)	169	51.1
High-Grade Enlisted (E7-E9)	44	13.3
Low-Grade Officer (O1-O3)	49	14.8
High-Grade Officer (O4-O10)	34	10.3
Missing	6	1.8
Total	331	100.0

Measure of Family Life Cycle:
A Control Variable

Family life cycle was operationalized in this study, using a modification of the classic scheme developed by Duvall (1977) and adopted by Aldous (1978). Indexed by the age of the oldest child, each couple was identified according to one of five life-cycle stages constructed for purposes of this analysis (see Table 12 for the stages and the numbers and percentages of the sample in each stage). The underlying conceptual rationale for the development of this stratification scheme is that the family, like the individual, goes through a developmental progression brought about by changes of personnel which require adaptation at each particular stage (Spanier, Sauer, & Larzelere, 1979).

Table 12
Family Life-Cycle Stages and the Numbers and
Percentages of the Sample in Each Stage

Stage	N	Percentage
1 Childless	74	22.4
2 Oldest Child Less Than Six Years of Age	95	28.7
3 Oldest Child Between Six and 12 Years, Inclusive	91	27.5
4 Oldest Child Between 13 and 20 Years of Age, Inclusive	58	17.5
5 Oldest Child Over 20 Years of Age	10	3.0
Missing	3	0.9
Total	331	100.0

Measure of Pattern of Wife
Employment: A Control Variable

Wives in the sample were divided into three groups, according to their level of occupational participation at the time of the study: (1) unemployed (employed fewer than five hours per week in the labor market or by self-employment); (2) employed part-time (employed in the labor market or self-employed for more than five hours per week, but less than 30 hours per week); (3) employed full-time (employed in the labor market or self-employed for 30 or more hours per week). The latter group included wives who were currently members of the Air Force. The groups and the numbers and percentages of the sample in each group are presented in Table 13.

Table 13
Employment Patterns of Air Force Wives

Employment Pattern	N	Percentage
Unemployed	140	42.3
Employed Part-Time	45	13.6
Employed Full-time	141	42.6
Missing	5	1.5
Total	331	100.0

Data Analysis

To test the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and their perceived level of marital quality, a series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparisons were made. The objective was to compare the four "marital types" (MM, MT, TM, TT) on their total marital quality score mean in addition to their score mean on each of the dimensions of marital quality defined earlier. The .05 level of significance was used.

The analysis of variance is a commonly employed statistical procedure in social science research, and is a generalization of the pooled t-test with more than two categories. Thus, it allows for the meaningful assessment of differences between means when more than two groups are involved (Hardyck & Petrinovich, 1975). The basic rationale of ANOVA is that the total variance of the sample population can be partitioned into two sources, variance between groups and variance within groups, and tested for statistical significance.

A posteriori multiple comparisons (statistical procedures for locating the pairs of means which are significantly different) were conducted following each significant ANOVA ($p \leq .05$) to test the three predictions deduced earlier from social exchange theory. The investigator, however, was not limited only to making planned comparisons. All possible comparisons were made between the groups where a significant F-ratio was found. The level of significance for the Scheffé procedure was at .10.

Although there are many different types of multiple comparison procedures (e.g., Duncan's test, Tukey's test, Newman-Keul's test, and so forth), this investigation used the Scheffé test for all possible comparisons. The Scheffé test is the most conservative multiple comparison procedure (i.e., least likely to make Type I errors), and has the advantage of not requiring the samples to be of equal size.

To determine the impact that the three control variables (i.e., family social standing, family life cycle, and wife employment pattern) have on the relationship between the independent and dependent variable in this analysis, three two-way analysis of variance comparisons were performed. In each analysis, the main effect of sex-role preference patterns was assessed after adjusting for the respective control variable in the factorial design, and two-way interaction was assessed with both main effects held constant. The .05 level of significance was used. This approach, a hierarchical stepdown analysis, has been described as the most appropriate application of a least-squares solution to data from nonexperimental research with

unequal cell frequencies (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973; Overall & Spiegel, 1969). It is identical to an ordinary multiple regression analysis in which the independent variables are coded vectors that represent categorical variables and their interactions (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The major hypothesis of this study was that the respective sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives would be related to the level of marital quality perceived in the marriage. Based on a fourfold typology of marital types, this hypothesis was made up of three distinct predictions. The first prediction was that there would be no significant differences between marriages where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences, either MM or TT, in their level of marital quality. Prediction Two was that there would be no significant differences between marriages where the husband is modern and the wife is traditional (MT), and those where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences in their level of marital quality. The third prediction was that marriages comprised of a traditional husband and a modern wife (TM) would have significantly lower marital quality than those with either similar partners (MM, TT) or where the husband is modern and the wife is traditional (MT).

To test the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and their perceived level of marital quality, a series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparisons were made. Each of the four marital types (MM, MT, TM, TT) was compared on its total marital quality score mean, in addition to its score mean on each of the dimensions of marital quality defined earlier. The .05

level of significance was used. A posteriori multiple comparisons (Scheffé test) were conducted following each significant ANOVA ($P \leq .05$) to test each of the three predictions. The .10 level of significance was specified for the Scheffé procedure.

To test for the potential impact that the three control variables (i.e., family social standing, family life cycle, and wife employment pattern) had on the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives, three two-way analysis of variance comparisons were performed. In each analysis, the main effect of sex-role preference patterns was assessed with the other main effect (the respective control variable in the analysis) held constant, and the interaction was assessed with both main effects held constant. A .05 level of significance was used.

Analyses

Test of Major Hypothesis and Specific Predictions

The findings, which are presented in Table 14, demonstrated significant differences between marital types on the scale used to measure marital quality, $F(3,324) = 4.47, p \leq .05$. In addition, significant differences between marital types were also found on three of the five subscales of marital quality: affectional expression, $F(3,324) = 2.59, p \leq .05$; general marital consensus, $F(3,324) = 3.84, p \leq .05$; and marital satisfaction, $F(3,324) = 4.49, p \leq .05$. There were two components of marital quality, however, that did not seem to be dependent on the respective sex-role preference patterns of husbands

Table 14
Differences in Marital Quality Scale Scores and
Its Subscale Scores by the Respective Sex-
Role Preference Patterns of Husbands and
Wives (Means, Standard Deviations,
F-Tests, and Multiple
Comparisons)

	MM (N=109)		MT (N=52)		TM (N=60)		TT (N=107)		F ^a	P	MM Versus MT ^b	MM Versus TM ^b	MM Versus TT ^b	MT Versus TM ^b	MT Versus TT ^b	TM Versus TT ^b
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD								
Marital Quality Scale	2.74	.93	2.71	.89	3.18	1.06	2.69	.77	4.47	.004	**			*		**
Affectional Expression Subscale	2.72	1.70	2.55	1.63	3.16	1.85	2.47	1.32	2.59	.05						*
Marital Leisure Agree- ment Subscale	4.52	1.46	4.36	1.55	4.86	1.40	4.34	1.30	1.92	.13						
General Marital Consensus Subscale	3.96	1.19	3.86	1.29	4.53	1.33	3.95	1.22	3.84	.01	**			**		**
Marital Satisfaction Subscale	1.17	1.06	1.16	.85	1.60	1.20	1.02	.76	4.49	.004	*					**
Communication Apprehensive Sub- scale	2.25	.97	2.37	1.07	2.60	1.22	2.47	.96	1.70	.16						

NOTE. Lower score = positive response toward evaluation of marriage.

^adf = 3,324; N = 327

^bScheffe's test for differences between means

*Significant at the .10 level.

**Significant at the .05 level.

and wives. Couples in each of the marital groups reported similar levels of marital leisure agreement, $F(3,321) = 1.92, p > .05$; and communication apprehension, $F(3,324) = 1.70, p > .05$. Thus, although significant differences between marital types were not uniform across all components of marital quality, these findings were at least partially supportive of the major hypothesis of the study; namely, that the respective sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives are related to the level of marital quality perceived in the marriage.

On the overall marital quality scale, each of the three predictions derived from the major hypothesis was supported. As expected, TM marriages had significantly lower marital quality ($\underline{M} = 3.18$) than either MM marriages ($\underline{M} = 2.74$), TT marriages ($\underline{M} = 2.69$), or MT marriages ($\underline{M} = 2.71$). Scheffé tests for each of these comparisons were statistically significant ($p \leq .10$). Moreover, there were no significant differences between MM marriages and TT marriages or between MT marriages and marriages where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences (MM, TT) in their levels of marital quality (Scheffé post hoc, $p > .10$).

Looking at the scores on the three subscales of marital quality with significant F-values, however, it is apparent that support for the predictions of the study was not consistent in all cases. The one component of marital quality, however, that did confirm each of the three predictions of the study was general marital consensus. As predicted, TM marriages had significantly more disagreement ($\underline{M} = 4.53$) than either MM marriages ($\underline{M} = 3.96$), TT marriages ($\underline{M} = 3.95$), or MT marriages ($\underline{M} = 3.86$). Scheffé tests for each of these

comparisons were statistically significant ($p \leq .10$). In addition, no significant differences were found between either MM marriages and TT marriages or between MT marriages and marriages where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences (MM, TT) in the level of marital consensus (Scheffé' post hoc, $p > .10$).

Support for the predictions of the study were more modest for the affectional expression dimension of marital quality. Only the difference between TM marriages and TT marriages was statistically significant (Scheffé' post hoc, $p \leq .10$). TM marriages, as predicted, were found to have more disagreement and less satisfaction over matters of affection in the relationship ($M = 3.16$) than traditionally oriented marriages ($M = 2.47$). No significant differences, however, were found between TM marriages and marriages with modern-oriented spouses ($M = 2.72$) or where the husband was modern and the wife was traditional ($M = 2.55$) in their level of affectional expression (Scheffé' post hoc, $p > .10$). Thus, Prediction Three was only partially supported. Consistent with Prediction One and Prediction Two of the study, no significant differences were found to exist between MM marriages and TT marriages or between MT marriages and marriages where spouses had congruent sex-role preferences (MM,TT) in their levels of affectional expression (Scheffé' post hoc, $p > .10$).

An inspection of the mean scores for the marital groups on the marital satisfaction dimension of marital quality reveals support for Prediction One and Prediction Two of the study, but only partial support for Prediction Three. As predicted, TM marriages were found

to experience lower marital satisfaction ($\underline{M} = 1.60$) than either MM marriages ($\underline{M} = 1.17$) or TT marriages ($\underline{M} = 1.02$). Scheffé tests for each of these comparisons were statistically significant ($p \leq .10$). Contrary to expectations, however, TM marriages and MT marriages ($\underline{M} = 1.16$) were found to have similar levels of marital satisfaction (Scheffé post hoc, $p > .10$). In support of Predictions One and Two, no significant differences were found between either MM marriages and TT marriages or between MT marriages and marriages where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences (MM, TT) in their levels of marital satisfaction (Scheffé post hoc, $p > .10$).

Although there were two areas of marital quality (marital leisure agreement and communication apprehension) that seemed to be independent of the respective sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives (F-test, $p > .05$), it is noteworthy that the trend in score means for both components were in the direction of Prediction Three of the study. In each case, TM marriages were found to be more problematic, that is, to have more disagreement concerning marital leisure ($\underline{M} = 4.86$) and higher communication apprehension ($\underline{M} = 2.60$) than either MM marriages ($\underline{M} = 4.52$ and $\underline{M} = 2.25$, respectively), TT marriages ($\underline{M} = 4.34$ and $\underline{M} = 2.47$, respectively), or MT marriages ($\underline{M} = 4.36$ and $\underline{M} = 2.37$, respectively). Moreover, even though there were no statistically significant differences between marital types on either subscale, this does not necessarily eliminate the possibility that there were significant differences between the samples with regard to specific items on each subscale. In fact, one item on each subscale disclosed significant disparities between marital types.

On the marital leisure agreement subscale of marital quality, there was a significant difference between marital types concerning agreement about the amount of time spent together, $F(3,324) = 2.98$, $p \leq .05$. TM marriages, as predicted, had significantly lower agreement on this item ($M = 5.02$) than either MM marriages ($M = 4.07$) or TT marriages ($M = 4.11$). Scheffé tests for each of these comparisons were statistically significant ($p \leq .10$). No significant difference, however, was found between TM marriages and MT marriages ($M = 4.04$) on this item (Scheffé test, $p > .10$). Thus, Prediction Three of the study received only partial support. Consistent with Predictions One and Two of the study, however, no significant differences were found between either MM marriages and TT marriages or between MT marriages and marriages where spouses have congruent sex-role preferences concerning agreement about the amount of time spent together (Scheffé post hoc, $p > .10$).

The item in the communication apprehension subscale of marital quality that revealed a significant disparity between marital types concerned the evaluation by couples of the openness of communication within the marriage, $F(3,324) = 5.92$, $p \leq .05$. Each of the predictions of the study was confirmed with respect to this item. In support of Prediction Three, TM marriages reported significantly less communication openness ($M = 2.73$) than either MM marriages ($M = 1.91$), TT marriages ($M = 2.06$), or MT marriages ($M = 2.11$). Scheffé tests for each of these comparisons were statistically significant ($p \leq .10$). In addition, no significant differences were found, as predicted, between either MM marriages and TT marriages or between MT marriages

and marriages where spouses share similar sex-role preferences (MM, TT) in their levels of communication openness (Scheffé' post hoc, $p > .10$).

Sex-Role Preference Patterns and Marital Quality: Controlling for Family Social Standing

In an attempt to determine whether family social standing has a significant impact on the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality, a two-way analysis of variance was performed. The results of this analysis are presented in Tables 15 and 16. An inspection of the tables shows that although significance was not achieved for interaction, both main effects were significant beyond the .05 level. These findings document that the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and marital quality is strong and significant even when the variance, due to family social standing, is held constant, $F(3, 321) = 3.60$, $p \leq .05$.

Sex-Role Preference Patterns and Marital Quality: Controlling for Family Life Cycle

Tables 17 and 18 present the data analyzed by the two-way analysis of variance to determine whether family life cycle might impact on the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality. In this analysis, significance was not achieved for interaction, while both main effects were significant beyond the .05 level. Thus, these findings support the independence of the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and

Table 15
 Mean Scores for Marital Quality by Family Social
 Standing and Sex-Role Preference Patterns

Sex-Role Preference Patterns	Family Social Standing				
	E1-E3	E4-E6	E7-E9	01-03	04-10
MM	2.20 (n=12)	2.89 (n=58)	2.97 (n=10)	2.44 (n=19)	2.57 (n=7)
MT	2.34 (n=3)	2.74 (n=30)	2.10 (n=4)	2.72 (n=11)	3.70 (n=3)
TM	2.75 (n=7)	3.22 (n=33)	3.54 (n=8)	2.68 (n=3)	2.93 (n=8)
TT	2.55 (n=7)	2.83 (n=46)	2.49 (n=22)	2.49 (n=15)	2.85 (n=16)

Table 16
 Analysis of Variance of Marital Quality by Family
 Social Standing and Sex-Role Preference Patterns

Source of Variation	Sums of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	P
Main Effects	17.78	7	2.54	3.78	.002
Family Social Standing	9.65	4	2.41	3.21	.013
Sex-Role Preference Patterns	8.13	3	2.71	3.60	.014
Interactions	9.83	12	0.82	1.09	.368
Family Social Standing by Sex-Role Preference Patterns	9.83	12	0.82	1.09	.368
Explained	27.61	19	1.45	1.93	.012
Residual	227.02	302	0.75		
Total	254.63	321	0.79		

Table 17
 Mean Scores for Marital Quality by Sex-Role
 Preference Patterns and Stages of the
 Family Life Cycle

Sex-Role Preference Patterns	Stages in the Family Life Cycle			
	Childless	Oldest Child Less Than 6	Oldest Child 6 to 12	Oldest Child 13 and Older
MM	2.48 (n=34)	2.89 (n=39)	2.90 (n=23)	2.68 (n=13)
MT	2.58 (n=12)	3.03 (n=13)	2.50 (n=19)	2.88 (n=8)
TM	2.51 (n=9)	3.66 (n=17)	2.98 (n=20)	3.32 (n=14)
TT	2.44 (N=18)	2.71 (n=26)	2.77 (n=29)	2.78 (n=33)

Table 18
 Analysis of Variance of Marital Quality by Stages
 of the Family Life Cycle and Sex-Role
 Preference Patterns

Source of Variation	Sums of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	P
Main Effects	20.72	6	3.45	4.40	.000
Family Life Cycle	11.10	3	3.69	4.71	.003
Sex-Role Preference Patterns	9.63	3	3.21	4.10	.007
Interactions	6.78	9	0.75	0.96	.473
Family Life Cycle by Sex-Role Preference Patterns	6.78	9	0.75	0.96	.473
Explained	27.50	15	1.83	2.34	.004
Residual	244.01	311	0.79		
Total	271.51	326	0.83		

marital quality when adjusted for the variance due to family life cycle, $F(3,326) = 4.10$, $p \leq .05$.²⁰

Sex-Role Preference Patterns and Marital Quality: Controlling for Wife-Employment Pattern

The results of the two-way analysis of variance designed to test whether wife-employment pattern has a significant impact on the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality are presented in Tables 19 and 20. In this analysis, only the main effect for sex-role preference patterns was significant, $F(3,324) = 4.48$, $p \leq .05$. Here, again, even when the variance due to the control variable was removed (in this case, wife-employment pattern), the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and marital quality remained strong and significant.

Table 19

Mean Scores for Marital Quality by Wife-Employment Pattern and Sex-Role Preference Patterns

Sex-Role Preference Patterns	Wife-Employment Pattern		
	Unemployed	Employed Part-Time	Employed Full-Time
MM	2.73 (n=32)	2.75 (n=16)	2.70 (n=60)
MT	2.60 (n=26)	2.92 (n=10)	2.76 (n=16)
TM	3.18 (n=20)	3.47 (n=9)	3.10 (n=31)
TT	2.72 (n=61)	2.34 (n=10)	2.76 (n=34)

Table 20
 Analysis of Variance of Marital Quality by Patterns
 of Wife-Employment and Sex-Role
 Preference Patterns

Source of Variation	Sums of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	P
Main Effects	11.09	5	2.22	2.75	.019
Wife-Employment Pattern	0.25	2	0.12	0.15	.858
Sex-Role Preference Patterns	10.85	3	3.62	4.48	.004
Interactions	3.14	6	0.52	0.65	.691
Wife-Employment Patterns by Sex-Role Preference Patterns	3.14	6	0.52	0.65	.691
Explained	14.23	11	1.29	1.61	.096
Residual	252.39	313	0.81		
Total	266.62	324	0.82		

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

In spite of general agreement that sex-role preferences are changing, research investigating the quality of the marital relationship has generally not taken into consideration the factor of spousal sex-role preferences. Noting the importance to military leaders and policy-makers of having a clear understanding of the factors that influence marital quality, the purpose of this study was to examine the sex-role preference patterns of military husbands and wives, and to assess how these preferences are related to the quality of the couple's relationship. To accomplish this aim, a fourfold typology of sex-role preference patterns was constructed, and a scale was developed to assess the quality of the marital relationship. The marital quality scale developed was designed to be used as an overall index of marital quality, as well as to be divided into five subscales --affectional expression, marital leisure agreement, general marital consensus, marital satisfaction, and communication apprehension--to permit a more detailed analysis of the marital relationship. An eclectic version of social exchange theory was used as the overarching theoretical orientation in the study, and testable hypotheses were derived from the framework for empirical analysis.

The data for the study were collected from personal interviews with a probability sample of 331 couples (662 persons) on nine United States and seven European bases. The married men and women were randomly selected at each base from lists of randomly generated Air Force personnel supplied by the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center. The sample was stratified to proportionately represent the families in different geographical locations and command responsibilities. All the interviews were conducted by professionally trained civilian interviewers, and in all cases husbands and wives were interviewed separately and by different interviewers. Nearly 70 percent of the couples contacted agreed to participate.

The results of the study documented the importance of sex-role preference patterns as an explanatory variable in marital research. Not only were significant differences obtained between marital types on the overall marital quality scale, but three of its five subscales as well--affectional expression, general marital consensus, and marital satisfaction. As hypothesized, the couples reporting the lowest marital quality were those in which the husband was traditional and the wife was modern. Moreover, the findings supported the independence of the relationship between the sex-role preference patterns of husbands and wives and marital quality. When the variance due to family social standing, family life cycle, and wife employment pattern was held constant in three separate two-way analysis of variance comparisons, the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality remained strong and significant.

Conclusions and Discussion

On the basis of this study, the conclusion must be considered that the respective sex-role preference patterns of Air Force husbands and wives are related to the level of marital quality perceived in the marriage. The significance of this study lies in the fact that it appears to be the first to report a significant relationship between the two variables. Thus, the question naturally arises as to why the present study succeeded when past research efforts have failed in this regard (see Scanzoni, 1975a; Snyder, 1979).

The most obvious possibility is that previous studies failed to capture the complexity of sex-role preferences in marriage. Although both Scanzoni (1975a) and Snyder (1979) employed both husbands and wives in their respective samples, they elected to analyze the data from the perspective of the individual spouse. There was no attempt made in either study, as in the present analysis, to transform the data to reflect the pair qua unit. It would seem from the current results that it may not be the sex-role preferences of the husband and wife per se that impact upon the level of marital quality perceived in the relationship, but the particular configuration of sex-role preferences that men and women have in the marriage (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). In sum, since the realization of Actor's preferences depends on the simultaneous reaction of Others to these preferences, the study of sex-role preferences in marriage should perhaps reflect the interdependency of the relationship between husband and wife (Blalock & Wilken, 1979).

A second possibility is that the dependent variable in both the studies by Scanzoni (1975a) and Snyder (1979) failed to reflect the multi-faceted nature of the marital relationship. By limiting themselves to narrow dimensions of the marriage (e.g., marital satisfaction), neither study had the potential to present a detailed analysis of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The present study developed a more comprehensive, multidimensional measure of marital quality that allowed for the simultaneous assessment of a broad range of dimensions in marriage. The detailed analysis with regard to the various components of marital quality added to the understanding of the dynamics involved in the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality.

It is also important to note that marital quality in the present study was defined as a joint reality. Thus, the couple was the unit of analysis, whereas in the two previous studies, the focus was on the individual's adjustment to marriage. Even though the procedure of combining the scores of the husband and wife into a couple score was defended in the present analysis as both theoretically meaningful and empirically valid, this approach to conceptualization was, at best, exploratory, and researchers must continue to struggle with issues pertaining to the unit of analysis in marital research (Spanier & Lewis, 1980).

A fourth possibility to explaining the discrepancy between the findings of the present investigation and the earlier findings by Scanzoni (1975a) and Snyder (1979) lies in the differences between samples employed. While both Scanzoni and Snyder used civilian

populations in their respective sample designs, the current study utilized a probability sample of Air Force couples. Although there is little reason to suspect wide discrepancies between military and civilian populations on the variables of interest, it may be that the present findings are restricted in their generalizability to the military community.

Lastly, it may be that the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality found in the present study is spurious. That is, the relationship between the independent and dependent variable is explained by some third variable or chain of variables not accounted for in the present analysis. Scanzoni (1975a), for instance, did hypothesize that sex-role structures may be indirectly linked to marital satisfaction via education and related socioeconomic indicators. When the impact of three key sociological variables (i.e., family social standing, family life cycle, and wife employment pattern) was held constant in the present investigation, however, the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality remained strong and significant. Although the socioeconomic indicator used in the present study (i.e., family social standing based on rank) was different than the socioeconomic indicators suggested by Scanzoni (i.e., income, education), these findings lend support to the independence of the relationship between the independent and dependent variable in the present analysis.

It was suggested earlier from exchange theory that the level of marital quality that couples experience would be dependent upon the relative perceptions that husbands and wives have toward the ratio of

rewards and costs in the marriage (Bagarozzi & Wodarski, 1977; Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). Conceptualizing high quality marriages as equitable reciprocal exchanges (Bagarozzi & Wodarski, 1977; Walster, Walster & Berscheid, 1978), it was hypothesized that since sex-role preferences reflect one set of rewards and costs that men and women bring into the marital relationship (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980), the respective pattern of these preferences for a particular couple should have direct consequences for the quality of the marital relationship. The results of the present investigation were consistent with these premises. As predicted, in all cases where significant differences were obtained between marital types, the marriages found to have the lowest evaluation of marital quality were those with a traditional husband and a modern wife. It is suggested that the greater difficulty that these couples experience in the marital relationship is probably the result of the pressures from wives to change the role expectations of their traditional husbands and a reluctance on the part of men to change. This is likely to lead to irreconcilable differences over the basic rules of the relationship that increases the probability that these marriages will be defined as inequitable.

Implications for Practice

Since marriages of high quality tend to have high stability (Lewis & Spanier, 1979), the greater strain and dissatisfaction that marriages with traditional husbands and modern wives experience may lead them to a higher than average rate of dissolution. Given the

importance of family functioning and stability to the military mission (Bennett et al., 1974; Carr et al., 1980; Goldman, 1976; Hunter, 1977; McCubbin et al., 1978; Stanton, 1976), this information has important implications for the planning and implementing of clinical services and programs within the Air Force community.

The most obvious implication of the findings of the study is in the area of marriage and family counseling. Inservice training is required that alerts military counselors to the differential impact that sex-role preference patterns may have on the marital relationship. In this transitional age of sex-role preferences, it is likely that more and more couples will be stressed by conflicting role expectations in the future and will need assistance in understanding the needs of their partner and help in negotiating a more satisfactory relationship. In many cases, a resolution to the crisis will require that the husband accept the new role his wife seeks, and in turn, redefine his role as husband and marital partner. As a consequence, traditional therapeutic interventions based on outmoded sexual stereotypes may become increasingly inappropriate for a sizable portion of the military community. New clinical strategies may be required that focus more on the issues of equity and fairness in the relationship.

Often, however, couples may need or desire less dramatic intervention than marriage or family counseling. In these cases, couples with conflicting sex-role preferences may benefit from participation in programs geared toward marital and family enrichment. With the development of these programs on bases, many families may remedy their relational problems by opening new lines of communication and

by developing the skills and support need for fostering their relationship. Chaplains, social workers, and other mental health personnel can serve as important catalysts for introducing and maintaining these programs.

In sum, the military must continue to seek new and better ways of serving its families. After all, these families are now a vital part of the mission support system upon which the military depends. This means that sensitivity and response to the needs of military families are not only humanitarian; they are also based on the knowledge that what is good for military families is good for military responsibilities as well.

Implications for Future Research

Based upon the procedures, findings, and conclusions of this study, the following implications for future research are suggested:

1. Although the application of survey techniques is important and must continue, it is suggested that the present survey approach be supplemented with other means of data collection. Joint interviews and observational techniques are particularly attractive options. The employment of these innovative approaches will hopefully allow future research efforts that test the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality to move in the direction of increasing internal validity.
2. Research should be pursued that tests the generalizability of the present findings with a carefully matched civilian sample.

3. Future studies should explore alternative methodological approaches to dealing with joint assessment--or at least the joint study--of husbands and wives in research on marital quality. Although the present study used a combined score, other rationales for measurement could be developed and the predictions of the study retested to help clear up ambiguity pertaining to the unit of analysis in marital research.
4. Future research should specify and test for the potential effects of additional intervening variables on the relationship between sex-role preference patterns and marital quality.
5. It might be profitable in further studies to examine the fourfold typology of sex-role preference patterns by using only the upper and lower one-third of the sample on the sex-role continuum. This would require a larger sample, but would have the effect of increasing the between-group variance, and thus providing more statistical power in both empirical description and prediction.
6. Given that both sex-role preference patterns and marital quality were conceptualized in ever-changing process, it is important that future research test the relationship between the variables longitudinally.

FOOTNOTES

¹There is also a fairly extensive civilian literature which documents the positive relationship between family-life satisfaction and emotional well-being, physical health, and satisfaction with job, and the negative relationship between family-life satisfaction and heavy drinking, feelings of isolation, and depression (Glenn, 1976; Harry, 1976; Lee, 1978; Renne, 1970). Other civilian research has examined ways in which families affect work interruptions, job stress, and productivity (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974).

²The terms "marital satisfaction," "marital adjustment," "marital happiness," and so forth, have all been commonly used in marriage research. In this study, the more inclusive term "marital quality" is preferred and used to assess the qualitative dimension of the marital relationship.

³The research on marital quality in the military has emphasized the effect of factors external to the family. Independent variables that have been associated with marital quality include war separation and reunion (e.g., Cuber, 1945; Frances & Gale, 1973; Griffith, 1944; Hill, 1949; McCubbin, Dahl, & Hunter, 1975; Metres, McCubbin, & Hunter, 1974; Waller, 1940, 1944; Webster, Hunter, & Palermo, 1977; Worthington, 1977), geographic mobility (e.g., McKain, 1969), and life-stresses such as retirement, permanent change of station (PCS) moves, remote tours, financial hardship, and periodic separation (e.g., Frances & Gale, 1973; Greenberg, 1973; McCubbin et al., 1976;

Woelfel & Savell, 1978). Research examining the effects of interactional variables within the marriage on the quality of the couple's relationship has been sparse, and no conclusions in this area have been identified (Croan et al., 1980; McCubbin et al., 1976).

⁴In this study, sex roles are defined as a "set of preferences, rewards, tastes, and goals that a person learns because he or she happens to be male or female" (Scanzoni, 1978, p. 6). They do not refer to the pattern of power distribution between husband and wife (e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Centers, Raven, & Rodrigues, 1971; Olsen, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979; Sprenkle & Olsen, 1978), the respective role performances or task allocation of husband and wife (e.g., Araj, 1977; Chadwick, Albrecht, & Kunz, 1976; Jorgensen, 1970; Keith & Brubaker, 1979; Lein, 1979; Nye, 1976; Stucker, 1963; Tharp, 1963; Tognoli, 1979), or the employment configuration of the couple (e.g., Clark, Nye, & Gecas, 1978; Scanzoni, 1979c, 1980).

⁵The format of Table 1 and many of the sample definitions were taken from Spanier and Cole (1976).

⁶Although the terms sex-role preferences and sex-role norms are used interchangeably in the present analysis, terms such as sex-role attitudes, ideologies, and so forth, will never be used. Scanzoni (1978) and Scanzoni and Fox (1980) consider the latter terms to be imprecise and theoretically sterile in understanding the relationship between men and women.

⁷The women's liberation movement is a sociological phenomenon of the 1970's (Worthington, 1977). The ideology and goals of this movement advocate equality in the role of the female, the male, and the relationship between them (Clavan, 1970).

⁸Although the study of men's roles has become of greater interest to sociologists during the past decade (e.g., Balswick, 1980; Balswick & Pleck, 1971; L'Abate, 1980; Lewis & Pleck, 1979; Nye & Bernardo, 1973; Sexton, 1979), it has neither been studied with the vigor nor rigor that has been characteristic in the study of women's roles.

⁹To date, there have been no comparative studies investigating the sex-role preferences of military and civilian wives.

¹⁰The terms "fair," "equitable," and "just" are used synonymously in this study. They simply mean that actors "perceive the arrangement as fair, in other words, each party believes he or she is receiving the right amounts of benefits [from the relationship] relative to what each is contributing" (Scanzoni, 1978, p. 4).

¹¹Recent evidence suggests that sex-role issues are centrally important to individuals in the 1970's (Thornton & Freedman, 1979). Converse and Markus (1979) concluded, for instance, that they are more crystallized in the minds of men and women than many other issues.

¹²The item thought to be an indicator of marital companionship (see Appendix A, Item 26) did have an acceptable factor loading on the marital satisfaction factor and was, therefore, retained in the scale.

¹³Since "marital leisure agreement" emerged from the factor analysis as a separate component of marital quality, the dimension of marital quality previously defined as "marital consensus" was renamed "general marital consensus" to differentiate it from the former more specific factor.

¹⁴Since one's evaluation of the qualitative aspects of the marital relationship is developed chiefly out of past interaction, it is unlikely theoretically that marital partners would deviate substantially in their level of reported marital quality. The primary reason for this hypothesis is that while positive interaction tends to generate satisfaction in the relationship for both spouses, aversive interaction is likely to stimulate a negative appraisal of the relationship by both husband and wife (Deutsch, 1973; Scanzoni, 1979 f). In short, the norm of reciprocity suggests that there is a kind of ongoing feedback between spouses that makes giving and receiving mutually contingent (Gouldner, 1960; Scanzoni, 1979 b).

¹⁵Empirically, a review of studies reporting correlations between husband-wife marital quality scores demonstrates spouses to have high levels of agreement in their perceptions toward the marriage (see Spanier & Cole, 1976, for a review of these studies). Although varying greatly from study to study, the majority of these studies reported coefficients greater than .50. In addition, Dean and Lucas (1978) found the correlation between communication and marital adjustment to be high, whether marital adjustment was constructed as an individual reality (husband or wife only, $r = .73$) or as a joint reality (mean marital adjustment score calculated from the scores of the respective spouses, $r = .76$). Dean and Lucas concluded from these results that "the issue of whether one uses an individual's or a couple's score [mean] need not overly concern scientists, in spite of the very plausible theoretical questions raised" (p. 978).

¹⁶The type of factor analysis used is what Nie, Bent, and Hill (1970) refer to as "the most universally accepted factoring method" or "principle factoring with iteration" (p. 220). The following program options were in effect: varimax rotation, pairwise deletion of missing data, maximum number of factors specified = unspecified, minimum eigen value = 1.0, maximum number of iterations: 25.

¹⁷Content validity refers to the systematic examination of the scale content to determine the degree to which it covers the content area to be measured (Anatasi, 1968).

¹⁸Construct validity refers to the extent to which the measure reflects constructs presumed to underlie it (Anatasi, 1968).

¹⁹When the "type of marriage" (MM,MT, TM, TT) was used as a criterion variable in a series of analysis of variance comparisons with the respective sex-role items that comprised the SRPS, each F-test was highly significant ($p < .001$). These results provide empirical support for the discriminative validity of the fourfold typology.

²⁰Since only ten couples had an oldest child over twenty years of age, stages four and five of the family life cycle were combined to test for interaction between family life cycle and sex-role preference patterns.

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APPENDIX A
MARITAL QUALITY SCALE

Marital Quality Scale

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate the letter that best corresponds to the degree of agreement or disagreement you and your partner have in the following areas:

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree	Don't Know
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
1. Handling family finances	0	1	2	3	4	8
2. Matters of recreation	0	1	2	3	4	8
3. Demonstrations of affection	0	1	2	3	4	8
4. Friends	0	1	2	3	4	8
5. Sex relations	0	1	2	3	4	8
6. Philosophy of life	0	1	2	3	4	8
7. Ways of dealing with parents and in-laws	0	1	2	3	4	8
8. Aims, goals, and things believed important	0	1	2	3	4	8
9. Amount of time spent together	0	1	2	3	4	8
10. Making major decisions	0	1	2	3	4	8
11. Leisure time, interests, and activities	0	1	2	3	4	8
12. Career decisions	0	1	2	3	4	8
13. Philosophy of Childrearing (If Parents)	0	1	2	3	4	8

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

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
14. I look forward to expressing my opinion to my spouse on controversial topics.	0	1	2	3	4	8
15. I don't hesitate to tell my spouse exactly how I feel.	0	1	2	3	4	8
16. I usually come right out and tell my spouse exactly what I mean.	0	1	2	3	4	8
17. I never hesitate to tell my spouse my needs.	0	1	2	3	4	8
18. I feel that I am an open communicator in my marriage.	0	1	2	3	4	8

Please indicate the letter that best corresponds to how often the following statements apply to your relationship with your spouse.

	All of the Time	Most of the Time	More Often Than Not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
19. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a disagreement?	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. How often do you confide in your mate?	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. How often do you ever regret that you married?	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. How often have you discussed or considered divorce or separation?	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Very Good	O.K.	Not So Good	Don't Know
26. How do you feel about the companionship that you and your spouse have in doing things together during leisure or non-work time? Do you feel the companionship is very good, o.k., or not so good?	0	1	2	8
27. How do you feel about the physical love and sex relations you experience with your spouse? Do you feel it's very good, o.k., or not so good?	0	1	2	8

APPENDIX B
SEX-ROLE PREFERENCE SCALE

Sex-Role Preference Scale

Here is a card showing five ways people can feel about a given statement. They might strongly agree, agree, have mixed feelings, disagree, or strongly disagree. What is your opinion about each of the following for a married woman and married man? Do you strongly agree, agree, have mixed feelings, disagree, or strongly disagree that:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does <u>not</u> work.	0	1	2	3	4	8
2. In marriage, the wife and husband should share making major decisions.	0	1	2	3	4	8
3. A man should expect his family to adjust to the demands of his profession.	0	1	2	3	4	8
4. If his wife works, a husband should share equally in the responsibilities of child care.	0	1	2	3	4	8
5. A woman should be able to make long-range plans for her occupation in the same way that her husband does for his.	0	1	2	3	4	8
6. If a child gets sick and his mother works, the father should be just as willing to stay home from work and take care of the child.	0	1	2	3	4	8
7. A wife should realize that her greatest rewards and satisfactions come through her children.	0	1	2	3	4	8

