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Correlates of the accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of self-other images among married couples

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CORRELATES OF THE ACCURACY OF ROLE-TAKING AND THE CONGRUENCE OF SELF-OTHER IMAGES AMONG MARRIED COUPLES

by

Elmer Wilbur Bock

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

An area of interpersonal relations that has long been neglected but one in which interest has recently been shown is the degree to which individuals in a group can accurately take the roles of others so as to predict their behavior. For many years the theorists have accepted role-taking and its influence on one's self-image and have proceeded from there, overlooking the fact that these phenomena can be objects worthy of study (9, p. 357). However, within the last ten years a number of researchers have been concerned with this area. Some have attempted to derive an adequate measure of role-taking and of the congruence of perception. Two terms for one's accurate prediction of another's response can be identified in the literature: some have termed it empathy or empathic ability; others have interpreted it as role-taking. In order to avoid the connotation of a personality trait and to place the present research in a sociological frame of reference, the term role-taking is used in this study.

The present research is concerned with the extent to which husbands and wives can accurately take each other's role, and the extent of agreement between one's self-image and self-as-seen-by-spouse. The latter phenomenon is called the congruence of images in this study. The study also concerns the relationships between these two variables and various situational and interactional variables.
The importance of this research is both theoretical and practical. The theoretical significance of role-taking and congruence of images is discussed in the chapter on Theory and Hypotheses where the interactional approach to the study of group activity is presented. The discussion of this approach includes definitions of the major concepts, inter-relations of the concepts and hypotheses derived for the present research.

The areas of role-taking and congruence of images are two interactional processes that have long been neglected in family research. Studies of the family have been generally concentrated on the static or situational family related variables. Researchers have generally neglected that fact that a marriage or a family is a dynamic relationship of two or more interacting individuals. Studying married couples and families by means of relationship variables, rather than by situational variables alone, gives a clearer picture of marriage and family roles and relationships. This orientation can offer an improved direction for family research, can tie research more closely to sociological theory and can provide greater assistance to marriage-and-family counseling. Further, the results obtained from a study of the marriage relationship can be incorporated into the general theory of role-interactional analysis.

Although there have been a number of studies on role-
taking and the congruence of perception, only a few have involved sociological theory, family relations, and a representative sample. It is hoped that the present research will add to the knowledge of family interaction by meeting these three criteria. Greater understanding of the relationships of the various perceptions held by family members will permit more effective handling of the overt interaction of these members. Since this is mainly an exploratory study, it concerns the correlates of role-taking by married couples and the congruence of their perceptions. It investigates the relationships between these dependent variables and independent variables including sex, age, spousal age differences, education, spousal educational differences, farm and nonfarm residence, social status, length of marriage and marital strain.

The next section presents a review of the literature regarding the two dependent variables, role-taking accuracy and the congruence of images, and their relationships with various independent factors, some of which are also considered in the present study. The subsequent section outlines the hypotheses derived from the elements of a general sociological theory to be tested in this study.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature is concerned with two aspects of interpersonal relations: role-taking accuracy and the congruence of images. While most of the research related to these variables has involved courtship and marriage pairs, other studies not involving these types of relationships are also considered in so far as they may add to knowledge and understanding of the two variables under study.

Role-Taking Accuracy

A study by Kirkpatrick and Hobart (32, p. 15) involved 306 couples in various stages of intimacy, which included 62 couples who were "favorite dates" of one another, 66 who were "going steady", 75 who were engaged and 103 who were married. The authors found that accuracy of role-taking increased with the degree of intimacy. This finding was reaffirmed in a later study by Hobart (26, p. 319), involving 258 couples who included 78 who were "favorite dates" of one another, 66 who were "going steady", 54 who were engaged and 60 who were married. Vernon and Stewart (50, pp. 50-51) came to the same conclusion in their study of 52 couples ranging from "just dating" to "being engaged". Thus, one can conclude that role-taking accuracy is positively related with stages of progressive association and intimacy.

The studies on the relations between the length of
association and accurate role-taking have produced conflicting results. Vernon and Stewart (50, p. 51) found that frequency of dating and role-taking accuracy were positively correlated. Couch (10, p. 357) studied 32 married couples and concluded that length of marriage and role-taking accuracy were positively related, but that the improvement was only slight for husbands. Kirkpatrick and Hobart (32, p. 16) and Hobart (26, p. 320) found no relation between length of association and role-taking accuracy in any of the intimacy stages. This latter finding of no relationship was also observed by Dymond (17, p. 131). This study, however, did not include marital or intimacy pairs. Instead it was based upon 29 females and 24 males in small groups and involved a test-retest after six weeks of group membership. The studies by Kirkpatrick and Hobart, and Hobart which involved the largest samples and approximately the same instruments suggested that the status itself in courtship, the nature of the responsibility and privileges existing between people, was a more important factor than the length of the status in determining the accuracy of role-taking (26, p. 320).

The positive relationship between role-taking accuracy of individuals and the similarity of their self-image has received unanimous support. Cowden (11, p. 190) in a study of 29 married couples, Dymond's study (16, p. 344) of 15 married couples, and Notcutt and Silva's study (43, p. 35)
involving 64 married couples all concluded that the more alike husband and wife were on self-ratings the more accurately they could predict each other's responses. This relationship between similarity of self-ratings and accurate role-taking was also reported by Halpern (25, p. 450) whose study, however, involved 39 female student nurses.

Not only are similarity of spousal self-images and accurate role-taking related, but the role-taking accuracy of each partner is also correlated with that of the other. Hobart and Klausner (27, p. 259) found in a study of 52 married couples a reciprocity of role-taking accuracy. Dymond (14, p. 346) observed the same phenomenon, although her study involved 80 students not in a defined courtship or marriage relationship. Thus, one might conclude that the more similarly two individuals see themselves the more accurately they will take the role of the other and that the more accurate one is in his role-taking the more accurate his partner will be.

The question whether the male or the female can more accurately take the role of the other has received somewhat conflicting answers. Cowden (11, p. 190) reported that males were more accurate in prediction than females. Kirkpatrick and Hobart (32, p. 16) and Hobart (26, p. 322) found no consistent differences between the sexes in any intimacy stage. Notcutt and Silva (43, p. 35) reported the same
latter finding among their married couples. The results of Couch (10, p. 356) appeared to support the superiority of the female, although he noted their superiority was true for only one group of responses: role-taking regarding the duties of the wife. The superiority of the female was also reported by Dymond in two studies (14, p. 346; 17, p. 131), which, however, did not involve couples in designated courtship or marriage relationships. Since these studies differed in sample characteristics, sample sizes, and types of relationships, i.e., who was predicting for whom and under what circumstances, they were not directly comparable. It may be concluded from the studies by Kirkpatrick and Hobart, Hobart, Notcutt and Silva, and, in general, Couch that the sexes do not differ in their role-taking accuracy.

The relationship between age and role-taking accuracy has not received much attention, and thus not much is known about it. Dymond, Hughes and Raabe (18, p. 205) compared 24 second grade children and 16 sixth grade children on role-taking and observed a greater accuracy among the older children than among the younger children. Locke, Sabagh, and Thomas (35, p. 124) in a study of 126 married couples dichotomized the group on age and found no difference between the older and the younger groups on role-taking accuracy.

The study by Locke, Sabagh and Thomas (35, p. 124) which was the only one to give attention to the relationship between
education and role-taking accuracy, found no relationship between these two factors.

A number of studies have been concerned with the relationship between accurate role-taking and marital happiness or adjustment, but the results have been in conflict. Dymond (16, p. 344), in her study of 15 married couples, found the two variables positively related. Buerkle and Badgley (4, p. 57) found that two criterion groups, 36 families "in trouble" and 186 families "not in trouble", were clearly differentiated on role-taking accuracy. Hobart and Klausner (27, pp. 259-261) in their study of 59 married couples observed that (1) the female's role-taking accuracy was more related to marital adjustment than the male's; (2) role-taking was related to marital adjustment when the role-taking involved personality characteristics, but was not related when it concerned opinions about marital roles; and (3) role-taking accuracy was negatively related to marital role disagreements. Locke, Sabagh, and Thomas (35, p. 123), however, in their study of 126 couples found no relationship between marital adjustment and accuracy of role-taking. It is difficult to resolve these conflicting findings for the following reasons: (1) The studies by Dymond, and Hobart and Klausner involved samples that were smaller and perhaps more biased than the other studies; (2) the study by Buerkle and Badgley was unique in that it had an outside criterion of
marital adjustment, while the other studies relied on an adjustment scale; (3) the study by Locke, Sabagh, and Thomes attempted to obtain a more random sample and thus their findings cannot be easily dismissed. The usual assumption that marital adjustment and thus a more effective working relationship between husband and wife are related to accurate role-taking needs further investigation.

There has been little research on the relation between personality and role-taking accuracy within the marriage relationship. Tarwater (48, p. 128) in a study of 34 couples found a positive correlation between emotional adjustment, as measured by the Bell Adjustment Inventory, and accuracy of prediction. The other studies on the relation between these two factors did not involve courtship and marriage pairs. Dymond in three separate studies (14, p. 346; 15, p. 232; 17, p. 133) found a positive relationship between accurate role-taking and accurate understanding of self. In two of these studies, Dymond (14, p. 346; 15, p. 232) also found accurate role-taking positively related to other personality characteristics such as finding emotional investment rewarding, flexibility and extroversion, and to experiences in one's family of orientation such as the emotional quality of and satisfaction with family relations. Thus, one's past experiences and personality characteristics appear to be related with the accuracy of his role-taking. Unfortunately, this
area has been neglected in research on role-taking in courtship and marriage relationships.

In summary, results of present studies have shown that accurate role-taking is related to (1) the progressive stages of courtship, but not to the length of association in any stage, (2) past experiences and personality characteristics, and (3) the similarity of the partners involved. The role-taking accuracy of one partner is also related to that of the other partner. There appear to be no large differences between the sexes on accurate role-taking. The relation between role-taking and age and between role-taking and education are inconclusive while the relation between role-taking and marital adjustment is unclear.

Congruence of Images

There is a paucity of research on the relationship between congruence of images, the agreement of self-image and self-as-seen-by-partner(s), and other factors involved in interpersonal relations. A review of the literature revealed only four studies concerned with the congruence of images.

One might expect that in a marriage where there is a high similarity of self-concepts, and a high accuracy of role-taking, there would also be a high congruence of images. In turn, these conditions should contribute to a high degree of marital satisfaction. It will be recalled from the last section that accurate role-taking was related to the similarity
of self-images. Kirkpatrick and Hobart (32, pp. 15-16) and Hobart (26, pp. 318-319) concluded that both role-taking accuracy and similarity of self-images increased with the progressive stages of courtship. A study by Kelly (30, p. 196) which involved a highly selective sample of 76 married couples showed a high similarity of self-images between husband and wife on a personality scale. He also found (30, pp. 197-198) that husbands and wives tended to rate each other higher than they rated themselves, and that this "humility" was positively related to marital adjustment. Corsini (8, p. 241), however, found that when 20 married pairs rated themselves on a 50-item Q sort, the Q sorts between husbands and wives were not significantly different from randomly paired Q sorts. On the other hand, he did conclude that the similarity of husband's and wife's self-images was highly correlated with marital happiness, especially for the wife (8, pp. 241-242). The relationship of similarity of self-images and marital happiness was also reported by Dymond (16, p. 344).

Brim and Wood (3, p. 246) in a study of 50 couples, ten each in five different stages of courtship, did not find a significant relation between self-image and self-as-seen-by-partner, although these researchers apparently did not control on the stages of courtship in the analysis. Luckey (37, p. 53) in a study of two criterion groups, 41 couples scoring in
the upper and 40 scoring in the lower quartiles on a marital adjustment scale, found these groups differed significantly in the degree of congruence of images. Luckey reported that marital satisfaction was significantly related to wives seeing their husbands as the husbands saw themselves, but was not significantly related to husbands seeing their wives as their wives saw themselves (38, p. 156). Mangus (39, pp. 257-258) offered some support for the relationship between marital adjustment and the congruence of images, although the completion of his research is not yet reported.

In summary, there is conflicting evidence concerning the question whether the self-images of husbands and wives are more similar than are those of two unmarried individuals, although the majority of research yields a positive answer. Similarity of self-images appears to be related to role-taking accuracy and to marital adjustment, although the relationship between accurate role-taking and marital adjustment is still in question. Congruence of images appears to be related to marital satisfaction. The relationship between the similarity of self-images and the congruence of self-image and self-as-seen-by-spouse has not yet been studied, nor has the interaction of all four variables just considered: similarity of self-images, role-taking accuracy, congruence of self-image and self-as-seen-by-spouse, and marital satisfaction.
Although research has investigated the relationship between role-taking and various situational factors involved in marriage, it has neglected the relationship between role-taking and the dynamic working relationships of marriages. The relationship between the congruence of images and factors which may influence it, such as age, sex, length of marriage and marital strain, has been even more neglected. The present research, it is hoped, will add to the knowledge and understanding of role-taking and the congruence of images by investigating their relationships with some of the factors involved in the interactional process of family living. The factors which may be expected to influence accurate role-taking and congruent images between marital partners are discussed in the following chapter.
THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

This section considers the major concepts which are employed in the present research, the interrelations of the concepts, and their relations to a more general role theory. An attempt is made to demonstrate the importance of role-theory and the congruence of images within this theoretical framework and to show in what way marriage and family relationships offer excellent opportunities for studying the phenomena under consideration. The dependent variables are defined and hypotheses concerning their interrelationships are presented. Following this, each of the dependent variables are discussed separately and hypotheses concerning the relationships between them and the independent variables are offered.

Theoretical Orientation

To demonstrate the importance of role-taking and the congruence of images, it is first necessary to discuss briefly the major concepts of the interactional approach to the study of the group. A social system is defined as a set of stable and regulated motivated interactions of two or more individuals who are oriented toward one another and toward a collective goal. Such interactions require a shared set of norms so that each individual knows what to expect from the others in the situation. The individual has a role in the
group and plays that role according to the expectations of the group members. A role is defined as the actual overt conduct of an individual as a member of a group in a socially defined situation. However, the individual's action is guided by role expectations, defined as shared standards of what he and other individuals believe he ought to do. The actual role tends to coincide with the role-expectations if conformity to these expectations has become a way of satisfying the needs of the individuals involved in the situation.

Role-taking, the act of placing oneself in the other's position to gain his point of view and thus being able to predict his behavior, is basic to the socialization process, to the development of a self-image and to participation in group relations. As an individual responds to other persons he identifies with them, learns to "take the roles of others" and to build a conceptual system of self-other relations and expectations of behavior. Since his own role performances are oriented toward the expectations of the other members of the group, he must "take their roles" in order to anticipate their responses. As he interacts with these others the individual perceives their attitudes toward him and his role and he develops a self-image on the basis of their reactions. By taking the roles of others he views himself as others view him and he becomes the object of his own scrutiny. Thus the individual's self-image is built around the roles he plays and
his and others' attitudes that go with those roles. In turn, self-image and the expectations of others influence the role performances of the individual. Through interpersonal communication and reciprocal role-taking, group members learn to view each other as each person views himself. This agreement between self-image and self-as-seen-by-others is termed the congruence of images.

It is assumed that when group members agree on role definitions they make responses appropriate to each other's behavior and expectations. Each communicates freely with the other, takes the role of the other, views the other as the other views himself, and thus anticipates the other's responses. It is further assumed that in an integrated group with well defined relationships, each member can anticipate not only the overt activities of the others but also their self-feelings as well as their feelings about others. Group integration thus results from agreement on role expectations, mutually supportive role performances, satisfaction with these roles, and a mutual understanding of self-concepts. The lack of these may result in tension, strain, conflict and dissatisfaction among members of the group (39, 40 and 41).

Research in the area of role-taking and the congruence of images has involved various types of groups: primary school classes, courtship relations, friendship relations,
experimentally arranged groups and married couples. It is readily apparent that these are all small group relationships in which the processes under consideration are assumed to be most observable and most easily measured. For a number of reasons the family is one of the best small group relationships in which role-taking and congruence of images can be studied. The family probably offers the most intense and intimate relationships possible in daily contacts, and, it is usually assumed, involves individuals who know one another well enough to predict each other's behavior.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables, which have already been defined, are role-taking and congruence of images. The degree of accurate role-taking by husbands and wives and the congruence of their images are taken as indices of interspousal communication and marital integration. A marriage in which there is a high degree of accurate role-taking and a high degree of congruence of images is assumed to reflect adequate communication and high integration. A marriage in which there is a low degree of these factors is assumed to be poorly integrated and characterized by tension, conflict and dissatisfaction.

In this study, it is hypothesized that accuracy of role-taking by one partner is positively related to that of the other partner. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between the accuracy of role-
taking by one spouse and the accuracy of role-taking by the other spouse. This general hypothesis involves four specific hypotheses, two for each of the two samples: (1) There is no relationship between the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts his wife's self-rating and the accuracy with which she predicts his self-rating. (2) There is no relationship between the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts his wife's rating of him and the accuracy with which she predicts his rating of her. These specific hypotheses are also tested for the nonfarm husbands and wives. These are the four role-taking relationships, two for each sample, which are involved in all tests of hypotheses concerning role-taking accuracy. Throughout this chapter only the general hypotheses regarding the relationships between the independent and dependent variables are given, but the number of specific hypotheses is also noted.

It is hypothesized that the degree of congruence between the wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is positively related to the degree of congruence between the husband's self-image and the wife's image of him. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: The degree of congruence between the wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is not related to the degree of congruence between the husband's self-image and the wife's image of him. This general hypothesis involves two specific hypotheses, one for
the farm and one for the nonfarm samples.

It is hypothesized that accuracy of role-taking is positively related to the congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between accuracy of role-taking and congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves eight specific hypotheses, four for each of the two samples: (1) The degree of congruence between the farm wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is not related to the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts the wife's self-image. (2) The degree of congruence between the farm wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is not related to the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts the wife's image of the husband. (3) The degree of congruence between the farm husband's self-image and the wife's image of him is not related to the accuracy with which the farm wife predicts the husband's self-image. (4) The degree of congruence between the farm husband's self-image and the wife's image of him is not related to the accuracy with which the farm wife predicts the husband's image of the wife. These four relationships are repeated and tested for the nonfarm husbands and wives which makes a total of eight separate tests.

Independent Variables

The independent variables used in this study are: sex, age, spousal age differences, education, spousal educational
differences, rural and urban residence, social status, length of marriage, and marital strain. In order to show the expected relation between each of the independent variables and the dependent variables, each of the former are considered and discussed separately.

**Sex**

It is often assumed that the female is more intuitive than the male and that she more than he can spontaneously sense what other persons feel and think. Others, arguing from a sociological frame of reference, state that this sex difference in role-taking accuracy is a function of the different roles each plays in the family group. The husband's major role in the family is that of earning income and giving status to the family. The wife's major role is of an integrative nature; more than her spouse, she is expected to know and anticipate the husband's thoughts and feelings, provide a pleasant atmosphere at home, satisfy his desires and care for their children. Thus, the wife provides emotional support to the family while the husband primarily plays a "linkage role" between the family and the occupational systems (Halle, pp. 13-15 and 313-314). The roles that the husband plays involve his being more oriented outside the family than the wife and spending less time with the children than she does. Although the wife may play some instrumental roles, she is more likely than her husband to be oriented toward her family, be
concerned about relationships among the family members, and be
involved in the caring of the children. While she cannot
participate directly in the work of the husband, she can offer
him emotional support. Thus, she probably demonstrates a
greater accuracy of role-taking and congruence of images than
he does.

This argument for the supportive role of the wife, and
thus for a more accurate role-taking on her part, assumes a
somewhat static society in which roles are traditionally held
by all. However, it has repeatedly been noted that American
society is changing, that the number of working wives and
mothers is increasing, and that thus the roles of married
women are being modified. Today, the emphasis appears to be
on an equalitarian type of marriage in which the husband and
wife are partners. Thus, one might expect that, at least in
the equalitarian type of marriages, husbands and wives
demonstrate the same degree of role-taking and congruence of
images.

The research cited in the previous chapter failed to find
sex differences in accurate role-taking (10, 26, 32 and 43). It
might be argued, however, that these studies involved
middle class couples among whom equalitarian marriages pre-
dominated and where thus no sex differences were likely to be
found. It might be argued further that among marriages where
the traditionally supportive role of the wife is more likely
maintained wives are more accurate than husbands in role-taking.

In the present research it is hypothesized that since the wife plays a more supportive-integrative role than the husband she demonstrates a higher degree of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images than he does. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no sex difference in role-taking accuracy or in the congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves six specific hypotheses, two for the role-taking and one for the congruence of images comparisons in each of the two samples.

**Age**

Age is often taken as an index to maturity. Part of the socialization process, learning to become more and more of an adult member of society, is taking the roles of others so that the others' responses can be anticipated and reacted to appropriately. Taking the roles of others in order to anticipate their responses permits the individual to become an integrated member of the group. In the process of development the child first learns to respond to, and take the roles of specific individuals, usually his parents. Later he interacts with other individuals who are significant to him, and finally he interacts with persons of his own age group, his peers (42, pp. 135-226).

The exact relationship between age and accurate role-
taking has never been specified, although it can be inferred from the above argument that the relationship may be somewhat linear, at least for the first 15 or 20 years of an individual's life. One study (18, p. 205) found that older children took the roles of others more accurately than younger children. Role-taking may follow a developmental pattern, rising in the early years, reaching a peak at maturity, maintaining this level for a number of years, and perhaps finally declining in old age. If this developmental pattern were true, then the finding by Locke, et al. (35, p. 124) of no difference between older and younger groups on accurate role-taking would have been expected.

Due to the lack of research in this area, no predictive hypothesis is presented for this study. However, the null hypothesis will be tested. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference between older and younger spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves six specific hypotheses, four for the role-taking and two for the congruence of images comparisons.

**Age differences**

A marriage between persons of approximately the same age appears to represent adherence to normative expectations while marriages involving persons of quite dissimilar ages may be considered as deviations from that norm. For a larger number
of reasons, some individuals cannot find a mate of the same age range. The pool of potential mates for these individuals is limited. When they do marry they may choose a mate who also has difficulty in finding a marital partner. Further, these individuals who are deviants from one societal norm may be deviants from other norms as well.

The positive relationship between age similarity of spouses and their marital success has been found in some research studies (5, p. 406 and 49, p. 184). It is assumed that two individuals who are similar in age will have had a more similar socialization experience and will thus have more in common than two persons quite different in age. Similarity in age would permit accurate role-taking and congruence of images since individuals of the same age range, it is assumed, would be more able to communicate with one another and have more in common to share, enjoy and discuss with one another than would persons quite dissimilar in age.

For the present research, it is hypothesized that similarity of age between spouses is directly related to accuracy of role-taking and to the congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between similarity of age between spouses and the accuracy of their role-taking or the congruence of their images. This general hypothesis involves the six specific hypotheses described in the previous section regarding age.
When dissimilarity in age occurs in mate selection, the male is usually older than the female. A marriage involving the reverse relationship may indicate a pattern of behavior more deviant than one involving persons of similar ages or involving a male who is older than the female. This deviant pattern may reflect personality difficulties and present problems in communication and role expectations between husband and wife (2, pp. 111, 197 and 211).

A second hypothesis regarding age differences is that marriages involving wives who are older than their husbands exhibit a lower degree of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images than do marriages involving spouses of similar ages or those in which husbands are older than their wives. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images between marriages involving spouses of similar ages, those involving husbands who are older than their wives, or those involving wives older than their husbands. This general hypothesis involves the six specific hypotheses described previously in the section regarding age.

Education

The purpose of education is to prepare individuals adequately for life situations, which include dealing with people, facing and solving problems and choosing a vocation. It is often assumed that an individual's preparation for most
life experiences including marriage, homemaking and child-rearing is related to the length of time he spends in school.

Studies have shown that educational level is positively related to marital adjustment (5, p. 391 and 49, pp. 191-192). Census figures demonstrate that divorce and separation are twice as great for young people who fail to finish high school as for college graduates (23, p. 154). The relationship between education and marital adjustment is complicated, however, by the relationships among age, education, occupation, income, standard of living, and perhaps numerous other factors. The question may well be asked whether education per se can account for greater marital adjustment or is education merely an index to greater maturity or a stepping stone to higher occupation and larger salary which, in turn, would help create a more satisfying marriage relationship.

If it is assumed that role-taking accuracy and congruence of images are correlated with marital adjustment, and if it is assumed that education is positively related to marital adjustment, then it can be hypothesized that educational level is directly related to role-taking accuracy and congruence of images. Locke, et al. (35, p. 124), however, failed to find a difference between less educated couples and more educated couples on role-taking accuracy.

With the assumption that formal education does offer better preparation for life situations than does the lack of
education, it is hypothesized in this study that educational level is positively related to role-taking accuracy and congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference between less educated spouses and more educated spouses in role-taking accuracy or in congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves the six specific hypotheses previously described in the section regarding age.

**Educational differences**

Like similarity of age, similarity of education is positively related to marital adjustment (5, pp. 390-392; 49, pp. 189-192). Individuals who have relatively the same amount of education should be better able to share ideas and events with each other, and have more in common than those who differ greatly in educational level. Being able to communicate freely with one another and to understand each other's views, the similarly educated are probably more likely than the dissimilarly educated to role-take accurately and have a higher congruence of images. The former type of individuals more than the latter have a pattern of roles satisfactorily agreed on and accepted by both partners, and each spouse communicates freely the feelings he has of himself, his partner, and the relationship. Each should be able to anticipate and predict the other's response due to the agreement on roles and the free communication between the
spouses. It is hypothesized for this study that similarity in education is directly related to role-taking accuracy and congruence of images. Stated in null form, the hypothesis is: There is no difference between spouses who have similar educational levels and spouses who have dissimilar educational levels on role-taking accuracy or on congruence of images.

When dissimilarity in education occurs in mate selection, it is usually the male who has more education. Two of the main functions the husband performs for the family, earning income and giving status, are partially dependent on his educational attainment. The type of work the husband does, his chances for advancement in his occupation, and the standard of living enjoyed by him and his family all reflect the educational level he has reached. Perhaps the facts that the male is considered superior to the female in our culture and that the male traditionally takes the initiative in courtship partially account for the male having a higher education. At times, however, women marry men with less education. These latter marriages were found in one study to be less successful and adjusted than those involving equally educated persons or those involving males with a higher education than the females (49, p. 191). The deviant pattern, one in which the female marries a male with less education, is assumed to present difficulties in role definitions, communication, and perhaps to prohibit an adjustment
satisfactory to both partners (2, pp. 111, 163-164, 226-227 and 256).

A second hypothesis concerning educational differences is that marriages of equally educated spouses or marriages in which the husbands are more educated than wives, exhibit more accurate role-taking than those in which the wife has more education than the husband. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference in accurate role-taking or in congruence of images between marriages of equally educated spouses or marriages in which the husbands have more education than the wives and marriages involving wives having more education than the husbands. This general hypothesis involves the six specific hypotheses described previously in the section regarding age.

Farm and nonfarm residence

Rural life has often been described as familistic, i.e., the family being the focus of the interest and activity of individuals in the rural community. The rural family is claimed to be more integrated and to experience less divorce than the urban family. The rural family members have more daily contacts with one another and the children are more supervised than is true of their urban counterparts. The members of the rural family more than those of the urban family spend time working together in a common enterprise and participating in community affairs.
Socio-economic status

Social status is related to numerous behavioral patterns, eating habits, clothing, voting behavior, leisure activity, child-rearing practices, and various attitude and value orientations. Two factors which have been frequently employed as indices of social status position are education and occupation. While education may be a preparatory step toward entering an occupation, the occupation itself is more directly related to income level, standard of living, and perhaps social prestige. For the present research occupation is taken as a measure of social status.

Unfortunately, none of the marriage adjustment studies employed social status measures in its research design. Roth and Peck (46, pp. 479-481), however, in a restudy of the marriages analyzed by Burgess and Cottrell, found that social status and marital adjustment were positively related. Goode (24, pp. 43-67) found divorce and social status were negatively related, whether status was measured by education or occupation.

Although research has demonstrated a relationship between social status and marital adjustment and marital instability, it has not yet shown the exact way in which social status operates to produce these phenomena. It is inferred from the available studies that the lower class couples would be more worried about finances, taking extra employment in order to
The urban family, it is claimed, tends to be atomistic, less well integrated, and each member spends more time with non-members than with other members of the family. The urban family, in contrast to the rural family, is more likely to be nuclear, isolated from relatives, small, and have a higher divorce rate.

Since most of the marital adjustment studies have used urban samples, there are little data pertaining to urban and rural family differences in marital adjustment. In the study by Locke, (34, p. 338) which included a rural sample, no significant differences were found between rural and urban families on marital adjustment scores.

If it is assumed that the farm family is more highly integrated, has roles which are more clearly defined and consists of members who interact more frequently than the nonfarm family, it can be hypothesized that farm spouses display a higher degree of accurate role-taking and of congruence of images than nonfarm spouses. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference between farm and nonfarm spouses in accuracy of role-taking and in congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves six specific hypotheses in these cases, comparisons between the two samples for the two measures of role-taking accuracy and the one measure of congruence of images for each sex.
increase income, and the feeling relatively deprived due to the discrepancy between expectations and achievements. It is assumed that a lower class family in which there is worry over income, few labor-saving devices, a number of children, a wife working or a husband taking a second job, there would be less chance of satisfactory interaction among the family members than would be true of an upper class family. When interaction does occur, it is likely to involve tension, argument and dissatisfaction. This may be part of the mechanism accounting for a higher divorce rate and a lower degree of marital adjustment among lower class individuals than among higher class persons.¹

Although there is little research on family interaction at the various status levels, it is assumed in this study that social status is directly related to formal preparation for life situations such as solving problems, for effective communication and for meeting and dealing with people. The amount of marital tension and conflict experienced is thus inversely related to social status position. It is hypothesized that lower status couples are less accurate in their role-taking and display less congruent images than higher class couples. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference between lower class spouses and upper class spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in

¹For further discussion and documentation see Cavan (7).
congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves the six specific hypotheses previously described in the section regarding age.

Length of marriage

The establishment of a new relationship between a man and a woman begins with their becoming husband and wife. They must establish a pattern of interacting roles which proves satisfactory to both partners and which helps them to achieve the goals they set for themselves. The establishment of a satisfying and working relationship does not occur immediately; it takes time. Some never reach it. Once the role of each partner is defined, agreed on and performed according to specifications, each knows what to expect of the other, and takes the role of the other in order to anticipate his responses. Each spouse learns what the other thinks and feels about himself, his partner and the marriage relationship. Once the relationship has stabilized, each partner generally comes to think and feel about the other partner as the other thinks about himself. Thus, it is assumed that accurate role-taking and congruence of images are positively related to length of marriage.

Landis (33, p. 668) found that although many of the couples in his sample reported reaching a satisfactory adjustment in the early years of marriage, others took longer to adjust. He also found that adjustment in different areas of
the marriage relationship took various lengths of time to complete. Burgess and Cottrell (5, pp. 246-248) found that marital adjustment scores were highest in the first years of marriage, dropped ten points by the sixth to eighth year, and rose somewhat after that but not as high on the average as at the beginning. This finding was reported by Terman (49, p. 177). It may be noted also that divorce is more likely to occur in the first years of marriage than later (23, p. 140).

It will be recalled that the review of literature revealed conflicting evidence on the relationship between accurate role-taking and the length of association. There was no research on the relationship between congruence of images and length of marriage. On the assumption that time does make a difference in the establishment of effective interspousal communications and a satisfactory pattern of interacting roles in marriage, it is hypothesized that length of marriage is positively related to accuracy of role-taking and to congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no difference in accuracy of role-taking or in congruence of images between spouses who have been married a short time and spouses who have been married a longer time. This general hypothesis involves twelve specific hypotheses, one for each of the six measures of the dependent variables for the couples in each of the two samples.
Marital strain

Indirect measures of conflict, tension, and strain in a marriage relation may be a more valid and reliable index to the degree of marital integration and satisfaction than more direct measures of marital adjustment and satisfaction. Recently two researchers have attempted to measure the amount of marital tension and strain between husbands and wives. Hurvitz (28 and 29) used what he called an "Index of Strain" computed by the sum of the discrepancies between role expectations by one spouse and role performances of the other. In one study (28, pp. 110) he found that the husband's index scores were significantly related to marital adjustment scores. However, there was no significant relationship between the wife's index scores and marital adjustment. He found also that the husband's and the wife's indices of strain were significantly related. Farber (19, 20 and 21) used what he called an "Index of Role Tension" computed by the total number of negative personality characteristics by which each spouse describes himself and his partner. He also used an "Index of Consensus", computed by the degree to which marital partners agreed on important values. These two indices, tension and consensus, were used as a combined measurement of marital integration. In one study (19, pp. 122-132) Farber found that the marital integration was positively related to similarity of spousal self-ratings.
and to reported happiness. In another study (20, p. 601) he found that marital tension was curvilinearly related to the number of children and was inversely related to marital adjustment.

A marriage couple between whom there is disagreement over goals, means, and roles will experience a great deal of tension, frustration, and confusion. Arguments will displace effective communication and separation or divorce may ultimately result. Accurate role-taking and congruent images will not be possible because the partners are too emotionally involved in the confused situation. Instead of accurately taking one another's role, the partners will impute to each other's personality the negative feelings they have about the relationship. Only when they have reached common role definitions will the atmosphere be cleared enough for them to communicate freely, define roles which are mutually agreeable, begin to take each other's role accurately, and develop congruent images.

A low degree of effective communication between husband and wife may thus result in inaccurate role-taking, incongruent images and discrepant perceptions of task performances. It is readily apparent that these may all be considered indications of marital strain. However, since accurate predictions of another's responses are defined in the theoretical framework of this research as role-taking
accuracy, and since the agreement between one's self-image and the image his partner has of him is defined as the congruence of images, the term marital strain is reserved in the present research for discrepancies in spousal perceptions of task performances.

For the present study marital strain is defined as the disagreement of spousal perceptions of role performances. Although Kenkel and Hoffman (31) found that spousal perceptions did not entirely agree with spousal behavior, it is here assumed that a discrepancy between spousal perceptions of role performances is one measure of marital tension and strain. It is hypothesized that marital strain is inversely related to accuracy of role-taking and to congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between marital strain and accuracy of role-taking or congruence of images. This general hypothesis involves twelve specific hypotheses, one for each of the six measures of the dependent variables for the couples in each of the two samples.
Definition of universe

The universe sampled for this survey consisted of all occupied dwelling units in Greene County, Iowa. Non-dwelling units such as institutions, hotels, boarding houses, etc., were not included. Detailed definitions were provided for the interviewers for distinguishing between occupied and non-occupied dwelling units, eligible and ineligible dwelling units and among households within eligible dwelling units.

Selection of sample

Three strata, or zones, were defined: urban, rural place, and open country. The urban zone included only the town of Jefferson. The rural place included the remaining incorporated and unincorporated name places in the county. Specifically the towns of Scranton, Dana, Varlin, Churdan, Adaza, Paton, Cooper, Rippey, Grand Junction, and that part of Ralston lying in Greene County were included in the rural place zone. The open country zone included all areas of the county not already assigned to the other two zones. A ten percent sample was taken in clusters of three out of thirty dwellings in each zone.

Urban zone

By means of cruising, an estimate of the total number of households in Jefferson was obtained on a
block by block basis and the number in each block was entered on a map of the city. In general, a block in the above context corresponded to a city block with the following exceptions: (1) Where the city block contained less than three households, it was combined with a contiguous block; and (2) where the street pattern was erratic, particularly on the outskirts of town, areas were blocked off on the map using other features, such as railroads, the city boundary and the Raccoon River, in combination with the existing streets.

The blocks thus formed were numbered in a serpentine manner and listed in order. The number of households in each was recorded, and a cumulative count was carried forward from block to block. Next, a number between one and thirty was drawn at random and a systematic selection of the block containing this dwelling and every thirtieth dwelling thereafter was made, thus designating with probability proportional to size, in terms of estimated number of households, the blocks from which the sample segments were to be selected.

Each designated block was revisited, closer count of the number of households was made, and the location of each household was indicated on a sketch of the block. The households were then numbered in a clockwise fashion starting at the northeast corner. Because the preliminary cruise count, which determined the probability with which the block in question was chosen, was not always accurate, it was necessary
to adjust the expected cluster size, three, by multiplying it by a factor, \( \frac{\text{number of households according to second count}}{\text{number of households according to cruise count}} \)

This procedure assures each household in the universe an equal chance of being selected in the sample as follows:

Let \( A_i \) = number of households in the \( i \)th block according to cruise,

\( B_i \) = number of households in the \( i \)th block according to second count,

\( C_i = \frac{B_i}{A_i} \) = number of households in cluster from the \( i \)th block,

\( D \) = number of households in stratum according to cruise.

\[
P (\text{jth household of \( i \)th block selected}) = (\text{number of clusters selected}) P (\text{\( i \)th block selected}) P (\text{\( j \)th household selected/\( i \)th block selected})
\]

\[
= \frac{D}{30} \frac{A_i}{D} \frac{C_i}{B_i}
\]

\[
= \frac{D}{30} \frac{A_i}{D} \frac{B_i}{A_i} x 3 = \frac{3}{30} = \frac{1}{10} .
\]

As can be easily seen, when the preliminary count was correct, as was usually the case, the cluster size was unaltered.

For each block a number between one and the total number of households in the block, according to the second count, was drawn at random. Starting with the household corresponding to
this number, the appropriate number of households was selected in numerical order.

**Rural place zone** The sample in the rural place zone was selected in the same manner as in the urban zone. A new number between one and thirty was selected at random for the first town and, along with the cumulative block count, carried forward from town to town. Since the sample was selected at the same time the cruise was made, the towns were ordered on the basis of geographical convenience rather than at random.

**Open country zone** In the selection of the sample from the open country zone, a cruise count was unnecessary since a Master Sample Map of Greene County on which cultural features including dwelling features was available. Clusters of three indicated households out of every thirty were selected systematically. Again, the sampling unit was the area of land associated with the three indicated households, and all households within the area were included in the sample.

**Modifications of the sample**

The sample was later modified by designating every fifth segment which was selected after a random number start as a substitute segment, thus reducing the sampling rate from 0.10 to 0.08. If the interviewer was unable to complete a questionnaire for a household in one of her assigned segments, usually because of a refusal, she was able to obtain a
substitute segment. Her instructions were to go to the nearest such segment in her area and, starting at the upper right-hand corner and proceeding clockwise, to interview the first household there. In the case of a subsequent substitution, she would interview the first household not already interviewed. In some instances, when her work area included no substitute segment, the interviewer was assigned a particular segment in another area.

The use of a substitution rule introduces a bias, the magnitude of which cannot be assessed since there is no way of knowing in what ways if any those not interviewed differ as a group from those interviewed. When the non-interview rate is small, the bias is usually assumed to be negligible; however, the rate in this survey is rather high, particularly in the rural place zone. The urban zone sample of 125 households included 11.2 percent substitutes; the rural place zone sample of 71 households included 16.9 percent substitutes; and the open country zone sample of 99 households included 8.1 percent substitutes. It is not possible to state what effect substitution may have had on the results of this survey.

In this thesis, only those married couples having children living at home were used. Further, the thesis included only those couples on whom there were complete data regarding all independent and dependent variables. When
these controls were imposed, the present sample resulted in 177 couples. The assumption was made that these couples were a random sample of all married couples having children at home at the time of the survey. Any further classifications of these selected families were also treated as random samples.

The data reported in this study were collected by home interviews with the husbands and wives.

Operational Definitions

Farm and nonfarm residence

For all comparisons in the present study, the 177 couples were divided into two categories, a farm sample with 80 couples and a nonfarm sample with 97 couples. Type of residence was based on the occupations of the husbands. All couples involving a husband who was a farmer were placed in the farm category, and all other couples were placed in the nonfarm category.

Congruence of images and role-taking accuracy

The measures of congruence of images and role-taking accuracy were based on responses to nine negative personality characteristics (see the Appendix). These nine items, taken from the Burgess-Wallin study of engagement and marriage, were part of their schedule measuring "compatibility of personality and temperament". The instrument as used by Burgess and Wallin was reported to have correlated .45 with
marital happiness (6, pp. 502-504). The nine items, selected on the basis of a factor analysis, were also employed by Farber and Blackman (20, p. 598) to measure marital role tension.

The nine negative personality characteristics included in the schedule were: angers easily, stubborn, selfish, irritable, easily hurt, moody, easily depressed, easily excited, and jealous. The responses for each item ranged from "very much so" to "not at all". Each respondent was asked to rate himself, to rate his spouse, to predict his spouse's rating of him, and to predict his spouse's rating of himself on the nine items in the schedule. The responses were scored from 0 for "not at all" to 4 for "very much so".

The responses by husbands and wives were compared item by item and the differences between each spouse's rating of himself and his partner's rating of him was taken as a measure of the congruence of images. Item comparisons were also made between each spouse's rating of himself and his partner's prediction of his self-rating, and between each spouse's rating of his partner and that partner's prediction of the spouse's rating of him. The item differences between spousal ratings were squared and summed for the nine items. A high score indicated a large disagreement between spouses while a low score signified small disagreement between them.

Two measures of congruence of images were developed:
(1) the amount of agreement between husband's self-rating and
his wife's rating of him, and (2) the amount of agreement
between wife's self-rating and her husband's rating of her.
Four measures of role-taking accuracy were developed: (1) the
amount of agreement between husband's prediction of wife's
self-rating and her self-rating, (2) the amount of agreement
between husband's prediction of wife's rating of him and her
rating of him, (3) the amount of agreement between wife's
prediction of husband's self-rating and his self-rating, and
(4) the amount of agreement between wife's prediction of
husband's rating of her and his rating of her.

In order to test the reliability of the six measures
employed in this study, the items were intercorrelated and
the Spearman-Brown formula was employed to obtain the average
correlation of the items in each measure. The results are
presented in Table 1. Although the reliability coefficients
were not large, it is felt that the measures offered minimum
reliability for the present research.

Marital strain

The measure of marital strain was based on husbands' and
wives' responses to items regarding family decisions (see the
Appendix). These items, similar to those employed by Blood
(1 and 2, pp. 19-20) and Dyer and Urban (12) to measure
marital role structure, were used in the present study to
measure differential spousal perception of decision-making
responded to items regarding farm management. For each item in the schedule the person could respond that the decision was made by (a) wife always, (b) wife more than husband, (c) wife and husband about equally, (d) husband more than wife, and (e) husband always. The responses were coded 1 through 5, respectively. The item responses by the husbands were then compared with those by the wives and the differences between these responses were taken as a measure of marital strain. The differences between spousal reports were squared and then summed for each of the areas of decision-making.

Two summary scores were also obtained. One summary score was obtained by adding the scores in the areas of child care, management of money, major family decisions, and social activity; the other summary score was obtained by adding scores in the last three mentioned areas but omitting child care. A high score on any of these measures indicated high disagreement, while a low score signified high agreement between husband and wife.

In order to test the internal consistency of item differences, the items in the schedule were intercorrelated. From these intercorrelations a decision was made to omit one item from the instrument, "How much life insurance the family should have", and to transfer another item, "Whether or not money should be borrowed", from the area of money management to the area of major family decisions. The reliability
Table 1. Reliability coefficients of the measures of accuracy of role-taking and congruence of images, by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm sample</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfarm sample</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aThese symbols are an abbreviation for the difference between the husband's rating of himself and the wife's rating of him.

bThese symbols are an abbreviation for the differences between the wife's rating of herself and the husband's rating of her.

cThese symbols are an abbreviation for the differences between the husband's prediction of the wife's self-rating and her actual self-rating.

dThese symbols are an abbreviation for the differences between the husband's prediction of the wife's rating of him and her actual rating of him.

eThese symbols are an abbreviation for the differences between the wife's prediction of the husband's rating of her and his actual rating of her.

fThese symbols are an abbreviation for the differences between the wife's prediction of the husband's self-rating and his actual self-rating.

practices in the family.

Each spouse was asked to report who made decisions in the areas of child care, management of money, major family decisions and social activity. The farm spouses also
coefficients for each of the areas of decision-making were calculated by the Spearman-Brown formula. The results are shown in Table 2.

It was felt the measures offered minimum reliability for the present study. At first, it was thought that by summing

Table 2. Reliability coefficients of the measures of marital strain, by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D-child^a</th>
<th>D-money^b</th>
<th>D-family^c</th>
<th>D-social^d</th>
<th>D-farm^e</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm sample</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfarm sample</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a This is an abbreviation for the discrepancies between husband's and wife's reports of decision-making practices regarding child care.

^b This is an abbreviation for the discrepancies between husband's and wife's reports of decision-making practices regarding management of money.

^c This is an abbreviation for the discrepancies between husband's and wife's reports of decision-making practices regarding major family decisions.

^d This is an abbreviation for the discrepancies between husband's and wife's reports of decision-making practices regarding social activity.

^e This is an abbreviation for the discrepancies between husband's and wife's reports of decision-making practices regarding farm management.
the discrepancies on all the items regarding decision-making one index of marital strain could be developed. However, after intercorrelating the five areas of decision-making the possibility of one index was considered untenable. Table 3 presents the results of the intercorrelations, corrected for attenuation, of the five areas. It was concluded from this table that differences in spousal perception of decision-making practices, i.e. marital strain, was a specific factor, and not a general factor, in the marital relationship. If marital strain occurred, it would more likely be limited to

Table 3. Intercorrelations among measures of marital strain, corrected for attenuation, by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital strain</th>
<th>Farm sample</th>
<th>Marital strain</th>
<th>Nonfarm sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D- money</td>
<td>D- family</td>
<td>D- money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-child</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-money</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-family</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-social</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aFor definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 2.

b_{N} = 80.
c_{N} = 97.
one or two areas than be diffused in all areas of family life. This fact appeared in Table 3 to be more true of the farm families than of the nonfarm families, as evidenced by the higher intercorrelations in the latter sample. Since the items in each of the areas of decision-making appeared to correlate more highly among themselves than they correlated with items in the other areas, a decision was made to employ each area cluster as a measure of marital strain rather than obtain one measure by summing all the items. Thus, four measures of marital strain were used for the nonfarm sample and five measures for the farm sample.

Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status was based on responses to the question, "What did the husband do during most of 1957?" Only the responses by the nonfarm sample were used in the present research. The responses were coded and then grouped into three occupational categories. The high status category included professional occupations such as lawyer, dentist, doctor and minister; managerial positions such as manager, proprietor, and owner-operator; and semi-professional and "trained white-collar" occupations such as school teachers, dental technicians, librarian, accountant and bank cashier. The middle status category included sales and service workers such as insurance agent, police officer, depot agent and hog buyer; skilled workers such as carpenter, plumber,
electrician and surveyor; and clerical workers such as store clerk, bookkeeper and bank clerk. The low status category included semi-skilled workers such as barbers, maintenance workers and factory workers; unskilled and domestic workers such as gas station attendants, custodians, truck drivers and day laborers; and salaried farm workers. Although desirable, a further refinement of these socio-economic status levels was impossible due to the small number of cases in each category.

Methods of Analysis

The first step in the analysis of the data, as already indicated, was to intercorrelate the items in the scales measuring congruence of images and role-taking accuracy. This was also done for the scales measuring marital strain. The internal consistency of the items in each of the scales was determined from these intercorrelations and a reliability coefficient for each scale was computed by the Spearman-Brown formula. Correlations among the scales measuring congruence of images and role-taking accuracy and among the scales measuring marital strain were computed and corrected for attenuation.

After the reliability of the instruments was determined, the next step in the analysis of the data was to test the hypotheses in the study by three methods, zero order correlations, t tests and analysis of variance. Length of marriage
and the various measures of marital strain were correlated with the measures of congruence of images and role-taking accuracy. This was done to determine whether the zero order correlation coefficients between these variables differed significantly from zero. The t tests based on matched pairs were used in the comparisons between mean scores by husbands and wives on the dependent variables, in order to determine whether the mean differences between spouses were greater than chance expectations.

The relationships between the other independent variables and the dependent variables were determined by analysis of variance. The design of the experiment was conceived as an unbalanced factorial design involving subclasses of unequal sizes. Although an analysis of variance test could have been applied to each of the independent variables separately, the interrelationships of these variables were apparent. Due to these interrelationships it was thought advisable to obtain one within sum of squares term for each test involving the relationships between the dependent variables and sex, age, spousal age differences, education, spousal educational differences, farm and nonfarm residence and social status. When all of these factors were controlled, only those cases which yielded repetition within cells were retained to determine the within sum of squares terms for the six measures of the dependent variables. For each of the six measures of the
dependent variables there were twelve cells with two cases each and with one degree of freedom, four cells with three cases each and with two degrees of freedom, one cell with four cases and with three degrees of freedom, and one cell with six cases and five degrees of freedom. Thus, a within sum of squares with 28 degrees of freedom was obtained for each of the analysis of variance tests of the relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

Each of the analysis of variance tests involved the ratio of two factors and their interaction to the within sum of squares mentioned above. In order to ascertain the influence of farm and nonfarm residence on the dependent variables, this variable was retained in the tests of the other independent variables. For example, in the analysis of variance regarding the relationship between age and the dependent variables, the interaction of residence and age was first tested, the influence of residence was then tested, and finally the influence of age was tested. This procedure of analysis is reported in more detail in the discussion of findings in the next chapter.

The five percent level was used as the criterion of statistical significance in all analyses.

Limitations of the Study

One of the principal limitations of the present study was the instruments used to measure the dependent variables.
and marital strain. The relatively low reliability of these instruments was probably affected by the small number of items in the scales. The validity of these instruments was judged by their face validity and by the internal consistency of the item. Although the instruments were assumed to measure the phenomena under consideration, they were also seen as a mere sampling of these phenomena.

The instruments were indeterminably affected by the process of data collection. It was assumed that husbands and wives completed the questionnaires independently, but there was undoubtedly some collaboration between spouses. The purpose of the instrument on role-taking accuracy was made known to the respondents by the wording of the instructions, and this fact possibly influenced their responses to their ratings of their spouses as well as their predictions of their spouses' responses. Knowledge of the purpose of this instrument might also have produced spousal collaboration in completing the questionnaires. The purposes of the instruments measuring congruence of images and marital strain were not as obvious as those measuring role-taking accuracy.

The responses to the items regarding ratings on personality characteristics were possibly also affected by the personality characteristics of the spouses. Some spouses might have marked all the items with a stereotyped response, i.e., marked all items "somewhat", or "not at all", or "very
much so". To what degree this was true was not determined in the present research, but it might be assumed that it was more true for respondents marking extreme responses, "very much so" and "not at all", than for respondents marking less extreme responses.
FINDINGS

The findings are presented in the order of hypotheses as previously outlined.

Dependent Variables

The first general hypothesis concerning the relationships among the dependent variables is that accuracy of role-taking by one spouse is positively related to that of the other spouse. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between the accuracy of role-taking by one spouse and the accuracy of role-taking by the other spouse.

Table 4 presents the correlation coefficients, corrected for attenuation, among the measures of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images of husbands and wives. Since high scores on all measures indicate greater inaccuracies in prediction, a positive correlation is in the direction expected by the hypothesis.

Practically all of the correlations were high. The only measures which did not appear to correlate significantly (P > .05) were the accuracy of farm wives' predictions of their husbands' ratings of them and their accuracy in predicting their husbands' self-ratings. With the exception of one tie, the correlations were higher among nonfarm couples than among farm couples. Thus, the general null hypothesis was
Table 4. Intercorrelations among measures of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images, corrected for attenuation, by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congruence of images and role-taking accuracy</th>
<th>Congruence of images and role-taking accuracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farm sample&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-H to W-H</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-W to H-W</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-W to W-W</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-H to W-H</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-H-W to H-W</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>For definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.

<sup>b</sup><sub>N = 80.</sub>

<sup>c</sup><sub>N = 97.</sub>
rejected and the predictive general hypothesis supported.

The second general hypothesis regarding the dependent variables is that the degree of congruence between the wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is positively related to the degree of congruence between the husband's self-image and the wife's image of him. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between the congruence of the wife's self-image and the husband's image of her, on the one hand, and the congruence of the husband's self-image and the wife's image of him, on the other hand.

As shown in Table 4, the correlations between the measures of congruence of images were .54 among the nonfarm spouses and .45 among the farm spouses. These significant correlations (\(P < .05\)) indicated that the agreement between one's self-image and the image held of him by his spouse was related to the agreement between the spouse's self-image and the image he held of that spouse. Thus, the second general null hypothesis was rejected and the predictive hypothesis supported.

The third general hypothesis is that accuracy of role-taking is positively related to the congruence of images. Stated in null form, this general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of images. The accuracy with which the husband predicted the responses of his wife was expected to be positively
related to the congruence of the husband's self-image and his wife's image of him.

As shown in Table 4, the correlations between the accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of images were significant (P < .05). Thus, the third general null hypothesis was rejected and the predictive hypothesis supported.

In summary, the data appeared to indicate fairly high intercorrelations among the measures of husband's role-taking accuracy, wife's role-taking accuracy, the congruence of the husband's image of the wife with the wife's self-image, and the congruence of the wife's image of the husband with the husband's self-image. The two notable exceptions, correlations of .04 and .10, were in the farm sample. There appeared to be a general factor running through these measures of accurate role-taking and congruent images, particularly among the measures which correlated .90 or more.

Independent Variables

Sex

It is hypothesized that since the wife plays a more supportive-integrative role than the husband, she demonstrates a higher degree of role-taking and congruence of images than he does. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no sex differences in role-taking accuracy or in the congruence of images.
In order to test this hypothesis, mean comparisons between responses by husbands and wives on the measures of the dependent variables were made separately for farm and nonfarm samples. Two-tailed t tests based on matched pairs were applied to these mean differences to test their significance. A higher mean indicated greater inaccuracies in role-taking and greater congruence of images. A t of 1.98 was necessary to be significant at the five percent level.

The mean of farm husbands predicting their wives' self-ratings, 11.9, compared to the mean of farm wives predicting their husbands' self-ratings, produced a t of .738, which was far from significance. The mean of farm husbands predicting their wives' rating of husbands was equal to the mean of farm wives predicting their husbands' rating of wives, 13.3.

The mean of the nonfarm husbands' prediction for their wives' self-ratings, 11.4, was practically equal to the mean of the nonfarm wives' prediction for their husbands' self-ratings, 11.3. The mean of the nonfarm wives' prediction for their husbands' ratings of wives, 14.9, compared to the mean of the nonfarm husbands' prediction for their wives' ratings of husbands, 12.8, produced a t of 1.72. This latter t approached, but did not reach the significance level (.08 > P > .05).

The mean of the congruence of the farm husbands' images of their wives and the wives' self-images, 13.3, compared to
the mean of the congruence of the farm wives' images of their husbands and the husbands' self-images, 10.9, produced a t of 1.36, which was non-significant (P > .05). The mean of the congruence of the nonfarm husbands' images of their wives and the wives' self-images, 13.7, compared to the mean of the congruence of the nonfarm wives' images of their husbands and the husbands' self-images, 10.3, produced a significant t of 3.01 (P < .01).

In summary, none of the statistical tests regarding sex differences in role-taking accuracy was significant, although one test approached the significance level for the nonfarm sample. While both statistical tests regarding sex differences in the congruence of images were in the expected direction, only one test was significant. Thus, it was concluded that the null hypotheses regarding role-taking accuracy could not be rejected. The null hypothesis regarding congruence of images was rejected for the nonfarm sample but failed to be rejected for the farm sample.

Age

No predictive hypothesis on the relationship between age and the dependent variables is presented in the present study. However, the null hypothesis is tested. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no differences between older and younger spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images.
In order to determine the relationship between the ages of wives and their performances of the dependent variables, the farm and nonfarm wives were separately divided into four age levels. The husbands were similarly divided in age levels to determine the relationships between their ages and their performances on the dependent variables.

As shown in Table 5, the mean scores by wives on the dependent variables appeared somewhat curvilinearly related to their age levels. The curvilinearity of the relationship, however, did not seem to be the same for farm and nonfarm wives, nor for the three measures of the dependent variables. The one feature that did appear prominent was the smaller means for wives 50 years of age and older.

Analysis of variance tests were used to ascertain whether significant differences existed between groups. Table 6 is presented to illustrate the procedure in the analysis of variance tests reported in this thesis. Other tables of analysis of variance are omitted because of the large number which would be necessary.

The first step in the analysis of variance was to test the statistical significance of the ratio of the mean square of the interaction of age and residence to the mean square of the residual or error term. This ratio was less than unity and therefore nonsignificant. The second step was to test the influence of residence on the dependent variable, in this
Table 5. Mean scores by wives on congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking, by age levels of wives and by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Farm sample</th>
<th>Nonfarm sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-29 years old</td>
<td>30-39 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wives</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-H to W-H</td>
<td>10.57</td>
<td>11.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.
Table 6. Analysis of variance regarding the influences of wives' ages and residences on the congruence of wives' images of their husbands with the husbands' self-images

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Degrees of freedom</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F-ratio</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Among age levels</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>646.40</td>
<td>215.47</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>P &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between farm and nonfarm residence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>P &gt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (age by residence)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>148.07</td>
<td>49.07</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>P &gt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total among subclasses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>812.10</td>
<td>116.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1545.00</td>
<td>55.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2357.10</td>
<td>67.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

case the congruence of the wife's image of the husband with the husband's self-image. The ratio of the residence term to the residual term was less than unity and was not statistically significant. The third step was to test the influence of age on the dependent variable. The ratio of the age term to the error term was 3.90 and was significant at the five percent level.

This procedure was followed in all analysis of variance tests reported in this thesis. Farm and nonfarm residence
was retained as a factor in these analyses, and the inter-
action of residence with each of the other independent
variables was always tested. None of the interaction mean
squares was significant \( P > .05 \) in this study; nor was any
of the residence mean squares. Therefore, in the following
discussion of the analysis of variance tests of null hypothe-
ses, only the significance or nonsignificance of the main
factors are reported. The second factor, residence, and the
interaction are omitted in order to avoid unnecessary
repetition.

The statistical tests regarding wives' ages and their
role-taking accuracy resulted in nonsignificant ratios for
age effect, 2.53 and 1.31. While the first ratio of age
effect, 2.53, approached significance, the last named ratio
was far from the five percent level of significance.

As shown in Table 7, the mean scores of husbands
appeared to indicate a curvilinear relationship with age
levels. There was no consistent pattern of curvilinearity
for both farm and nonfarm husbands, nor for the three measures
of the dependent variables. There also was no consistently
smaller mean for the older husbands as there was for the older
wives. Analysis of variance tests regarding husbands' ages
and the congruence of images proved nonsignificant \( F = 1.90; 
\) degrees of freedom = 3, 28; \( P > .05 \). The statistical tests
regarding husbands' ages and the accuracy of their role-taking
Table 7. Mean scores by husbands on congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking, by age levels of husbands and by farm and nonfarm samples*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Ages of husbands</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farm sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nonfarm sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-29 years old</td>
<td>30-39 years old</td>
<td>40-49 years old</td>
<td>50 years old</td>
<td>20-29 years old</td>
<td>30-39 years old</td>
<td>40-49 years old</td>
<td>50 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of husbands</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-W to H-W</td>
<td>15.42</td>
<td>10.46</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>7.94</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>16.82</td>
<td>10.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-W to W-W</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>12.42</td>
<td>15.11</td>
<td>8.44</td>
<td>9.94</td>
<td>11.59</td>
<td>12.09</td>
<td>10.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.
resulted in one significant and one nonsignificant F ratio. The significant ratio, 3.11 (P < .05), concerned the accuracy with which the husbands predicted the wives' ratings of the husbands. The other ratio, 2.01, which approached but did not reach the ratio necessary for significance, 2.95, concerned the husbands' accuracy in predicting their wives' self-ratings.

In summary, only two statistical tests of the relationships between age levels of the spouses and their performance on the dependent variables were significant. One test concerned the relationship between wives' ages and the congruence of their images with their husbands' self-images. The other test concerned the relationship between husbands' ages and the accuracy with which they predicted their wives' ratings of them. For all other results, the null hypotheses failed to be rejected.

Age differences

The first general hypothesis regarding age differences is that spouses who are similar in age demonstrate a higher degree of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images than do spouses who are dissimilar in age. The second general hypothesis is that marriages involving wives who are older than their husbands exhibit a lower degree of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images than do marriages involving spouses of similar ages or marriages in which husbands are
older than their wives. Combining these two hypotheses into one null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no differences in accuracy of role-taking or in congruence of images among marriages involving spouses of similar ages, those involving husbands older than their wives, or those involving wives older than their husbands.

In order to test the null hypothesis, the farm and nonfarm couples were separately divided into five categories, depending on the amount and direction of differences in spousal ages. Analysis of variance tests were applied to determine whether significant differences in the dependent variables existed among the various categories of age differences.

As indicated in Table 8, there was no consistent pattern of mean scores among the categories of age differences. Some of the mean scores were lower for the couples similar in age than for those dissimilar in age. However, this relationship was true for only two measures of the dependent variables in the farm sample and for three measures in the nonfarm sample. Although mean scores expected to increase as the difference between spousal ages increased, this expectation was not fulfilled. The data also did not appear to support the expectation that mean scores of couples involving wives older than husbands would be larger than mean scores of the other categories. The statistical tests failed to demonstrate
Table 8. Mean scores by husbands and wives on congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking, by age differences between the spouses and by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Farm sample</th>
<th></th>
<th>Nonfarm sample</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age differences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No diff.</td>
<td>Hus- band</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in ages</td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of couples</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-H to W-H</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>15.82</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>15.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-W to W-W</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>15.64</td>
<td>8.25</td>
<td>10.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.*
significant differences in the dependent variables among the various categories of age differences. Thus, there was no basis for rejecting the null hypotheses for these tests.

**Education**

It is hypothesized that educational level is related to role-taking accuracy and to congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no differences between less educated and more educated spouses in role-taking accuracy or in the congruence of images.

In order to test this hypothesis, the farm and nonfarm wives were separately divided into three educational levels. More educated wives were expected to exhibit a higher degree of role-taking accuracy and more congruence of images than less educated wives. Analysis of variance tests were applied to determine whether significant differences in the dependent variables existed among the three educational levels of wives.

As indicated in Table 9, there was no consistency among the mean scores of the wives throughout the three measures of the dependent variables for both farm and nonfarm samples. The relationship between educational levels of wives and the congruence of their images of their husbands with the husbands' self-images appeared to be in opposite directions for the farm and nonfarm samples. While the more educated nonfarm wives seemed to exhibit a higher congruence of images with their husbands than did the less educated nonfarm wives, the
Table 9. Mean scores by wives on congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking by educational levels of wives and by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Education of wives</th>
<th>Farm sample</th>
<th>Nonfarm sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 and under</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13 and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wives</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-H to W-H</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>11.32</td>
<td>12.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-H-H to H-W</td>
<td>12.05</td>
<td>12.24</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aFor definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.

reverse appeared true for the farm wives. The accuracy with which wives predicted their husbands' ratings of them appeared higher for the most educated group than for the other two categories. However, this relationship was not true for the accuracy with which wives predicted the husbands' self-ratings. None of the statistical tests regarding the data of the wives was significant.

The farm and nonfarm husbands were also divided into three educational levels. The more educated husbands were expected to demonstrate a higher degree of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images than less educated husbands.

As indicated in Table 10, the mean differences among the
Table 10. Mean scores by husbands on congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking, by educational levels of husbands and by farm and nonfarm samplesa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Education of husbands</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farm sample</td>
<td>11 and</td>
<td>13 and</td>
<td>11 and</td>
<td>13 and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>under</td>
<td>over</td>
<td>under</td>
<td>over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of husbands</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-W to H-W</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>13.27</td>
<td>11.71</td>
<td>13.89</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-W to W-W</td>
<td>11.93</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>10.43</td>
<td>11.45</td>
<td>10.54</td>
<td>11.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aFor definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.

three educational levels of husbands regarding the congruence of images were not consistent for farm and nonfarm samples. The mean differences regarding the accuracy with which husbands predicted their wives' ratings of them appeared to be opposite to the expected direction in both samples. There appeared to be little differences among the three educational levels regarding the other measure of role-taking accuracy. The one statistical test which proved significant was that regarding husbands' educational levels and the accuracy with which the husbands predicted their wives' ratings of them ($F = 4.15$; degrees of freedom = 2, 28; $P < .05$), but, as already indicated, the direction of the difference in mean
scores appeared opposite to the expected. The other statistical tests were nonsignificant.

In summary, no consistent mean differences in the dependent variables appeared among the educational level of husbands and wives. Only one analysis of variance test was significant. Statistical tests provided no basis for rejecting the remaining null hypotheses.

Educational differences

The first general hypothesis concerning educational differences is that spouses similar in educational attainment demonstrate a higher degree of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images than do spouses dissimilar in education. The second general hypothesis is that marriages involving equally educated spouses or marriages involving husbands more educated than their wives exhibit more accuracy in role-taking and higher congruence of images than do marriages involving wives more educated than their husbands. Combining these two hypotheses into one null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no differences in accuracy of role-taking or in congruence of images among marriages involving equally educated spouses, marriages involving husbands more educated than wives, and marriages involving wives more educated than husbands.

In order to test the null hypothesis, the farm couples were divided into four categories and the nonfarm couples were
divided into five categories, based on the amount and direction of differences in spousal educational levels. Due to the small number of cases, only one group of farm couples involving husbands older than wives was retained. The larger number of cases in the nonfarm sample permitted two categories involving husbands older than wives. Analysis of variance tests were applied to determine whether significant differences in the dependent variables existed among the categories of educational differences.

Although the mean scores of the similarly educated couples, as indicated in Table 11, appeared to be smaller than those of the other categories, this relationship did not hold for both farm and nonfarm samples throughout all measures. The relationship appeared to be true for four measures of the dependent variables in the farm sample and for five measures in the nonfarm sample. Smaller mean scores of the similarly educated couples appeared in three measures for both farm and nonfarm samples. The expectation that mean scores would increase with the increase in educational differences was not supported by the data. The mean scores of couples involving wives more educated than husbands were expected to be greater than the mean scores of the other categories, but this expectation was not supported. None of the statistical tests was significant and thus the general null hypothesis failed to be rejected.
Table 11. Mean scores by husbands and wives in congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking, by educational differences between the spouses and by farm and nonfarm samples^a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Educational differences</th>
<th>Farm sample</th>
<th>Nonfarm sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No diff.</td>
<td>Husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>more</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of couples</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-H-W to H-W</td>
<td>9.97</td>
<td>17.60</td>
<td>10.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^aFor definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.
Rural and urban residence

It is hypothesized that farm spouses display a higher degree of accurate role-taking and of congruence of images than nonfarm spouses. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no differences between farm and nonfarm spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images.

In order to test this hypothesis, farm and nonfarm residence was utilized as a factor in the two-way classifications for all analysis of variance tests of the other factors in the study. The procedure in analysis of variance has been previously discussed in this chapter.

None of the F ratios showed farm and nonfarm residence to be a significant determinant of scores in the dependent variables. When t tests were applied to the mean scores on the six measures of the dependent variables obtained by the farm and nonfarm samples, none was significant. In fact, the mean differences between the two samples averaged only 0.5. The two types of statistical tests mentioned appeared to demonstrate no significant differences between farm and nonfarm spouses in the dependent variables. Thus, the general null hypothesis was not rejected.

Socio-economic status

It is hypothesized that lower status couples are less accurate in their role-taking and display less congruent
images than higher status couples. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There are no differences between lower status spouses and upper status spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in congruence of images.

Only the nonfarm sample was used to test this hypothesis. The occupations of nonfarm husbands, taken as indices of social status, were divided into three levels as described in the previous chapter. Analysis of variance tests were used to determine whether status level had any significant effect on husband's or wife's performance in the dependent variables.

Table 12. Mean scores by nonfarm husbands and wives on congruence of images and accuracy of role-taking, by occupational levels of the husbands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Occupational levels of husbands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of couples</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-H to W-H</td>
<td>9.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-H-W to H-W</td>
<td>12.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-H to W-H</td>
<td>14.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-W-W to W-W</td>
<td>10.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-H-H to H-H</td>
<td>10.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aFor definitions of abbreviations in this table, see footnotes in Table 1.
As indicated in Table 12, there was no apparent pattern of mean scores among the three status levels for all six measures of the dependent variables. Although the mean scores were expected to increase steadily from high to low status levels, this expectation was fulfilled only by the second and third sets of means reported in Table 12. Either no differences or inconsistent fluctuations appeared among the other sets of mean scores. None of the analysis of variance tests was significant, four of the six F ratios being less than unity. Thus, the general null hypothesis failed to be rejected.

**Length of marriage**

It is hypothesized that length of marriage is positively related to accuracy of role-taking and to congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between length of marriage and the accuracy of role-taking or the congruence of images.

In order to test this hypothesis, correlation coefficients between length of marriage and the six measures of the dependent variables were computed. Since high scores in the dependent variables indicated greater inaccuracies of role-taking and greater incongruence of images than did low scores, the correlations between length of marriage and scores in the dependent variables were expected to be negative. Thus, all six measures for farm and nonfarm samples were expected to be
negatively related to length of marriage.

As shown in Table 13, only one correlation coefficient was significant (P < .01). Among the nonfarm spouses, the other correlations were in the expected direction but failed to reach the significance level. Among farm spouses, the correlations were so low as to indicate no relationships whatever between length of marriage and the dependent variables. Thus, the general null hypothesis failed to be rejected.

**Marital strain**

It is hypothesized that marital strain is negatively related to accuracy of role-taking and to congruence of images. Stated in null form, the general hypothesis is: There is no relationship between marital strain and accuracy of role-taking or the congruence of images.

In order to test this hypothesis, measures of marital strain in each of the areas of decision-making were correlated with the six measures of the dependent variables for the couples in each of the two samples. Two sets of summary scores of marital strain were also developed and correlated with the latter measures. One summary measure of marital strain resulted from combining the scores in the areas of child care, management of money, major family decisions and social activity. The other summary measure of strain resulted from combining the scores in the areas of management of money,
Table 13. Correlations of length of marriage and measures of marital strain with measures of role-taking accuracy and congruence of images, by farm and nonfarm samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of marriage</th>
<th>Congruence of images and role-taking accuracy</th>
<th>Farm sample</th>
<th>Nonfarm sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and marital strain</td>
<td></td>
<td>H-H</td>
<td>W-W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>H-W</td>
<td>W-H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>H-W-W</td>
<td>W-H-H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>H-H</td>
<td>W-W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>H-W-W</td>
<td>W-H-H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>H-H</td>
<td>W-W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>H-W-W</td>
<td>W-H-H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Length of marriage  
- H-H  
- W-W  
- H-W  
- W-H  
- H-H  
- W-W  

D-child  
- .03  
- .05  
- .03  
- .04  
- .02  
- .04  
- .15  
- .15  
- .13  
- .28b  
- .07  
- .15

D-money  
- .23c  
- .02  
- .25c  
- .16  
- .17  
- .06  
- .19  
- .11  
- .13  
- .20c  
- .19

D-family  
- .03  
- .05  
- .06  
- .22c  
- .08  
- .08  
- .12  
- .13  
- .09  
- .10  
- .13

D-social  
- -.03  
- .15  
- .01  
- .33b  
- .13  
- .13  
- .11  
- .02  
- .15  
- .14  
- .13  
- .08

D-farm  
- .09  
- .01  
- .13  
- .12  
- .21  
- .01  
- -  
- -  
- -  
- -  
- -  

D-child, money, family and social  
- .07  
- .06  
- .12  
- .28c  
- .16  
- .06  
- .23c  
- .14  
- .23c  
- .24c  
- .24c  
- .19

D-money, family and social  
- .11  
- .08  
- .14  
- .30b  
- .16  
- .06  
- .21c  
- .13  
- .17  
- .18  
- .22c  
- .20

a For definitions of abbreviations of all measures except the last two measures of marital strain, see footnotes in Tables 1 and 2. The first of the last two measures of strain refers to the discrepancies between spousal reports of decision-making practices in the combined areas of child care, management of money, major family decisions and social activity. The last measure of strain refers to the discrepancies between spousal reports of decision-making practices regarding the combined areas of management of money, major family decisions and social activity.

b For farm sample, when r = .29, then P ≤ .01; for nonfarm sample, when r = .26, then P ≤ .01.

c For farm sample, N = 80, when r = .22, then P ≤ .05; for nonfarm sample, N = 97, when r = .20, then P ≤ .05.
major family decisions and social activity. Since a high score on either the independent or dependent variables indicated greater disagreement between spouses, positive correlation coefficients were expected. Thus, a positive relationship was expected between disagreements in spousal reports of decision-making and inaccuracies in role-taking, and between the former measures and incongruence of images.

As indicated in Table 12, only four of the correlations between the separate measures of marital strain and the measures of the dependent variables were significant to the nonfarm sample. Only four were significant in the farm sample also. The significant correlations in the nonfarm sample were concentrated in the area of child care, with two of these correlations being significant at the one percent level. No such concentration of significant correlations was observed in the farm sample. In the latter sample, the correlations between child care and the dependent variables appeared quite small and opposite to the predicted direction.

In the nonfarm sample, the first set of summary scores was observed to be significantly correlated with four of the six measures of the dependent variables. No such pattern was noted in the farm sample. The second set of summary scores correlated significantly with only two measures of the dependent variables for the nonfarm sample and with only one measure of the dependent variables for the farm sample. The
other correlations in the nonfarm sample were in the expected direction but were not large enough to be significant. The remaining correlations in the farm sample appeared to be smaller than those in the nonfarm sample, some being quite close to zero, others being in the expected direction but nonsignificant, and still others being opposite to the expected direction.

In summary, the only set of results which were significant were the correlations between the measure of marital strain in the area of child care and three of the six measures of the dependent variables for the nonfarm sample. The correlations between the first summary measure of strain and the dependent variables were also significant for the nonfarm sample. However, it was difficult to interpret these last mentioned results since, as was noted in the previous chapter, marital strain appeared to be a somewhat specific factor, and not a general factor, in the marital relationship. It was questioned whether any summation of the scores could be made to obtain one measure of marital strain. For all other results, the null hypotheses could not be rejected.
DISCUSSION

The present research involved empirical testing of hypothesized relationships between two dependent variables, congruence of images and role-taking accuracy, and certain independent variables. The hypotheses were derived from general role theory. While most of the predictive hypotheses failed to be supported, some of the hypotheses were supported by the data. The strengths and weaknesses of the research are discussed in this chapter.

The main strength of the present research is seen in the significant intercorrelations among the dependent variables. These intercorrelations may reflect a general factor of effective interpersonal communication. When one spouse can accurately take the role of the other spouse, his partner can also take his role accurately. Accuracy of role-taking may then lead to a greater mutual understanding of each other and to the development of congruent images.

Another important finding of this study was the relatively low intercorrelations among the various measures of marital strain. The assumption which is sometimes made concerning marriage is that when marital strain occurs it permeates the entire marital relationship. This assumption was not supported by the present findings. The data appear to indicate that when marital strain occurs it is likely to be confined to one or two areas of the marriage relationship. This fact may
suggest that married couples may have a well integrated relationship and yet display disagreement in a limited number of areas of that relationship.

Although there are no significant differences between the farm and nonfarm samples in any of the statistical tests, some differences did appear to exist in some of the other findings. For example, the intercorrelations of the measures of accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of images appeared larger for the nonfarm sample than for the farm sample; the same appeared true concerning the intercorrelations of the measures of marital strain; and different patterns of correlations between measures of marital strain and the measures of the dependent variables were observed for the farm and nonfarm samples. The larger intercorrelations of the measures of the dependent variables for the nonfarm sample suggest that nonfarm spouses demonstrate more effective interspousal communication than farm spouses. The larger intercorrelations among the measures of marital strain for the couples in the nonfarm sample suggest that marital strain is likely to be a more pervasive factor in nonfarm families than in farm families. The data in the present study did not permit any post-factum interpretation of these apparent differences between the married couples in the two samples. Whether these differences would be found in a comparison with a more urban population is a problem for future research.
The weaknesses of the present study are reflected in the failure to find support for the majority of the predictive hypotheses. When predictive hypotheses are not supported by the data, two areas of the research may be suspect: theory, methodology or both. Although the author is more inclined to criticize the methodology, he recognizes possible theoretical weaknesses.

In the first place, the theoretical framework may be faulty. It is quite possible that the independent variables are unrelated to the dependent variables, and this possibility should not be easily dismissed. Role-taking accuracy may be a learned response in the general socialization process of every individual and is possibly not affected significantly by the situational variables involved in the present study. However, the conclusion that the hypotheses, and thus the theoretical structure, are proved untenable by results of one study would be presumptuous. The negative results do indicate the need for further empirical research on the accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of images. It is the writer's opinion that the failure to find support for the predictive hypotheses lies in the methodology of the research.

The major limitation of the study probably was the measures used to operationalize the dependent variables. As already indicated, these measures had unknown validity and somewhat low reliability. The reliability coefficients of
these measures were possibly influenced by the small number of items which the measures contained. The instruments were probably also affected by the collaboration between some husbands and wives, by the somewhat obvious purpose of the instruments, and by the tendency of some individuals to mark every item with the same stereotyped response.

The measure of marital strain may also be criticized for some of the same shortcomings. Although the purpose of this instrument was not apparent to the respondents, this fact did not preclude spousal collaboration in marking the items. Since each area of decision-making had to be used as a separate measure of marital strain, each measure consisted of a small number of items. This possibly affected the reliability coefficients of the measure, coefficients which, however, were as large if not larger than those of the measures of the dependent variables. The measures of marital strain, like those of role-taking accuracy and the congruence of images, had unknown validity.

The operational definitions of the other variables may also be criticized. The combination of certain occupations to form three status levels, for example, may have obliterated differences between them on the dependent variables. Differences may have appeared if different combinations of occupations had been employed or if the occupational categories had been kept separate. Criticisms can be leveled
against the combinations made on the variables, such as educational level, age level and degree and direction of spousal differences in age and education. Although these combinations may have been the only possible ones due to the small number of cases, such combinations may have reduced differences between categories.

The failure to find significant results may also reflect the small number of cases in the farm and nonfarm samples. Results which appeared in the expected direction might have reached the significance level if larger samples had been used. The small number of cases in some of the categories of the dependent variables may also have influenced the failure to find significant results.

In the author's opinion, it is very difficult to summarize or evaluate the significant and nonsignificant results of the present study. For example, the reason sex differences appeared on the congruence of images but not on role-taking accuracy is difficult to explain. Particularly is it difficult since sex differences on congruence of images appeared significant beyond the one percent level for the nonfarm sample, but did not reach the five percent level of significance for the farm sample.

The author also finds difficulty in comparing the present findings with those of previous studies. This difficulty is partially a function of the comparability of the samples.
employed. In numerous previous studies only urban samples were used and many of these studies involved such highly selective groups as college students and college graduates. Since the present research involved a probability sample of couples who had children living at home and who resided in a predominately rural, midwestern county, the findings of this study are not directly comparable to previous studies. The findings which are in agreement with results from other studies are more easily compared than are findings which disagree with the latter.

While not all of the findings of the present research can be compared with previous studies, the results that are comparable to other studies are presented. The significant correlations between accuracy of role-taking by the wife and that by the husband support the research reported in the review of literature. Sex differences on the congruence of images for the nonfarm sample agrees with the findings by Luckey (38, p. 156). Nonsignificant differences between sexes on role-taking accuracy agree with the findings of Kirkpatrick and Hobart (32, p. 16), Hobart (26, p. 322), and Notcutt and Silva (43, p. 35). The nonsignificant relationships between age and role-taking accuracy and between education and role-taking accuracy support the findings of Locke, et al. (35, p. 124). The nonsignificant relationship between length of marriage and role-taking accuracy supports the findings of
Kirkpatrick and Hobart (32, p. 16), and Hobart (26, p. 320) but disagrees with the findings reported by Couch (10, p. 357). The other results of the present study are not comparable to any previous research, since they involve tests of hypotheses previously untested.

This study involved a random sample of a population in a predominately rural county in Iowa. However, when certain controls were applied to the sample, only those couples who had children presently living at home were used in testing the hypotheses. Thus, the degree to which the present findings can be generalized is limited by the relative homogeneity of the county from which the sample was taken. They are further limited to married couples having children at home.

Some suggestions are offered for future research.

1. Future research should be directed toward the development of improved measures of role-taking accuracy and of congruence of images. If paper-and-pencil instruments are to be used, the reliability of these instruments can certainly be improved by the addition of more items. The question of the validity of these instruments, however, remains a problem.

2. The development of an improved measure of marital strain should also be attempted. If strain appears localized to specific areas of the marital relationship, enough items in each area should also be included in the instrument to
insure optimal reliability. The instrument can be checked against known criterion groups to ascertain its validity.

3. Future research should also involve samples from various populations. Numerous studies have involved white, middle-class, urban, Protestant samples, and even more atypical groups, so that too little is known about other populations. Although the present research involved an attempt to obtain data from a probability sample, it is limited to a predominately rural, socially homogenous population. Future research can also insure enough cases in the various categories of the dependent variables mentioned in the present study, so that the hypotheses may be more adequately tested.

In conclusion, it is the writer's opinion that the various studies on the accuracy of role-taking and on the congruence of images have involved so many different measures and different sampling procedures as to preclude detailed comparisons of the results. It is suggested that adequate measures of these phenomena be developed and that research procedures be done as to insure the comparability of results. The development of improved measures of role-taking accuracy and of the congruence of images will permit a more adequate testing of the same hypotheses presented in this study. Replication of such research will allow comparability of results and provide a basis for the generalization of the findings.
SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between certain factors considered as independent variables and the accuracy of role-taking by married couples and the congruence of their images. The independent variables were sex, age, spousal age differences, education, spousal educational differences, farm and nonfarm residence, social status, length of marriage and marital strain.

Data were gathered from a probability sample of all families in Greene County, Iowa, in May and June, 1958. This sample was based on three strata: urban, rural place, and open country. The data were collected by home interviews with the husbands and wives. In the present study, only those married couples having children living at home were used. Further, the present research included only those couples on whom there were complete data regarding all independent and dependent variables. When these controls were imposed, the present sample resulted in 177 couples, 97 couples in the nonfarm sample and 80 couples in the farm sample.

Role-taking accuracy was defined as the imaginative act of placing oneself in another's position to gain his point of view and thus being able to predict his behavior. It was operationally defined as the accuracy with which each spouse predicted his partner's responses to an instrument consisting
spouse were taken as the measures of the congruence of images. Reliability coefficients were computed for the two measures of congruence of images, one measure for each sex.

Marital strain was defined as the disagreement of spousal perceptions of decision-making activities of husbands and wives. Although it was recognized that the previous measures could also be considered as measures of marital strain, the concept was reserved for this last measure. Each spouse was asked to report who made decisions in certain areas of family activity. The summation of item differences between spousal responses in each area of decision-making was taken as a measure of marital strain. For the farm and nonfarm samples there were four measures of marital strain: child care, management of money, major family decisions, and social activity. For the farm sample alone, there was an additional measure of strain in the area of farm management. Reliability coefficients were computed for each of these measures of strain.

Social status was measured by three groupings of the occupations of the husbands. High status included professional, semi-professional, managerial and "trained white collar" occupations; middle status included sales and service, skilled and clerical workers; and low status included semi-skilled, unskilled, domestic and salaried farm workers.

Type of residence was based on the occupations of the
of nine items. These nine items referred to personality characteristics for which each spouse was asked to rate himself, to rate his partner, predict how his partner would rate him and predict how his partner would rate himself. The summations of the differences between predicted ratings and actual ratings for the nine items were taken as measures of role-taking accuracy. Reliability coefficients were computed for the four measures of role-taking accuracy, two measures for each sex. These measures included (1) the amount of agreement between husband's prediction of wife's self-rating and her actual self-rating, (2) the amount of agreement between husband's prediction of wife's rating of him and her actual rating of him, (3) the amount of agreement between wife's prediction of husband's self-rating and his actual self-rating, and (4) the amount of agreement between wife's prediction of husband's rating of her and his actual rating of her.

Congruence of images was defined as the amount of agreement between one's self-image and the image held of him by others. It was operationally defined as the amount of agreement between the self-rating of each spouse and the rating of him made by his marital partner. Each spouse was asked to rate himself and to rate his partner on the instrument mentioned above. The summations of the item differences between one's self-rating and the rating of him made by his
husbands. All couples involving a husband who was a farmer were placed in the farm category, and all other couples were placed in the nonfarm category.

To test the predictive hypotheses presented in this study, three methods of statistical analysis were employed. Tests of zero order correlations were used for the relationships among the dependent variables, for the relationships between length of marriage and the dependent variables, and for the relationships between marital strain and the latter variables. Matched pair t tests were used to test the relationships between sex and the dependent variables. Analysis of variance tests based on a factorial design were used to test all other hypotheses.

Throughout this chapter only the general hypotheses regarding the relationships between the independent and dependent variables are given, but the number of specific hypotheses is also noted. The following general null hypotheses were tested.

1. There is no relationship between the accuracy of role-taking by one spouse and the accuracy of role-taking by the other spouse. This general hypothesis involved four specific hypotheses, two for each of the two samples. (1) There is no relationship between the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts the wife's self-rating and the accuracy with which the wife predicts and husband's self-rating. (2)
There is no relationship between the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts his wife's rating of him and the accuracy with which the wife predicts the husband's rating of her. These specific hypotheses were also tested for the nonfarm husbands and wives. The four specific hypotheses were rejected and, thus, the general null hypothesis was also rejected.

2. There is no relationship between the congruence of the wife's self-image and the husband's image of her, on the one hand, and the congruence of the husband's self-image and the wife's image of him, on the other hand. This general hypothesis involved two specific hypotheses, one for the farm and one for the nonfarm samples. Since the specific hypotheses were rejected, the general hypothesis was also refuted.

3. There is no relationship between accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of images. The general hypothesis involved tests of eight specific hypotheses, four for each of the two samples. The specific null hypotheses were: (1) The degree of congruence between the farm wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is not related to the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts the wife's self-image. (2) The degree of congruence between the farm wife's self-image and the husband's image of her is not related to the accuracy with which the farm husband predicts the wife's image of the husband. (3) The degree of congruence between
the farm husband's self-image and the wife's image of him is not related to the accuracy with which the farm wife predicts the husband's self-image. (4) The degree of congruence between the farm husband's self-image and the wife's image of him is not related to the accuracy with which the farm wife predicts the husband's image of the wife. These specific hypotheses were repeated and tested for the nonfarm husbands and wives. The rejection of the specific hypotheses provided a basis for the rejection of the general hypothesis.

4. There are no sex differences in role-taking accuracy or in the congruence of images. This hypothesis involved six specific hypotheses, two for the role-taking and one for the congruence of images comparisons in each of the two samples. The hypotheses regarding role-taking accuracy failed to be rejected. The hypothesis regarding congruence of images was rejected for the nonfarm sample but not for the farm sample.

5. There are no differences between older and younger spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images. This hypothesis involved testing six specific hypotheses, four for the role-taking and two for the congruence of images comparisons. Only two of the six statistical tests were significant (P < .05). For all other results, the null hypotheses could not be rejected.

6. There are no differences in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images between marriages involving
spouses of similar ages, those involving husbands older than their wives, or those involving wives older than their husbands. The general hypothesis involved six specific hypotheses as described in the previous section regarding age. None of the statistical tests was significant and the hypotheses could not be rejected. Thus, the general hypothesis was not refuted.

7. There are no differences between less educated and more educated spouses in role-taking accuracy or in the congruence of images. The general hypothesis involved tests of six specific hypotheses as described in the previous section regarding age. Only one of the statistical tests was significant. Results of the other tests provided no basis for rejecting the remaining hypotheses.

8. There are no differences in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images among marriages of equally educated spouses, marriages involving husbands more educated than wives, and marriages involving wives more educated than husbands. Six specific hypotheses as described in the previous section regarding age, were derived from the general hypothesis and were tested. None of the statistical tests was significant and the hypotheses were not rejected. Thus, the general hypothesis failed to be rejected.

9. There are no differences between farm and nonfarm spouses in accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of
images. This general hypothesis involved six specific hypotheses in these cases, comparisons between the two samples for the two measures of role-taking accuracy and the one measure of congruence of images for each sex. None of the statistical tests was significant. Thus, there was no basis for refuting the general hypothesis.

10. There are no differences among status levels in the accuracy of role-taking or in the congruence of images. Six specific hypotheses, as described in the previous section regarding age, were involved in testing the general hypothesis. None of the statistical tests was significant and the hypotheses were not rejected. The general hypothesis was not refuted.

11. There is no relationship between length of marriage and the accuracy of role-taking or the congruence of images. This hypothesis involved tests of twelve specific hypotheses, one for each of the six measures of the dependent variables in the two samples. None of the statistical tests was significant. Neither the specific hypotheses nor the general hypothesis could be rejected.

12. There is no relationship between marital strain and the accuracy of role-taking or the congruence of images. The general hypothesis involved twelve specific hypotheses, one for each of the six measures of the dependent variables in the two samples. The only set of results which was significant was the correlations between the measure of marital
strain in the area of child care and the dependent variables. This observation, however, was true only for the nonfarm sample. For the remaining results, the hypotheses were not refuted.

Failure to find support for the majority of the hypotheses was attributed principally to the inadequacies of the measures of role-taking accuracy, congruence of images and marital strain. Attention was given to the difficulty in summarizing and evaluating the present findings and in comparing them to previous research. This latter difficulty was due to the different instruments and different sampling procedures employed by studies of role-taking accuracy and the congruence of images. Some suggestions were offered for future research in this area, principally involving the development of more adequate measures and the replication of studies to test the hypotheses proposed in the present research.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express his sincere appreciation and indebtedness to Dr. Lee G. Burchinal for his encouragement, valuable suggestions and constructive criticisms throughout the writing of this research.

The author also expresses appreciation to Dr. Leroy Wolins for his advice and assistance on statistical methods and in the interpretation of the results.


41. ______. Role theory and marriage counseling. Social Forces 35:200-209. 1957.


APPENDIX

Questionnaire used in the Development of the Measures of Role-Taking Accuracy, the Congruence of Images, and Marital Strain
EXPRESSIONS OF FEELINGS

1. We all have some ideas of what kinds of feelings we have, feelings other people have, and ideas other people have about our feelings. Place a check to the left for your rating of yourself (I) for the feelings listed in the center. Then place a check to the right for your rating of your spouse (II) for these same feelings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>I. Your rating on yourself</th>
<th>II. Your rating on your spouse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angers easily</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfish</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritable</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily hurt</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moody</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily depressed</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily excited</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Now let's take those same feelings and to the left place a check for how you think your spouse would rate you on these feelings (III).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>very much so</th>
<th>considerably</th>
<th>somewhat</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angers easily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfish</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Irritable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easily hurt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moody</td>
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<td>Easily depressed</td>
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<td>Easily excited</td>
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<td>Jealous</td>
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3. Now go back over the list again and to the right place a check for how you think your spouse would rate him or herself on these feelings (IV).
FAMILY DECISIONS

In every family a number of decisions have to be made. Many couples talk things over first, but the final decision often has to be made by one person, either the husband or wife. Now, for example, punishing the children; is it always the wife, wife more than husband, wife and husband about equally, husband more than wife or always the husband who decides this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who decides about</th>
<th>Who usually makes the decision</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wife always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Punishing the children</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Letting the children go somewhere</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Giving the children money</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. When to have children</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. How many children to have</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. How much should be spent on food</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. How much should be spent on new furniture</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. How much should be spent on small appliances</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. How much life insurance the family should have</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. What changes, redecorations, should be made in the home</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. How much to give to the church or charities</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Whether or not (or how) money should be borrowed</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>