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Attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families: implications for home economics curriculum

Valerie Leonie Colyard

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ATTITUDES OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS TOWARD SINGLE-PARENT AND STEPPARENT FAMILIES: IMPLICATIONS FOR HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM
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Attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families: Implications for home economics curriculum

by

Valerie Leonie Colyard

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY Major: Home Economics Education

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Iowa State University
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to
Amelda Colyard
(Whose memory has been a source of inspiration)
Claudine Stubbs
(Mother and Daughter)
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, several family forms other than the traditional family have evolved. Of these forms, single-parent and stepparent families have been the fastest growing family lifestyles in the United States (Blaine & Chatelain, 1981; Dolan & Lown, 1985). Seventeen percent of American households are headed by single parents (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978), and every year one-half million adults become stepparents (Prosen & Farmer, 1982). These family lifestyles are largely due to the increase in the divorce and remarriage rates in the last 25 years (Miller & Soper, 1982). In 1975, there were one million divorces, representing a 135 percent increase since 1962, and the remarriage rate increased from 19.7 percent in 1960 to 59.1 percent in 1980 (Statistical Abstract, 1984-1985).

These changing lifestyles are having an impact on the youth in this society. At least two in five children will experience family disruption, and one in four will grow up in a stepparent family (Bumpass, 1983; Furstenberg et al., 1983). One out of five school-age children lives in a single-parent family (Glick & Norton, 1978). Census demographers project that 48 percent of the children born in 1980 will live in this type of family part of the time before reaching age 18 (Boss, 1980).

The increasing number of single-parent and stepparent families and children within these families suggest that the family as a social institution is changing. Much research has focused on the effect of single parenthood and stepparenthood on children, yet little is known
about the perception of these family forms by youth. However, there is some evidence that youth have concerns regarding single-parent and stepparent families (Lutz, 1980; Parish & Dostal, 1980; Welden, 1985).

Information regarding early adolescents' perceptions of single-parent and stepparent families is particularly pertinent considering the critical developmental period of this age group. Theorists suggest that during early adolescence, the building of self-identity and wholesome attitudes toward oneself are important (Havighurst, 1976; Weiner & Elkind, 1976) and attitudes toward social groups and institutions are formed (Havighurst, 1976). Early adolescents also begin to see themselves in terms of labels applied to them by society (Stone & Church, 1973). Considering these developmental tasks, and the continued increase in the number of children living in single-parent and stepparent families, early adolescents' views of such families need to be determined in order to understand, in general, their perceptions of the family as a changing social institution and, in particular, their attitudes toward these family forms. This information may indicate whether or not early adolescents have a realistic understanding of these families, and may provide the basis for family life education at the middle school level that is sorely needed (Schiller, 1977). Thus, the main purposes of this study were to investigate the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent family lifestyles, and to determine the relationship of these attitudes to selected sociodemographic characteristics.
Objectives

The objectives of the study were to: (1) develop a valid and reliable instrument for determining the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families; (2) assess the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families; (3) determine the relationship of early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families to grade level, sex, family structure, place of residence, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' education; and (4) make recommendations regarding family life education curriculum for the middle/junior high school level.

Definitions, Assumptions, and Limitations

The definitions, assumptions, and limitations of the study were as follows:

Definitions


Stepparent family: Adults living together in the same household who have children for whom they are responsible, but for whom at least one is not the natural parent (Pill, 1980).

Early adolescent: A child from 10 to 15 characterized by a period of rapid growth transforming the
child into an adult; a period of experimentation with detachment from parents, getting established with peers, and transitional thought processes (Kagan & Coles, 1972).

Middle/junior high school: The administrative unit on the secondary level containing fifth, sixth, seventh, and/or eighth grades.

Family life education: An interdisciplinary field addressing all aspects of family life, bringing together anthropology, biology, economics, education, home economics, law, philosophy, psychology, sociology, social work, and theology. The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of individual and family life (Standards & Criteria, 1984).

Assumptions

1. School officials followed procedures outlined for selection of random sample in each school.

2. The respondents answered consistently and honestly.

Limitations

Findings from this study are generalizable only to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders in Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 in Iowa who participated in the study.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review is divided into four sections. The first section focuses on family life education, particularly the need for information about single-parent and stepparent families. The second section deals with early adolescents, with particular emphasis on their development, characteristics, and perceptions regarding families. In the third section, the middle/junior high school is described, with attention given to the general development of these schools, home economics programming, and educational needs assessments. The last section will provide a summary and conclusions.

Family Life Education

Need for family life education

The Industrial Revolution greatly changed society in the late 1800s and early 1900s as families were moving to cities so that family members could work in factories. This brought many changes to family life and created the need for family life education.

One significant change was that families spent less time together as men, women, and children joined the labor force (Jax, 1985). Jax further explained that as the result of such societal changes, their cause and effects brought about the formation of social organizations to improve society. The major societal concern was that the institution of the home and family no longer provided the kinds of skills and ethical influences that it had in the past. Persons in various disciplines, e.g., psychology, sociology, education, and social work felt that family education was needed in the schools. Thus, the responsibility for such instruction fell to the
school. This discussion will focus on the home economists' role in family life education.

The first Lake Placid conference, made up of home economists and spearheaded by Ellen Richards, was called. The conference participants believed that home economics had an important role in society. In their view, the purpose of the field was to help the family develop ethical and free human beings who were conscious participants in improving society (Jax, 1981). Later, the concept of home economics broadened and was described by the conference as "the study of laws, conditions, principles, and ideals concerned with man's immediate physical environment and his nature as a social being, and specifically the relation between these two factors."

Home economists have advocated an ecological approach to family studies (Bubolz & Paolucci, 1980). This approach views the family holistically and recognizes that behavior of any part of the family system affects the entire system (Deacon & Firebaugh, 1981). In addition, it stresses the consequences of decisions we make about the family and/or its members (Bubolz & Whiren, 1984). The mission of home economics is to "enable families to function in their own strength" (Paolucci & Brown, 1979). Home economists also view the family as a major source of nurturance, protection, and renewal for the individual. As an educational force, the family significantly contributes to the qualitative development of its individual members and has the potential to prepare them for effective productivity for self and society. From this perspective, home economists work with families to effect an optimum balance between people and their environments (Bivens, 1976). Thus, through viewing several changes in society and with-
in the family that affect its functioning, home economists have seen the need for family life education. Family life education, as an interdisciplinary field addressing all aspects of family life, strives to give instructions which will help students develop an understanding of the physical, mental, emotional, social, economic, and psychological aspects of interpersonal relationships between persons of varying ages (Sheek, 1984). Family life education, therefore, promotes human understanding and teaches respect for the individual. It also demonstrates how family members who get along with one another can contribute productively to the communities in which they live and society in general. Family life education begins in the home and is the primary responsibility and privilege of parents (Sheek, 1984). However, because some parents have not adequately fulfilled this responsibility, it has been partially given to the school.

In order to appreciate the importance of family life education in the schools, one needs to be aware of societal changes since the beginning of the century. One of the most significant changes in the American family has been the emergence of family units that are structurally dissimilar from the traditional nuclear family (Pill, 1980). Two recent studies indicate that at least two in five children will experience disruption and one child in four will grow up having more than two parents (Bumpass, 1983; Furstenberg et al., 1983). The number of persons living alone increased by 173 percent between 1970 and 1983, and the number of never married custodial mothers increased by 377 percent in the same time period (Glick, 1984a).

Changes have also been occurring in marriage. The typical age at first marriage for men and women continues to rise as young adults
postpone marriage until they are well into their twenties. The median age of marriage is 22 for women and 24 for men (Johnson, 1982). Adolescents have become more sexually active, resulting in a significant increase in the numbers of unintended teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

There has been a growing number of dual-income households in which both husband and wife, father and mother are employed outside the home (Long & Long, 1985). Dual career couples, especially those with young and elementary school-age children, experience a complicated pattern of managing and allocating the precious resources of time, energy, and money within the family (Jorgensen & Haley, 1985). Current estimates are that by the year 1990, nearly 70 percent of all wives and mothers will be working outside the home (Arizona Daily Star, 1979). As a result, children who are in school become "latch-key" children, left to their own self-care and supervision in the hours before parents return home (Hoffereth, 1979). There may be as many as 10 million such children nationwide (Long & Long, 1983).

Another change in families has been the increase in sexual activity among teenagers and the increase in teenage pregnancy. Young people are initiating sexual relationships earlier than they ever have and are marrying much later than has been the custom. Thus, the risk of premarital pregnancy has risen sharply, resulting in some increase in abortion and elevated levels of out-of-wedlock childbearing among adolescents (Furstenberg, Lincoln, & Menken, 1980). An estimated 11 million teenage boys and girls are sexually active. Six hundred thousand illegitimate babies were born to girls between 10-18 last
year, and 15 percent were girls between 10-13 years of age (Bondi & Wiles, 1983).

Early adolescents need help in dealing effectively with the complexities and challenges of everyday life in a modern society, particularly in terms of family living. Many parents see this need, but because of lack of knowledge or insufficient time, they rely on outside specialists such as teachers to perform this task (Koprucki, 1983; Placek-Zimmerman, 1982). There are also data to suggest that early adolescents as well as their parents have expressed the need for family life education. For example, Shielder (1977) conducted a survey with the purpose of seeking support for family living in the middle school. The survey consisted of 199 middle school students and 86 parents. The results indicate that 51 percent of the seventh and eighth graders who responded were interested in taking family living courses in the future. All respondents felt that sixth graders should take family living courses. More than half of the sixth graders (76 percent) and most of the seventh (85 percent) and eighth graders (83 percent) had parents who wanted their children to take family living courses.

In light of the many changes in society today and the vulnerability of early adolescents to those changes, there is a need for family life education for this age group. Home economists have the responsibility to plan the necessary programs so that early adolescents, as well as other youth, will be able to make wise decisions and deal with the challenges and complexities in this society (Okobiah, 1981).

In summary, social pressures created by the Industrial Revolution
brought about many changes in American family life, including increase in the age at first marriage, dual career families, increase in sexual activities among teenagers, and increase in divorce rates. The major societal concern was that the family no longer provided the skills and ethical influences that it had in the past, thus creating the need for family life education.

Schools have been given the major responsibility for family life education because of parents not having the time or sufficient knowledge to assist youth in this area. With the home economics philosophy of concern for the well-being of families, it is argued that professionals in this field have the responsibility to teach family life education.

Need for education about single-parent and stepparent families

Several factors have contributed to the need for education about single-parent and stepparent families in the United States today. However, one of the major factors has been the increase in alternate family structures. This increase may be due to demographic changes as well as changes in societal values.

Single-parent and stepparent families are the two fastest-growing family structures in the United States. The number of children in these families has also been on the increase. These increases have created the need to investigate the demographic changes of these families.

Demographic changes in stepparent and single-parent families

A stepparent family may be described as adults living in the same household with children for whom they are responsible, but for whom at least
one is not the natural parent (Pill, 1980). The stepparent family has emerged as a significant family system in American society. At the beginning of the 20th century, stepparent families resulted primarily from remarriage following the death of a spouse, while today contemporary stepfamilies result primarily from remarriage following divorce of the biological parents. Eighty percent of divorced persons remarry, and 60 percent of these remarriages involve an adult with physical custody of at least one child (Glick, 1980; Glick & Norton, 1978; Visher & Visher, 1979).

Stepfamilies constitute one-fifth of the U.S. population (Sager, Walker, Brown, Crohn, & Rodstein, 1981). Prosen and Farmer (1982) reported that every year one-half million adults become stepparents, and that one out of every six American children under 18 is a stepchild. Approximately 10 million children lived in stepparent families in 1980 (Glick, 1980; Prosen & Farmer, 1982). It is estimated that by 1990, 11 percent of all minor children in the U.S. will live in a stepparent family (Glick, 1980; Prosen & Farmer, 1982) and that this family form could be the norm (Prosen & Farmer, 1982; Wewe, 1981).

A single-parent family is a family with one parent and at least one child (Hetherington, 1981). Single-parents have different reasons for being single: they may be divorced, widowed, or never married; or they may be foster or adoptive parents. Single-parenthood is increasingly a lifestyle of choice. More women are choosing to conceive a child out of wedlock, and more single men and women are choosing to adopt a child or provide foster care (Barnes & Coplan, 1980).
The number of households in America rose by 58 percent between 1960 and 1983. During this period, single-parent households increased by 175 percent, representing one in ten households. Almost all of these parents are women of whom two-thirds are separated or divorced, one-quarter have never been married, and fewer than one in ten are widows. Since 1960, the number of children living in one-parent families doubled (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983; Glick, 1984b). It has been suggested that divorce is the most common cause of single-parenthood.

Despite the increase in single-parent and stepparent families, the intact nuclear family is still being used as the measure of "normalcy" against which all other family forms are being judged (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1980; Satir, 1982). This has partly contributed to the emergence of several images of single-parent and stepparent families.

Images of single-parent and stepparent families

Several images or perceptions of single-parent families exist today. First, there is a common belief that single-parent families are economically disadvantaged. Census data have indicated that the majority (65%) of single-parent families are headed by women (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982, 1983). Over 36 percent of all female-headed families live below the poverty level, compared to approximately 7 percent of all families headed by a married couple (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983). Between 1959 and 1982, the number of poor female family heads increased from 1.9 million to 3.4 million, an increase of 79 percent (Rodgers, 1985).

These findings suggest a gender factor in the economic plight of these households. However, this may be attributed to three factors:
low levels of child support, employment and earning problems, and inadequate welfare benefits. There is evidence of lack of financial support by absent fathers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982). Over the past five years, on average only 35 percent of all women with minor children have received child support from an absent father, and of those receiving support, only about 69 percent have received the agreed upon amount (Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, 1983). Even when mothers receive support, the amount generally is quite low. For example, women who were heads of households received only $1,799 annually in 1978 (Rodgers, 1985).

Employment and wage earnings greatly affect the economic condition of households. In 1982, over 67 percent of all poor female family heads were unemployed, slightly higher than the average over the last 25 years (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983). Even when female family heads are employed, they generally earn less than male heads of households (Beller, 1982; Rytina, 1982). For example, in 1982, female family heads had a median income of $11,484 compared to $20,140 for male-headed families (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985). Several reasons have been suggested for the lower earnings of female-headed families, including working only part-time or part of the year, changing jobs frequently, having intermittent employment, having less seniority, and being concentrated in traditionally female jobs which usually pay low wages (Corcoran & Duncan, 1979; Rodgers, 1985; Wolfe & Fligstein, 1979). Thus, the image of single-parent families as economically disadvantaged is valid for those headed by women. However, for the single-parent households headed by males, this is not as evident.
Another image of single-parent families is that they are deviant, and, therefore, a social problem (Monaghan-Lackband, 1979). There is a common belief that single-parent families do not provide a conducive environment for the development of children (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). There is some evidence that children from these families do have adjustment problems. For example, Touliatos and Lindholm (1980) found that youngsters living with fathers only and with mothers and stepfathers exhibited more conduct problems and socialized delinquency than did their peers in intact families. Several researchers (Kalter & Rembar, 1981; Schoettle & Cantwell, 1980; Touliatos & Lindholm, 1980) have reported that children from "disrupted" homes manifest behavioral problems, such as conduct, bizarre behavior, and cooperative stealing. Jenkins argues, however, that coping with single-parenthood and the inherent problems created are compounded by the shift in the family's economic status which may occur. In the same vein, Desimone-Luis, O'Mahoney, and Hunt (1979) found that the maladjusted children in their sample were from homes in which there had been a 50 percent drop in income immediately following divorce. Colletta (1979) concluded that the loss of income was more detrimental than the father's absence from the home.

Another problem in the perceived relationship between children's behavioral problems and single-parent families is that the studies reported have been descriptive in nature, focusing on characteristics of youth from single-parent families. Researchers have failed to include proper controls in assessing other significant life events which may have an adverse effect on respondents (Schoettle
Moreover, comparative or causal designs seldom have been used to determine more accurately the relationship between youth's behavioral problems and single-parent families. Thus, the image of single-parent family life as deviant or not providing a conducive environment for child rearing is not supported.

In summary, two basic images attributed to single-parent families are being economically disadvantaged and having youth with behavioral problems. Although both images have some "truth," it is important to sort out the misperceptions. Single-parent families headed by females are economically disadvantaged, but this is not as evident in single-parent families headed by males. Youth from single-parent families have been found to have behavioral problems including delinquency, but these studies have been descriptive rather than causal in nature. Thus, these images are only partially supported by the literature.

A number of images or perceptions exist about stepparent families. One of the most prevalent notions is that the remarried family is like the nuclear biological family (Dolan & Lown, 1985). Although the remarried family does resemble the nuclear family, there are many differences. Moreover, the remarried family is structurally the most complex of all the family structures (Visher & Visher, 1979). The nuclear family's structure is characterized by habitualized patterns that govern family unity such as clear boundaries, and divided loyalties. However, such structure is absent in stepparent families where boundaries are unclear and children have divided loyalties to parents (Dolan & Lown, 1985; Wald, 1981; Walker & Messinger, 1979). In addition, children in stepparent families have multiple households,
resulting in unclear roles regarding expectations and responsibilities. This increases the probability of communication problems and misunderstandings (Pitman, 1983; Visher & Visher, 1978a).

Another popular image of the stepparent family is that stepparents and stepchildren will instantaneously love each other (Dolan & Lown, 1985; Visher & Visher, 1979). This seldom is true. Dolan and Lown (1985) point out that children may reject a stepparent for fear that he/she is trying to replace the noncustodial, biological parent. Even though adults are usually ready to enter into the new stepparent family relationship, the children often have not worked through the grief caused by the separation of parents. Loss for the child involves not only the loss of absent parent or change in community, but also involves more subtle factors like the loss of an exclusive relationship with the parents or an alteration of the child's position in the family (Pill, 1980). Other adjustments may include sharing rooms and possessions with stepsiblings, changing schools and friends, and following new routines. The child in the stepparent family may need time to adjust to these changes, making instant love of stepparents and stepsiblings almost impossible.

The image of stepparents as neglectful, wicked, and abusive is also quite common. Visher and Visher (1979) suggest that the term "step" evokes the negative imagery found in fairy tales such as Hansel and Gretel, Snow White, and Cinderella. Such fairy tales have helped shape these negative images of stepparents. Ganong, Coleman, and Brown (1983) reported that the terms "stepmother" and "stepfather" were rated by college students more negatively than mother and father.
Bryan et al. (1985) found that undergraduate students perceived step-parents more negatively than parents in nuclear families or parents who were widowed. Stepparents were also seen as less powerful than divorced parents (Bryan et al., 1985). Although these negative perceptions of stepparents appear to be prevalent, there is no empirical evidence that stepparents are any different than other parents in their treatment of family members.

In summary, there are three common images of stepparent families. Stepparent families are considered to be structurally similar to nuclear biological families. Yet due to remarriage of adults and blending of siblings, this family form actually has a very complex structure. Stepparent family members are also expected to have "instant love" for one another, but the major adjustments to this family lifestyle may make close relationships difficult initially. Finally, stepparents are often viewed as neglectful, wicked, and abusive, even though there is no empirical evidence to suggest this.

The Early Adolescent

This section will focus on the biological, emotional, social, and intellectual development of the early adolescent. Relevant theoretical perspectives regarding these traits and early adolescents' perceptions of single-parent and stepparent families will be discussed.

Early adolescence, usually defined as ages 10 to 15, is a period of rapid growth transforming the child into an adult (Kagan & Coles,
1972; Thornburg, 1980b). It is also a period of many developmental changes, with youth experimenting with detachment from parents, getting established with peers, and becoming involved in transitional thought processes (Kagan & Coles, 1972). Thus, an understanding of the early adolescent demands an examination of some of the theories related to these developmental changes.

**Biological development**

The heightened rate of bodily changes during early adolescence is second only to the rate of growth during infancy (Boxer, Tobin-Richards, & Petersen, 1983). Today, adolescents are maturing faster than in previous decades. The typical girl in the United States begins puberty at 10-1/2 years and the average adolescent boy by age 13 (James, 1980; Petersen, 1979; Tanner, 1972). Medically, children are entering their pubescent developmental changes 12 to 18 months earlier than children of the same age in the 1950s and 1960s (James, 1980).

Early adolescence begins with a "growth spurt" that produces marked development of primary and then secondary sex characteristics caused by a rapid change in hormonal secretions (Blythe & Traeger, 1983; Gordon, 1972; Petersen, 1979; Sommer, 1978; Tanner, 1972). Until the age of 10, boys and girls grow at almost identical rates. However, there are different indications of pubertal development in males and females. This stage is marked by the development of breasts in the female and by genital changes in the male (Brunk, 1975). The boy's growth is usually more marked, more intense, and
of longer duration. As a result of all these changes, early adolescents are subject to impulses, desires, and behaviors not previously encountered by this age group (Thornburg, 1980b). Their biological development, therefore, affects their emotional development.

Emotional development

In terms of emotional development of early adolescents, Erikson (1959) indicates that there is a shift from emphasis on emotional crises involving family ties to relationships with peers. Early adolescents are searching for self-identity amid confused sex-role identification models, a changing cultural milieu, and the primal understanding of the impact of puberty and new appearance of the body (James, 1980). They experience turbulent emotions and much flexibility in self-concept. Erikson (1963a) identified eight developmental stages, with his fifth stage, identity versus crisis, describing the early adolescent. In the adolescent's search for identity, Erikson states:

In no other stage of the life cycle are the promises of finding oneself and the threat of losing oneself so clearly allied (Erikson, 1963b, p. 10).

Early adolescents face the problem of integrating into one identity or personality all the traits of the four previous stages (James, 1980). They experience uncertainty with their ideologies (Kagan & Coles, 1972) and try on various roles, values, and styles. Havighurst (1953) suggests that crises of earlier stages must be successfully resolved before one moves on to the next stage. Thus, early adolescents who have not successfully resolved such crises often
experience role confusion (James, 1980), which may have adverse effects on their social development.

**Social development**

The "growth spurt" in early adolescence signals the start of the adolescent's social development (Gordon, 1972). Socially, young adolescents begin to separate from their parents, test their developing sense of autonomy, establish close peer relationships, and reach out beyond the family to connect with a larger social sphere (Dorman, Lipsitz, & Verner, 1985). At this stage, contacts with parents begin to lessen and the nature of the interaction gradually undergoes changes (Capaldi & MacRae, 1979; Thornburg, 1983).

Today, the peer group becomes the primary partner in adolescents' social interaction (Brendt, 1982). The peer subculture imposes an intricate social structure which grants attention and approval, delivers reproof, and meets punishment. It facilitates meeting the need for acceptance, recognition, and a sense of belonging as an equal (Urbansok-Eads, 1981). The peer society also helps the early adolescent attain emancipation from home and adult situations, while providing models for developing values and social skills. The peer group grants status not found in the adult world and fosters the participation needed to gain a sense of achievement. It further serves as a reality check for the self (Urbansok-Eads, 1981).

The friendship patterns of the early adolescent are ones in which close friendships have a major influence on the development of personality, social skills, and behavior (Brendt, 1982).
these close friendship groups, learning to accept and be acceptable by others is of vital importance to the early adolescent. Peer group formations are usually initiated among friends of the same sex (Gould & Thornburg, 1980). However, Sullivan (1952) postulates that one of the major tasks of the preadolescent is to develop a "chum" relationship with the opposite sex. This relationship allows the child, for the first time, to learn the meaning of the reciprocal nature of meeting and satisfying human needs. According to Sullivan (1965), the natural outgrowth of this preadolescent friendship is the adolescent's ability to generalize feelings of concern for the needs of others.

In addition, this relationship is the necessary precondition for forming intimate relationships with members of the opposite sex throughout the lifespan. Mannarino (1975) studied friendship patterns and altruistic behavior in male sixth graders from an upper-middle class suburban area in the North. He hypothesized that preadolescent males involved in chum relationships would exhibit greater levels of altruism than those without chumship. The results indicated that the chumship group was significantly more altruistic at the .01 level than the nonchumship group. In a similar study done by Strickland (1981) with 10-year-old males and females from a rural area in the South, participants were given the Chumship Checklist, used to determine the degree to which subjects had a chumship relationship, and the Altruistic Scale, to measure the subjects' altruistic behavior. The results revealed that preadolescents classified as having a high level of chumship relationship had statistically
higher altruistic scores than children classified as having a low-level chumship relationship. The results of these studies provide support for Sullivan's theoretical discussion that preadolescents manifest a need for interpersonal intimacy.

Social conditions partly determine the nature and functions of friendships during early adolescence. Bart (1983) believes that in appropriate social conditions, most adolescents can be expected to develop desirable capabilities such as those related to abstract thinking and to manifest them in productive ways. Therefore, social development enhances intellectual development.

Intellectual development

Intellectually, early adolescents show increasing intellectual power and sophistication. Their interests lean toward the real and practical world (James, 1980). They begin to develop the cognitive ability to think abstractly, to think seriously about their personal futures in relation to their social context, and to reflect on social and personal values and motives (Dorman, Lipsitz, & Verner, 1985). The wisdom of cognitive-developmental psychology is that persons are evolving selves (Kegan, 1982), who make sense of the world around them in different ways as they move forward through sequential stages of being (Parker, 1985).

Early adolescents fall within Piaget's concrete formal operations stage. At this stage, the early adolescent organizes information around categories or concepts which are generalizable from one instance to another. In other words, the formal stage is characterized by
abstract thought, and adolescents utilize the components of logic and reasoning in making decisions (Cowan, 1978; Elkind, 1975; Thornburg, 1980a, 1981).

Extending Piaget's framework to the domain of ethical reasoning, Kholberg (1969) observed that the development from the concrete to abstract context for meaning-making permits one's thinking about right and wrong. At this formal operational stage comes the capacity for meeting the perspectives of several other people simultaneously. Early adolescents are also concerned with making explicit their own personal positions in relation to the values and beliefs of society. Concurrent with this is the development of moral reasoning. They discover existing inconsistencies in values and beliefs and seek clarification (Gibson, 1978).

In summary, early adolescents experience biological, emotional, social, and intellectual changes which are interrelated. Changes in one area affect changes in the other areas. As a result of the developmental changes experienced by early adolescents, their perceptions of individuals, their family, and society change.

Perceptions of single-parent and stepparent families by early adolescents

Several researchers (Curran, 1981; Hertzog, 1984; Schlesinger, 1978; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980a) have studied the developmental effects of parental separation and divorce on children. Also, in recent years, considerable research has focused on children in stepparent families (Furstenberg et al., 1983; Lombana, 1983; Lutz, 1980; Santrock, Warshak, Lindenberg, & Meadows, 1981; Visher & Visher, 1978b). However, only a
few studies have addressed early adolescents' perceptions of different family lifestyles, particularly by adolescents.

One study compared adolescents who experienced parental separation or divorce with subjects from intact families to determine whether these groups differed with regard to self-concept, anxiety, locus of control, and perceptions of their family lifestyles (Slater, Stewart, & Linn, 1983). Several questionnaires were used for this comparison. The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) was used to measure self-concept, the Family Environment Scale (FES) to assess respondents' family milieu, the Strait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) to measure state and anxiety, and the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control (LOC) to assess whether adolescents viewed the causal relationship of events to be under their control or governed by luck or fate.

Data were analyzed by a two-way analysis of variance and covariance with one factor being home background and the other being sex. Of interest for this review are the results for the FES which revealed that adolescents from disrupted homes perceived their families as having more control, more conflict, and more achievement orientation than teenagers from intact homes.

In addition, subjects' home background classification interacted with their sex type on total self-esteem, identity, behavior, physical self, and social self. These interactions revealed that males from disrupted homes scored higher (more favorably) than females in the same homelife situation. Further, males from divorced/separated homes had more positive scores than their intact counterparts. Males from divorced/separated homes also scored higher on moral-ethical self than those whose parents were still married. The authors suggest that the ability to adapt to a new lifestyle
without negative perceptions of their family environment is central to a healthy adjustment.

In another study, Schlesinger (1982) investigated children's viewpoints of living in a one-parent family. The sample consisted of 40 children ages 12-18 years living in middle class, urban, separated or divorced one-parent families in Toronto, Canada. The questionnaire consisted of 87 structured questions and four open-ended questions.

The findings point to some of the changes the children experienced in becoming a member of a one-parent family. These included: moving to a new neighborhood, a shift in contact with maternal and paternal relatives, and a new experience in their contact with the noncustodial parent. At least half of the children had no parental communication about the pending separation. In most cases, respondents felt upset and unhappy about the separation and found advantages and disadvantages in living in a one-parent family. It is apparent that the change in family structure affects children, but over time, the hurt appears to lessen and they seem to live a normal family life with one parent at home. It also seems that after adjusting to the new family situations, children's perceptions of those families become more positive.

Other studies, however, investigated how children in single-parent families view their parents and themselves. Holmes and Holmes (1973) found that children from two-parent families tend to view their mothers as caring and affectionate more often than do children from fatherless homes. Parish and Dostal (1980) found that children from divorced families tend to perceive their parents and themselves less favorably than do children from intact families. They
also found that upon remarriage of the mother, children's perceptions of themselves and their absent fathers become negative. According to Youniss and Smoller (1985), adolescents in single-parent families view their mothers as more accepting and able to negotiate disagreements than their fathers. Subjects from single-parent mother-custodial homes and those from two-parent homes appeared to evaluate their parents quite differently. With respect to conceptions of self in relation with parents, subjects from single-parent families assigned their parents with slightly more positive descriptors than subjects from intact families (33% compared to 32%) (Youniss & Smoller, 1985).

It does seem that children have varying views about their families, particularly those in one-parent families. However, there is disagreement among researchers concerning these views. Some findings indicate that adolescents from disrupted homes perceive their parents and themselves more positively than adolescents from intact homes, while other findings indicate the opposite. What is not known is how adolescents in general and preadolescents in particular perceive diverse family forms. Thus, while the previously reviewed studies focus on adolescents' perceptions of their single- or step-parent families, research is needed that explores perceptions that youth in general have toward these family forms.

In summary, the few studies addressing early adolescents' perceptions of different family lifestyles revealed that teens at this developmental stage are concerned with the changes they experience during the shift in their family structure. In most cases, they were unhappy and upset about the changes. However, over time the changes
are accepted and the early adolescent is able to cope as other teens who have not experienced such changes.

Early adolescents from single-parent families sometimes viewed their parents less favorably than do children from intact families. Upon remarriage of the parent, the teens' perceptions of themselves and their family change positively. Finally, early adolescents from disrupted homes perceived their families as having control, more conflict, and more achievement orientation than those from intact families.

Middle/Junior High School Concept

This section focuses on the middle/junior high school concept with particular emphasis on the development of home economics and educational needs assessment.

Development of middle/junior high school

In the late 1800s, there was societal pressure to create a three-year junior school between the elementary grades and the four years of secondary grades (Brooks, 1978). The change was encouraged for many reasons. First, there was concern about the increasing age of college freshmen (Moss, 1969). Thus, the Committee on College Entrance Requirements recommended a "unified six-year high school course of study beginning with the seventh grade" (Moss, 1969). The committee then regarded the seventh grade rather than the ninth grade as the turning point of adolescence.

Other factors that stimulated the reorganization of secondary
education included: high pupil dropout rate from sixth grade through the early years of high school; a growing awareness that the schools were not adequately preparing children for occupational life or future training; increasing recognition that adolescents were out of place in an elementary school, both physically and educationally; and that the conventional school did not provide satisfactorily for the individual differences, learning capacities, interests, and needs (McEwin, 1983).

The growth of the junior high schools, grades 7-9, was very rapid. The number increased from fewer than 400 in 1920 to more than 6,000 in 1964 (Lounsbury, 1978; Johnson, 1962). However, by the middle of this century, there was disenchantment with the junior high school (Brooks, 1978; Compton, 1978; Gibson, 1978; Hertzog, 1984). A major criticism was that the junior high school tended to be a scaled-down version of the senior high school, with complex departmentalization, interscholastic sports, rigid scheduling, and inappropriate social events (Brooks, 1978; Hertzog, 1984). The view was also expressed that in large cities, the junior high school fostered racial imbalance by its nature (Moss, 1969). Another criticism was that there were few teacher education programs that differentiated the preparation for junior high school teachers from that designed specifically for elementary or high school teachers (McEwin, 1983).

As more and more educators became aware of the shortcomings of the junior high school, and as theorists studied early adolescents in more depth, the concept of the middle school was introduced. A middle school is defined as a school serving at least three grades,
no more than five grades, and including grades 6 and 7 (Alexander, 1964). In 1963, Alexander proposed that the middle school organization be comprised of grades 5-8, and that programs be based on the needs of 10- to 14-year-olds (Alexander, 1964). The middle school has grown rapidly since its inception in the '60s. A survey conducted by Alexander (1964) revealed a total of over 1,101 middle schools in 1967-1968, and this number grew to over 56,000 today (Thornburg, 1984).

Alexander (1964) states that the middle school provides: (1) a secure base environment for every student; (2) a program of learning opportunities which attempts to give balanced attention to personal development, skills of continued learning, and use of organized knowledge; (3) an instructional system which focuses on individual progress; (4) interdisciplinary team teaching; (5) flexible scheduling and grouping; and (5) continuing and increasing opportunities for socializing, integrating, and interest-building activities.

Garvelink (1973) suggests that the evaluation and report system should reflect student achievement. Popper (1967) states that the paramount goal of the middle school is to intervene in the process of education which began in elementary school, mediate between human conditions of the onset of adolescence and the pressures of the culture, and continue the general education of early adolescents in a curriculum which is functional for the learning at this stage of development. To achieve this goal, Pray and McNamara (1967) suggest that there must be some radical departures from previous teaching, administrative, and organizational patterns prevalent at the
secondary level.

Although there has been a shift to the middle school organization, there are still many junior high schools. Thornburg (1984) indicates that there are 6,000 junior high schools remaining in the United States today. He added that although both types of schools serve the same clientele, their philosophical base is different. The reluctance of some schools to change to the middle school concept may be due to their not agreeing with the philosophy of the middle school. Moreover, there are still only a few effective middle-level teacher preparation programs which use present knowledge about necessary components of effective middle-level education (Thornburg, 1984).

In summary, in the late 1800s, there was societal pressure to create a three-year junior high school between the elementary grades and the four years of secondary grades. It was felt that the present schools were not meeting the needs of children between the ages of 10-14, and there was much concern about the increasing age of college freshmen and the high pupil dropout rate from sixth grade through the early years of high school. These concerns led to the development of the junior high schools.

These schools grew rapidly but soon there was disenchantment with the junior high schools. A major criticism was that these schools were only a scaled-down version of the high schools with complex departmentalization, interscholastic sports, rapid scheduling, and inappropriate social events. There was also concern that teachers were not being prepared specifically to teach this age group. These concerns led to more studies on the early adolescent.
The studies made educators more aware of the shortcomings of the junior high schools; thus, the concept of the middle school was proposed. The goal of this organization is to meet all the needs of the early adolescent that were neglected by other organizations. The middle schools grew rapidly from 1,101 in the late 1960s to 56,000 today. However, despite the shift to this organization, many administrators do not subscribe to the philosophy of the middle school. There are still many junior high schools remaining in the United States today which serve the same clientele as the middle school but whose philosophical orientations are different.

**Home economics in the middle/junior high school**

Home economics focuses on total family well-being with the ultimate goal to improve the quality of life for families and individuals. Home economists, therefore, have the social responsibility to lead a continuous reexamination of the social ideas and beliefs that relate to and affect the family (Simpson, 1981). Home economists need to emphasize the meaning of family, the diverse modes of family life, and how these can contribute to the fullest development of family members. Home economics prepares students to become sufficiently aware of their own values, the decision-making process, the available alternatives which will enable them to make mature, informed, functional lifestyle choices for themselves, and understand those who make choices different from their own (Macklin, 1981). This suggests that home economics should be taught at all levels of education. It
is, therefore, appropriate to ask what is taught in the middle school home economics curriculum, and specifically in family life education.

Home economics curriculum

Home economists and other educators have made several suggestions regarding what needs to be included in the home economics curriculum in general, and at the middle school level in particular. Rubin (1978) suggests that the home economics curriculum should encourage learning experiences that strengthen commitment to family life and parenting. Also emphasized are interpersonal skills, the humanistic elements of education, and the clarification of roles, particularly those related to women and family lifestyles (Martin & Light, 1984). Specifically, Horn (1970) suggests that the middle school curriculum in home economics should include areas of personal growth and development, interpersonal relationships, consumer education, and a combination of physical, cognitive, and mental skills. She added that the program should operate so the students will continue to use the skills and knowledge learned throughout their life.

Empirical evidence is provided regarding what needs to be included in the middle school curriculum. In 1973, Kohlmann and Ericksen (1976) initiated a research project with sixth graders to identify sound bases for structuring curriculum and to explore teaching/learning strategies and program organizations that are in keeping with the purpose and philosophy of the middle school and home economics education. The researchers reviewed the literature related to the middle school, conferred with nationally recognized leaders in the movement, and visited schools that used differing ways to implement
programs. The project also included a critical study of the characteristics and educational needs of the emerging adolescent as related to personal development and home and family life.

The results indicated four developmental tasks of the early adolescent which home economists could especially assist the learner in achieving. The developmental tasks included: developing self, being a family member, being a consumer, and becoming employable. The conclusions drawn were that the curriculum at the middle school level should be child centered in context and approach and should be flexible to take care of the wide variability in individual rate and stage of development.

In another study, Smith (1984) studied the frequency of home tasks performed by early adolescents and addressed curricular implications for home economics. The sample consisted of 1,252 boys and girls in grades 6, 7, and 8 enrolled in Iowa public schools. Subjects were asked to respond to a 52-item objective questionnaire on each of two forms. The items included activities related to six areas: food, living environments, human relationships, consumer practices, and clothing. The response scale was a Likert-type five-response format which asked the respondents to indicate how often they did the activity described, with responses ranging from "I never do this" to "I do this regularly."

The findings indicate that students perform a number of home tasks that can serve as the nucleus for planning curricular offerings. In particular, 78 percent of the respondents never discussed divorce with parents or guardians. This is a very interesting finding, since early adolescents want to be informed about their parents' separation,
divorce, and/or remarriage (Goldstein & Solnit, 1984; Porter & Chatelain, 1981; Sager et al., 1981; Visher & Visher, 1979). Smith (1984) concluded that the interactive quality of the home/school environment for the area of home economics holds potential, particularly for early adolescents. She suggested that the program in the middle school needs to be task oriented and include concepts from all the areas of home economics. It should be broad in scope with emphasis on continuation and expansion of activities already being done in the home. One way of encouraging learning experiences that strengthen commitment to family life is by exposing students to a well-developed family life curriculum.

**Family life curriculum** The need for family life education at all ages has long been recognized by home economists and other educators. Programs dealing with concepts related to personal development and the family have existed to some extent for many years. However, most of this instruction has been at the beginning elementary grades, and largely tended to ignore early adolescents in the later elementary grades and early middle school years. Professionals in the field have suggested what should be the function of family life education.

Sheek (1984) suggests that family life curriculum should address the wide diversity of families. The real challenge for home economists, she adds, is to prepare students for family life with the knowledge that no family structure should be considered a constant or even a necessarily predictable variable. In addition, students need to be informed about some of the potential difficulties or unique issues.
which may affect different families, and what family members need to know to help them take a proactive stance toward successful family functioning regardless of their family structure (Harriman, 1982).

This information is important for early adolescents in light of recent data indicating that the percentages of children in this age group that belong to single-parent and stepparent families are drastically increasing (Bumpass, 1983; Furstenberg et al., 1983; Glick, 1984a; Spanier & Glick, 1980).

No empirical evidence has been found regarding early adolescents' concerns regarding single-parent and stepparent families. However, Welden's (1985) study concerning older adolescents' perceived concerns related to the stepfamily has implications for family life curriculum in the middle school. The researcher used a 44-item questionnaire to compare the perceptions of adolescents in step- and intact families. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree of importance each item would have to teenagers in a stepfamily. The degree of importance was rated on a five-point scale ranking from "not important at all" to "extremely important." Data were analyzed by factor analysis to determine whether the perceived concerns of adolescents related to the stepfamily differed by sex, type of family, and the length of time in a stepfamily.

The results indicated that respondents expressed great concern for items dealing with relationships with both parents and siblings. Females perceived these concerns to be of greater importance than males. In the analysis by family type, "Relationships with stepfamily members" was the only factor to be more important by stepfamily respondents than by respond-
ents in intact families. According to Welden, it appears that adolescents from both stepfamilies and intact families view these concerns similarly. These findings point to the need for the inclusion of information regarding stepparent families in the home economics curriculum, since it will be of importance to all students regardless of their family background. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate what is being taught in the home economics curriculum.

Computer searches revealed no systematic reviews of curriculum materials indicating what is taught in the home economics curriculum regarding single-parent and stepparent families. However, Nolan, Coleman, and Ganong (1984) conducted a study regarding the presence of information on single-parent and stepparent families in home economics textbooks. Seven textbook publishers were called to determine the best selling marriage and family textbooks. They provided the titles of 14 books considered to be leaders in the field and suggested additional relevant texts, making a total of 26 textbooks published between 1973 and 1983.

The books were reviewed by four persons who teach introductory marriage and family courses at the University of Missouri to determine if all major textbooks had been included and if each was appropriate for an introductory applied course. A preliminary review of books revealed that only three had a comprehensive discussion of stepfamilies, and three did not even include the subject of stepfamilies. An additional seven addressed the topic in less than one page.

It was observed that the topic of stepfamilies is generally covered in chapters dealing with divorce and remarriage. However,
92 percent of the books discussed cohabitation and 23 percent discussed communal living. This is not surprising, as these family forms are on the increase in the American society. However, with the documented evidence of the increase in single-parent and stepparent families, the continued increase of school-age children who are being a part of these families, and the unique situations within these families, one would expect much information regarding these families in the curriculum and also in textbooks. Since home economics is concerned with the well-being of all families, one would particularly expect such information to be present in the home economics curriculum.

In summary, home economics focuses on the well-being of families and prepares students to function in society and understand other people. Thus, home economists also need to focus on the meaning and the diversity of the family and its contribution to family development.

What should be taught in home economics at the middle/junior high school level has brought about much discussion. It has been suggested that home economics at this level should be broad and provide students with experiences and skills they will use throughout their lives, both inside and outside the family setting.

Several research findings indicate that adolescents have much concern about diverse family forms, particularly single-parent and stepparent families. This information is pertinent for early adolescents especially since a large percentage of children in this age group already belong to these families, and it has been predicted that even larger numbers will become members of such families in the future. Professionals
in the field have, therefore, suggested that family life education needs to help students understand different family structures and the unique issues with which they are faced.

Despite this, little information regarding these families is in textbooks. It can, therefore, be assumed that such information is not widely included in the curriculum. Based on the philosophy on which home economics was founded, and the fact that more school-age children are becoming members of single-parent and stepparent families, family life curriculum at the middle/junior high school level needs to address diverse family forms. In order to include the content that students need to learn regarding single-parent and stepparent families in the curriculum, it is important to conduct needs assessments.

Educational needs assessment in the middle/junior high school

The process of conducting educational needs assessments has rapidly increased over the years. Needs assessments provide valuable information which is essential for planning and developing effective instructional programs. Kuh (1982) points out, for example, that needs assessment has its greatest value when used as a problem-solving strategy in identifying unsatisfactory conditions or challenging situations with which students must contend.

Needs assessments at the middle/junior high school level are of critical importance. With early adolescents maturing at a younger age (James, 1980; Petersen, 1979), they often have to make adult-like decisions. However, it is not clear whether or not the middle/junior high school curriculum prepares students to make such decisions. In
addition, the newness of the middle school organization may warrant use of needs assessments in order to obtain the necessary information for effective program planning.

This section will, therefore, focus on defining needs assessment and reviewing the types of attitudinal measures that can be used to assess needs.

Definition of needs assessment There is a lack of consensus regarding the definition of the concept of "need." Atwood and Ellis (1971) suggest that a need is a deficiency that detracts from a person's well-being. Scriven and Roth (1978) express the idea that need is the gap between an actual situation and a satisfactory situation. A need may also be considered as a gap between a current set of circumstances and some desirable set of circumstances (Price, 1982; Tyler, 1979), which can be described in terms of proficiency (knowledge, skills, attitudes) and performance. In addition, needs can deal with desires, interests, or deficiencies (Price, 1982). For purposes of this study, a need is defined as a discrepancy between current outcomes and desired outcomes.

An educational needs assessment may be described as a procedure or gap analysis that is used to determine discrepancies between "what is" and "what ought to be," between current outcomes and desired outcomes (Kaufman, 1978; Tyler, 1979). The information obtained from the educational needs assessment may be used for planning and developing educational programs by providing the information base for long- and short-term decision making. Wiles and Bondi (1978) suggest that educational needs assessment is basic to all curriculum development,
without which developmental activities will have little or no purpose.

Educational needs assessment is a comprehensive inquiry into the educational status of learners. Thus, affective information about students can assist planners in making adjustments to the existing curriculum (Wiles & Bondi, 1979). As affective information, attitudes are often assessed to determine educational needs of learners (Oppenheim, 1972) and can assist curriculum planners in personalizing the instructional program (Wiles & Bondi, 1979).

**Attitudinal measures as needs assessment** Although there are several definitions, attitudes may be defined generally as a readiness to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to social objects, issues, groups, situations, types of people, and others (Aiken, 1980; Nitko, 1983; Oskamp, 1977). Attitudes may be formed in interaction with others, by exposure to dictums, pronouncements, or printed or spoken exhortations (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965). Having an attitude means that the individual is no longer neutral toward a social object and rejects other evaluations.

One common view of attitudes is that they have affective, cognitive, and behavioral components (Aiken, 1980; Oskamp, 1977). The affective component consists of feelings and emotions one has toward the object. The cognitive component is conceptualized as a person's beliefs about, or factual knowledge of, the object or person. The behavioral component involves the person's overt behavior directed toward the object or person (Aiken, 1980; Zimbardo & Ebbesen, 1970).

Attitudes are not directly observable, but are inferred based
on the study of responses which are observable. They help to explain the relationship between certain observable stimulus events and certain behavioral responses (Fleming & Levie, 1978; Oskamp, 1977). However, behavior does not always reflect attitudes. On the other hand, attitudes sensitize individuals to events that otherwise might be overlooked. They also may be responsible for the neglect of contemporary facts and for special interpretations (Jahoda & Warren, 1966).

Attitudes can be measured by the use of quantitative scales. There are various approaches to constructing attitude scales. Five common types of attitude scales will be discussed.

1. **Borgardus' social-distance scale.** This scale was developed to determine attitudes toward various racial or nationality groups. The seven points of the scale progress systematically from acceptance of members of racial or national groups into the most intimate family relationships to complete exclusion of the group. The respondent's attitude score toward the group is used as the closest degree of relationships which he is willing to accept. A mean score for a group of respondents is computed, which reflects a composite attitude. Thus, the attitudes of one group can be compared to those of another group (Oskamp, 1977). Recent variations of this method have allowed measurement of attitudes toward any social group and have also broadened the range of response options.

2. **Thurstone's methods of equal-appearing intervals.** This method indicates the amount of difference between one respondent's attitude and another's (Oskamp, 1977). To build a scale using this
method, the investigator writes or locates a large number of opinion statements representing favorable, neutral, and unfavorable views about the particular topic. A group of experts judges the statements, then rates each statement's favorability or unfavorability. The judges are directed to think of each category as being equally distant from the adjacent category when they are placed on a continuum (Nitko, 1983; Oskamp, 1977).

The mean and variance of each item and the intercorrelations among the items are computed. The median becomes the "scale value" that locates a statement on a 1- to 11-point scale. Based on the analyses, 20 items are selected for the final scale. Persons respond to the items by checking "agree" or "disagree" for each statement (Brown, 1983; Nitko, 1983).

3. **Likert method of summated ratings.** This is similar to Thurstone's scale but does not require the use of judges. Respondents are presented with a series of statements and asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement. Responses are usually made on a 5- or 7-point scale with categories ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." All the items are considered to be of equal value, and responses are weighted to reflect the degree of agreement. The attitude score may be either the total number of points over all the items, or the average score per item (Brown, 1983; Zimbardo, Ebbesen, & Maslach, 1977).

4. **Guttman's scalogram analysis.** This method was developed to measure only one underlying attitude; that is, scores have one unique meaning. This was to be accomplished by insuring that the
response patterns were cumulative. To develop this scale, an initial pool of items is given to a large group of respondents. Each item is stated in a "yes-no" or "agree-disagree" format. The items are then arranged according to the number of respondents agreeing with them. The item agreed to by the fewest respondents is the item most favorable to the attitude object. Each respondent's score is determined by the rank order of the most favorable item endorsed (Oskamp, 1977).

5. **Osgood semantic differential scale.** This type of device attempts to measure the implied meaning of the concept being measured and includes a series of 7-point subscales with two opposing adjectives (e.g., "good" and "bad"). Respondents check the point of each scale which corresponds to their feelings about the concept being rated (Oskamp, 1977).

Although all these scaling methods are different in structure, they generally yield scores which are highly correlated with the other attitude measures. However, the Likert scale was found to be most highly correlated with the other attitude measures (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1974; Tittle & Hill, 1967).

In summary, needs assessments provide information essential for planning and developing effective instructional programs and can be used as a problem-solving strategy in identifying unsatisfactory conditions or challenging situations with which students must contend. Because of preadolescent's development and maturation and the newness of the middle school organization, needs assessments are particularly essential for educational programs at the middle/junior high school level.
Needs are discrepancies between current outcomes and a desired outcome. Thus, needs assessment may be considered a procedure used to determine discrepancies between current outcomes and desired outcomes. Attitudes, defined as a readiness to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to social objects, issues, situations, or groups, are often assessed to determine educational needs of learners. Because attitudes have affective, cognitive, and behavioral components, several scales have been developed to measure attitudes. The five most commonly used are: Borgardus' social distance scale, Thurstone's method of equal-appearing scale, Likert's method of summated ratings, Guttman's scale, and Osgood's semantic differential scale. These scaling methods yield scores that are highly correlated with each other. The Likert scale is reported to correlate most highly with the other attitude scales.

Summary and Conclusions

Summary

Family life education in the school curriculum is becoming increasingly necessary due to the rapid changes in family structures. For example, demographers have projected that by the year 2000, the number of single-parent and stepparent families may exceed that of nuclear families. They also indicated that one of every two children under 18 will live part of his/her life in a single-parent or step-parent family.

Despite these changes, the measure of "normalcy" is the nuclear
family. This has resulted in many images of single-parent and step-parent families. These families are predicted as being economically disadvantaged, having children who are delinquent and having parents who are wicked and abusive. These images suggest that there are misconceptions of these family forms and that family life education may be needed in the schools.

One age group that may need family life education is the early adolescent. Today, early adolescents mature much faster physically, experiencing rapid developmental changes. Emotionally, they search for self-identity, need closer contact with peers as primary partners, and need to learn to accept and be accepted by others. Their intellectual development assumes an abstract nature, seeking clarification of inconsistencies in values and beliefs. With these developmental changes along with the changes occurring in family life, it would seem that early adolescents would be a target audience for family life education. However, little information is available regarding early adolescents' perceptions of families, particularly nontraditional family structures. This suggests that more studies are needed on the perceptions of early adolescents regarding single-parent and stepparent families. Such studies would also help in developing appropriate curriculum content for the early adolescents in middle/junior high schools.

Junior high schools, and more recently middle schools, have been a growing phenomenon in the 1900s. Both grew out of a concern to meet the needs of students from sixth grade through the early years of high school, particularly regarding the preparation of
children for occupational life and future training. Although both
types of schools serve the same clientele, their philosophical orienta­
tions are different. Regardless of which organization is adopted,
there is general agreement that home economics needs to be taught at
this level.

In order to plan home economics programs for middle/junior high
schools, educational needs assessment is necessary. One of the means
by which needs may be assessed is by the use of attitudinal measures.
Attitudes are not observable, but they have affective, cognitive,
and behavioral components. These help to explain observable stimulus
events and behavior responses which may be used as needs assessment.

This study will serve as a needs assessment for early adolescents at
the middle/junior high school level. The study will focus on the attitudes
of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families.

Conclusions and selection of variables

The literature review revealed very little information concerning
early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families.
Further, there was little information regarding the relationship of these
attitudes to certain sociodemographic variables which were of particular
interest to the researcher. This section, therefore, will provide justifi­
cation for the inclusion in the study of the variables sex, grade, place of
residence, family structure, father and mother's occupation, and father and
mother's education. Tyler (1979) suggests that knowledge of the charac­
teristics of learners is important in order to plan curriculum to meet
their needs.
Sex  Roper and LaBeff (1977) found sex differences in sex-role attitudes, with males being more traditional than females. This might suggest that males would have less positive attitudes toward nontraditional family structures. In contrast, Ganong, Coleman, and Brown (1981) found that male adolescents viewed divorce more favorably than females. These findings suggest that there may be differences by sex in attitudes toward nontraditional families. However, there is no clear trend regarding whether males or females will have the more positive attitudes.

Grade  Angrist, Mickelsen, and Penna (1977) sought to determine whether adolescents' attitudes about family-related topics was related to grade. No significant differences were found. These findings indicate that there may be no significant differences by grade in adolescents' attitudes about single-parent and stepparent families.

Place of residence  There is evidence of rural-urban differences in attitudes towards family forms, and considerable evidence that a relationship exists between size of community and various attitudes. For example, Weiss and Jurich (1985) found that individuals residing in small communities had more negative attitudes toward premarital sex than individuals in large communities. Larsen (1978) studied Gallop Polls taken between 1965 and 1975 and found that persons from rural areas in comparison to urban areas were less accepting of divorce. These studies suggest that there may be differences by place of residence with rural residents and those from smaller communities having less positive attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families than respondents from larger communities.
Family structure  

Ganong, Coleman, and Brown (1981) found that adolescents from stepparent families had more favorable attitudes toward divorce than those from intact and single-parent families. On the other hand, Nunn, Parish, and Worthing (1983) found that adolescents from intact families evaluated their families more positively than those from either single-parent or stepparent families. Further, they found adolescents from single-parent families to be significantly less positive regarding their families than were adolescents from stepparent families. These findings suggest that there may be differences by family structure, with adolescents from intact and stepparent families having more positive attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families than adolescents from single-parent families.

Mothers' and fathers' occupation  

Angrist, Mickelsen, and Penna (1977) found no relationship between attitudes of adolescents toward family orientation and mothers' occupation. In addition, they found that family and personal variables such as fathers' occupation, mothers' occupation, and employment, among others, had little or no association with attitudes and knowledge. The results of these studies indicate that there may not be significant differences in early adolescents' attitudes toward single- and stepparent families by fathers' and mothers' occupation.

Mothers' and fathers' education  

In a study of adolescents' knowledge and attitudes regarding certain family-related topics, Angrist, Mickelsen, and Penna (1977) found no relationship between parents' educational level and adolescents' attitudes toward the
topics. These findings, although limited, suggest that there may be no significant differences in early adolescents' attitudes toward single- and stepparent families by parents' educational level.
CHAPTER III. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The purposes of this study were to investigate the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families and to determine the relationship between these attitudes and selected socio-demographic characteristics. No suitable instrument was found for assessing the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families. Thus, a secondary purpose was to develop a valid and reliable instrument. This chapter presents the methods and procedures used in the study and includes the following sections: (1) development of the instrument; (2) pilot test; (3) selection of the population and sample; (4) data collection; and (5) data analysis.

Development of the Instrument

In the absence of a suitable instrument to assess early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families, the instrument, "What I Think About Single-Parent and Stepparent Families," was developed. The conceptual framework for the instrument was derived from a review of the literature on single-parent and stepparent families. Two major concepts emerged as relevant for the instrument: Images of single-parent and stepparent families (Johnson, 1980; Lutz, 1980; Swihart & Brigham, 1982) and acceptance of single-parent and stepparent families (Chng & Gray, 1983; Hetherington, 1981; Lombana, 1983; Touliatos & Lindholm, 1980).

Research indicates that there are two general images of single-parent and stepparent families. First, there is a general belief
that single-parent and stepparent family structures result in a change in economic status of the family (Hetherington, 1979; Johnson, 1980, Lutz, 1980; Swihart & Bingham, 1982). In some cases, this image is verifiable, but there are other cases in which it may be questionable. Second, there is an image regarding relationships of members of single-parent and stepparent families such as: (1) conflicting loyalties of children toward the absent parent (Barnes & Coplan, 1980; Brown, 1980; Lutz, 1980; Pill, 1981); (2) change in role expectations (Chng & Gray, 1983; Johnson, 1980; Pill, 1981); (2) change in 1981); (3) children having a desire to have contact with the absent biological parent (Brown, 1980; DiSibio, 1981; Johnson, 1980; Lutz, 1983; Pill, 1980); (4) children's desiring to be informed about the change in family structure (Goldstein & Solnit, 1984; Porter & Chatelain, 1981; Sager & Walker, 1981); and (5) children's fearing loss of their parents' love or being abandoned (Barnes & Coplan, 1980; Furstenberg et al., 1983; Hetherington, 1981; Johnson, 1980; Swihart & Brigham, 1982).

With regard to acceptance of single-parent and stepparent families, research indicates that family forms are accepted more positively by family members (DiSibio, 1981; Furstenberg et al., 1983; Visher & Visher, 1979) than by their peers (Chng & Gray, 1983; Santrock, Warshak, & Meadows, 1981; Touliatos & Lindholm, 1980; Weiss, 1981). In addition, school personnel and society in general accept these family forms negatively (Drake & Shellenberger, 1980; Lombana, 1983; Swihart & Brigham, 1982). Table 1 shows the major concepts and subconcepts and the number of items included in each.
Table 1. Table of specifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Single-parent family</th>
<th>Step-parent family</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Changes in economic status</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Conflicting loyalties of children toward parents</td>
<td>5, 15</td>
<td>2, 11, 13</td>
<td>16.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Change in role expectations</td>
<td>2, 3, 4</td>
<td>1, 3, 8, 12</td>
<td>22.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communicating to children the change in family structure</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fear of loss of love/abandonment</td>
<td>6, 7</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>12.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Self-blame for parents' separation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>9.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Acceptance of single-parent and stepparent families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Acceptance by self</td>
<td>9, 14</td>
<td>4, 9, 10</td>
<td>16.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Acceptance by peers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Acceptance by school personnel</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Acceptance by society</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7, 14, 16</td>
<td>9.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part consisted of 15 items to obtain information regarding the attitude of participants toward single-parent families, while the second part consisted of 16 items concerning respondents' attitudes toward stepparent families. The items were developed to reflect information in the literature regarding single-parent and stepparent families. Much effort was made to construct an equal number of positive and negative items. A seven-point Likert-type response mode ranging from "strongly disagree" (coded as 1) to "strongly agree" (coded as 7) was used for the instrument. This type of scale was used because it allows greater variability in responses in order to evaluate if other correlations are present (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1974; Tittle & Hill, 1967). The final section of the questionnaire consisted of eight items developed to obtain background information regarding age, sex, grade, ethnicity, place of residence, family structure, living arrangements, and parents' education and occupation. The completed instrument consisted of 39 items.

The items were reviewed by specialists in family life education, home economics education, and research and evaluation at Iowa State University. Revisions were made in the instrument following the review by the specialists.

Pilot Test

The questionnaire was administered to 20 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students not included in the sample. Respondents were asked to comment on clarity of the items and directions, and the length and format of the instrument. In general, the respondents
felt that the directions were clearly stated and that the items were easily understood. The length of the instrument was considered appropriate and the format was easy to follow. The length of time to complete the instrument was 15–20 minutes.

Population and Sample

The population consisted of students in grades six, seven, and eight in Area Education (AEA) 11 in Iowa. (See Appendix B for counties included in AEA 11.) Letters were sent to principals of 56 schools with at least one of the grades mentioned, inviting them to participate in the study. A self-addressed postcard was sent to each principal indicating their agreement or disagreement to participate (Appendix C). Of the 56 principals contacted, 23 (40%) agreed that their schools would participate in the study.

The principals who agreed to participate furnished the researcher with the number of students in each of the three grades in their schools. The total number of students in each grade in all the schools was computed, representing 849 sixth graders, 1,150 seventh graders, and 1,385 eighth graders. A proportionate sample based on the total number for each grade was then computed for each school. This was done to assure appropriate representation of students in each grade for each school. For example, one school had a total of 188 sixth graders, 189 seventh graders, and 205 eighth graders. The computation was as follows:
Therefore, included in the sample from this school were 22 sixth graders, 16 seventh graders, and 15 eighth graders. Based on this sample selection process, a total of 344 students were identified for the sample. This number represented 104 sixth graders, 115 seventh graders, and 135 eighth graders.

Data Collection

Data for the study were collected by mailed questionnaires between November, 1985 and January, 1986. Packets of materials were sent to each principal of the 23 participating schools. Included in the packets were a cover letter thanking the principal for agreeing for his school to participate in the study, instructions for selecting the sample, directions for administering the instrument, comment sheet, copies of the instrument, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope (Appendix C). Specific instructions for selecting the sample required the principals to consecutively number the students in each of the three grades, place the corresponding numbers in a box, and draw numbers until the designated number was obtained for each grade. The information from the comment sheet provided the researcher with verification that all procedures were adequately carried out as suggested by the researcher.

Three weeks after the packets were mailed, a follow-up telephone call was made to the principals who did not respond. In early
January, a second telephone call was made to principals from whom questionnaires were not received.

A total of 344 questionnaires were mailed, and 335 (97.4%) were returned. Of that number, 333 (99.4%) provided usable data. Distribution of sample size by grade is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of sample size by grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

The questionnaires were coded according to the plan in Appendix D. Responses were then transferred to the main frame computer at Iowa State University. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences-X was used to develop a computer program to analyze the data. In the program, reverse scoring was done for negatively stated items so that for all items, high scores indicated realistic views of single- and stepparent families.

Several statistical procedures were used to analyze the data. First, descriptive statistics including frequency distributions, percentages, and means were used to determine sociodemographic characteristics and general attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent
families. Second, factor analysis using the principal components method and varimax rotation procedures was used to identify items with large numerical correlations which seemed to be forming clusters. Factor reliabilities were determined using Cronbach's alpha. Finally, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-tests were computed to determine if the dependent variables, the identified factors, would vary according to the independent variables: sex, grade, place of residence, family structure, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' education.
CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The objectives of the study were to: (1) develop a valid and reliable instrument for determining the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families; (2) assess the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families; (3) determine the relationship of early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families to sex, grade level, place of residence, family structure, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' education; and (4) make recommendations regarding family life education curriculum at the middle/junior high school level.

This chapter includes five parts: characteristics of the respondents, attitudes of early adolescents, factors derived from the factor analysis, relationship between factors and respondent characteristics, and discussion of the findings.

Characteristics of Respondents

This section describes the personal characteristics of the 333 early adolescents who participated in the study. Characteristics described include: sex, age, grade, ethnicity, place of residence, family structure, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' education.

Characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 3. The data show that there were slightly more males (51.8%) than females (48.2%). Most respondents were either 12 or 13 years of age (61.7%).
Table 3. Characteristics of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Sex</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>48.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
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<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
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<td>92.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/Afro-American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic American</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Indian American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Table 3. Continued

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural (farming)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural (nonfarming)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town (less than 5,000 population)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City (5,000-50,000 population)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan area (over 50,000 population)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>Stepparent</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-parent</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intact</td>
<td>234</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<th>Fathers' occupation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional/technical</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers/proprietors</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/kindred workers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen/foremen/kindred workers</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operators/kindred workers</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service/private household workers</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mothers' occupation</th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional/technical</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers/proprietors</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/kindred workers</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen/foremen/kindred workers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operators/kindred workers</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service/private household workers</td>
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Table 3. Continued

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
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<td>10.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
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<td>Graduate</td>
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<td>Technical</td>
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<td>92</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>333</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean age of the respondents was 12.58 years. Respondents were evenly distributed with 39.1% in grade 8, 33.3% in grade 7, and 27.6% in grade 6. The majority of the respondents (92.1%) were White/Caucasian, with only 2.7% from other ethnic/racial backgrounds. The largest percentage of respondents came from towns (32.2%), while others came from cities of 5,000-50,000 (21.6%), farm (21.6%), and nonfarm (22.2%) rural areas. Only a very small percentage came from metropolitan areas (1.2%).

Respondents primarily lived in intact families (70.3%), with smaller percentages living in single-parent (16.2%) and stepparent (13.2%) families. About one-fifth of the respondents' fathers held jobs as craftsmen or foremen (20.4%), managers, officials, or
proprietors (19.9%), or operators (19.2%). Smaller percentages held jobs as professionals or technicians (15.6%), service or private household workers (12.9%), or clerical or kindred workers (12%). The largest percentage of respondents' mothers held jobs as service workers or private household workers (43.2%). Smaller percentages held clerical (25.2%), professional/technical (15%), or operator positions (11.4%). Few of the respondents' mothers were employed as craftsmen/foremen (3.0%), and managers/proprietors (2.1%).

The largest percentage of the respondents' fathers had a high school education (34.0%), while there were smaller percentages with college (21.4%) or graduate degree (10.2%). A very small percentage (3%) had technical training. Respondents' mothers primarily had high school (36.9%) or college (24%) as their highest level of education. Few had graduate degrees (7.2%) or technical training (4.2%). A fairly large percentage of the respondents did not know their fathers' (31.4%) or mothers' (27.7%) highest level of education.

Attitudes of Early Adolescents

This section describes the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families (Table 4). The data indicate that of the 31 items, respondents were overwhelmingly neutral in their response to 19 items. These responses could be categorized in three areas for the discussion. First, respondents expressed neutrality in the area of children's feelings in the single-parent or stepparent family. For example, the majority of the sample neither agreed nor
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #a</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>S1</strong></td>
<td>Single-parent and stepparent families have less money than other families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S2</strong></td>
<td>Single-parent females usually have to work outside the home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families assume more responsibility than other children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Single parents maintain a positive image of the absent parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S5</strong></td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel relieved with the absence of the other parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families become closer to the biological parent present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S7</strong></td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel rejected and abandoned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families blame themselves for their parents' separation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel as good about themselves as other children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S10</td>
<td>Single parents should explain to their children why they are in single-parent families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S11</td>
<td>Single parents who do not plan to remarry should explain this to their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S12</strong></td>
<td>Teachers and principals believe that children in single-parent families have behavior problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S13</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families have as many friends as other children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S14</strong></td>
<td>Children in single-parent families are ashamed of their family structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S15</strong></td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel hostile toward the absent parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST1</td>
<td>The two households to which stepchildren belong have different rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST2</td>
<td>Stepchildren are closer to the stepparent than to the absent biological parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST3</td>
<td>Stepchildren learn to cooperate and share with siblings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST4</td>
<td>Stepchildren feel as good about themselves as other children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this and all subsequent listings of items, those items prefaced with "S" refer to items about single-parent families and those prefaced by "ST" refer to items about stepparent families.

Response made was 1-7 with 1-2 indicating strongly disagree (SD), 3-5 neutral, and 6-7 strongly agree (SA).

*Indicates negatively stated items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>51.90</td>
<td>32.70</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>30.30</td>
<td>64.50</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>1.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>35.80</td>
<td>54.90</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30</td>
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<td>16.30</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.99</td>
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<td>47.50</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>56.40</td>
<td>24.60</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>47.50</td>
<td>35.40</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.70</td>
<td>51.60</td>
<td>24.70</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>71.50</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>1.58</td>
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<td>5.10</td>
<td>31.60</td>
<td>63.30</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>47.71</td>
<td>33.60</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>34.80</td>
<td>58.50</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>50.70</td>
<td>22.30</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.10</td>
<td>59.10</td>
<td>23.80</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.90</td>
<td>46.80</td>
<td>46.30</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.30</td>
<td>48.90</td>
<td>20.80</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
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<td>12.60</td>
<td>48.60</td>
<td>38.80</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
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<td>13.80</td>
<td>50.50</td>
<td>35.70</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST5*</td>
<td>Stepchildren feel rejected and abandoned by the absent parent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST6</td>
<td>Children experience a sense of loss when their parents remarry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST7</td>
<td>Society considers stepfamilies as &quot;regular&quot; families.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST8</td>
<td>It is easy for stepfamily members to accept each other.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST9*</td>
<td>Stepchildren are ashamed of their family structure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST10</td>
<td>Stepchildren readily accept stepparents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST11*</td>
<td>Some stepfathers sexually abuse their stepchildren.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST12</td>
<td>Stepchildren need to learn to relate to their new family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST13*</td>
<td>Stepchildren find it difficult to have contact with their grandparents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST14*</td>
<td>Stepmothers are &quot;wicked.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST15</td>
<td>Teachers should plan activities with stepfamilies in mind.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST16</td>
<td>Society more readily accepts the stepfamily than the single-parent family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.70</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>21.30</td>
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<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
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<td>10.80</td>
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<td>37.60</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
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<td>14.70</td>
<td>54.60</td>
<td>30.70</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>50.50</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>1.82</td>
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<td>10.90</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.90</td>
<td>53.50</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
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<td>30.90</td>
<td>49.90</td>
<td>19.20</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>38.20</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>1.43</td>
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<td>53.20</td>
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<td>4.58</td>
<td>1.76</td>
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<td>45.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.60</td>
<td>49.20</td>
<td>29.20</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.50</td>
<td>63.30</td>
<td>20.20</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
disagreed that children in single-parent (56%) or stepparent families (51%) feel rejected or abandoned, that children in single-parent families feel hostile toward the absent parent (59.1%), or that children in single-parent families experience a sense of loss when their parents remarry (51%). In addition, the majority of the sample was neutral to the statement that children in single-parent (51%) or stepparent families (50%) feel as good about themselves as children in other families.

Second, almost half of the respondents expressed neutrality in the area of school personnel's perceptions of single-parent and stepparent families. Respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that teachers should plan activities with stepfamilies in mind (49%) or that teachers and principals believe that children in single-parent families have more behavior problems than children in other families (47%).

Third, respondents expressed neutrality to items which related to how single-parent and stepparent families are viewed by society. For example, the majority of the respondents (54%) neither agreed nor disagreed that society considers stepfamilies as "regular" families. Correspondingly, the majority of the respondents (63%) expressed neutrality to the statement that society more readily accepts the stepfamily than the single-parent family.

The data also indicate that respondents agreed to six of the 31 items. Respondents expressed agreement with societal perceptions of the lifestyles of single-parent family members. For example, the majority of the respondents (64%) agreed that female single-parents have to work outside the home and that children in single-parent families
assume more responsibilities than children in other families (54%).

Second, respondents showed agreement regarding the importance of communication in single-parent and stepparent families. For example, the majority of the respondents (71%) agreed that single-parents should explain to their children why they are in that family structure and why they do not plan to remarry, if applicable (63%). In addition, 58 percent of the respondents agreed that stepchildren need to learn to relate to their new family.

A large percentage of the respondents disagreed with only one item. Forty-two percent (42%) of the sample disagreed that children in single-parent families feel relieved with the absence of the other biological parent.

The grand mean for the 31 items was 4.1, indicating generally neutral responses. A visual examination of the means indicates that respondents have more neutral attitudes toward stepparent families than toward single-parent families. In comparison, respondents had more positive attitudes toward single-parent families than toward stepparent families.

Factors Derived from Factor Analysis

This section reports factors derived from the analysis of the 31 attitude items of the instrument, "What I Think About Single-Parent and Stepparent Families." A factor analysis was performed with factors identified
Two factors emerged from the analysis and were labeled according to the dimensions they appeared to describe. These factors were: Factor A: Feelings about Family Members, and Factor B: Adjustment to Restructured Family. Fourteen items were not included in the two factors and were not used for further analysis (see Appendix E). The factors and the items in each are reported below.

**Factor A: Feelings about Family Members**

Factor A, which contains 12 items, had an average item mean of 4.05, a coefficient alpha reliability of 0.75, and accounted for 16% of the variance. This factor refers to feelings about single-parent and stepparent family members, including how children within these families feel, and how parents are viewed by school personnel and society in general. The items included in this factor are shown below. (Items prefaced by "S" refer to items about single-parent families, while those prefaced by "ST" refer to stepparent families.)
Factor B: Adjustment to Restructured Family

Factor B, which contains six items, had an average item mean of 5.15, a coefficient alpha reliability of 0.58, and accounted for 40% of the variance. This factor refers to strategies that can be used by family members to facilitate adjustment to single-parent and restructured families. Strategies include explaining why the family is restructured, developing relationships with new family members, and promoting acceptance of the new family. The items included in this factor are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel as good about themselves as other children.</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel rejected and abandoned by the absent parent.</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST4</td>
<td>Children in stepparent families feel as good about themselves as other children.</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S14</td>
<td>Single-parent families are ashamed of their family structure.</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families often feel responsible for their parents' separation.</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST5</td>
<td>Children in stepparent families feel rejected and abandoned by the absent parent.</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST9</td>
<td>Children in stepfamilies are ashamed of their family structure.</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S15</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel hostile toward the absent parent.</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>School personnel believe that children in single-parent families have more behavior problems than other children.</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST14</td>
<td>There is truth to the idea that stepmothers are wicked.</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST11</td>
<td>Stepfathers sexually abuse their stepchildren.</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST8</td>
<td>It is easy for steprelatives to accept each other.</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Item # | Item | Factor loadings
---|---|---
ST12 | Stepchildren need to learn how to relate to their new family members. | .54
ST3 | Stepsiblings learn to cooperate and share with each other. | .50
S10 | Single-parents should explain to their children why they are in that family. | .41
S11 | Single-parents who do not plan to remarry should help their children understand this. | .40
ST7 | Society considers stepparent families as "regular" families. | .40
ST4 | Children in stepparent families feel as good about themselves as other children. | .38

Relationship between Factors and Respondent Characteristics

This section reports the results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test which were done to determine the relationship of selected variables to the factors. Factors included in the analysis were Factor A: Feelings about Family Members and Factor B: Adjustment to Restructured Family. Respondent characteristics selected for the analysis were sex, grade, place of residence, family structure, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' education. For the ANOVA, the occupation variables were recoded "1" for white collar occupations (professional/technical and managers/proprietors) and "2" for blue collar occupations. A probability level of .05 was used to determine significance.

**Sex**

The results of the t-test for Factor A and Factor B by sex are reported in Table 5. No significant differences by sex were found.
Table 5. Group means and t-values for factors by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Group means</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>48.74</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30.53</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Groups indicated as: 1 = males; 2 = females.

b t-value of 1.96 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 1 and 332 degrees of freedom.

for either Factor A or Factor B. An examination of the group means shows that males scored slightly higher than females on Factor A, while females scored slightly higher on Factor B.

Grade

The results of the ANOVA for Factor A and Factor B by grade are reported in Table 6. No significant differences by grade were found for either Factor A or Factor B. An examination of the group means for Factor A shows that the means were about similar for the three grades. For Factor B, respondents in grade 6 had slightly higher scores than those in the other two grades.

Place of residence

The results of the ANOVA for Factor A and Factor B by place of residence are reported in Table 7. No significant differences by place of residence were found on either Factor A or Factor B. For Factor A, respondents from towns had slightly higher mean scores than those from other places of residence. For Factor B, respondents from rural nonfarming
Table 6. Within group means and F-values for factors by grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Within group means</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>48.30</td>
<td>48.78</td>
<td>48.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>31.45</td>
<td>30.44</td>
<td>30.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^Groups indicated as: 1 = 6th grade, 2 = 7th grade; 3 = 8th grade.

^F-value of 3.00 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 2 and 332 degrees of freedom.

Table 7. Within group means and F-values for factors by place of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Within group means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>49.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>29.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^Groups indicated as: 1 = rural (farming); 2 = rural (non-farming); 3 = town (less than 5,000); 4 = over 5,000.

^F-value of 2.60 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 3 and 332 degrees of freedom.

areas had slightly higher mean scores than respondents who resided elsewhere.

Family structure

The results of the ANOVA for Factor A and Factor B by family structure are reported in Table 8. No significant differences by family structure were found for either Factor A or Factor B.
Table 8. Within group means and F-values for factors by family structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Within group means</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>51.20</td>
<td>49.30</td>
<td>47.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30.29</td>
<td>31.28</td>
<td>30.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Groups indicated as: 1 = stepparent; 2 = single-parent; 3 = intact.*

*F-value of 3.00 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 2 and 332 degrees of freedom.*

For Factor A, group mean scores of respondents from stepparent families were slightly higher than the mean scores of respondents from single-parent or intact families. For Factor B, group mean scores for respondents from single-parent families were slightly higher than the mean scores of respondents from either stepparent or intact families.

**Fathers' occupation**

The results of the t-test for Factor A and Factor B by fathers' occupation are reported in Table 9. No significant differences by fathers' occupation were found on Factor A. An examination of the group means shows that children whose fathers held blue collar jobs had slightly higher scores than those whose fathers held white collar jobs. Significant differences were found in Factor B (t = -2.36, p = .05). An examination of the group means shows that children whose
Table 9. Group means and t-values for factors by fathers' occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Group means</th>
<th>t-value b</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>48.52</td>
<td>49.40</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>31.58</td>
<td>-2.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Groups indicated as: 1 = white collar; 2 = blue collar.
b t-value of 1.96 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 1 and 303 degrees of freedom.

fathers held blue collar jobs scored significantly higher than those whose fathers held white collar jobs.

Mothers' occupation

The results of the t-test for Factor A and Factor B by mothers' occupation are reported in Table 10. No significant differences by mothers' occupation were found for either Factor A or Factor B. For Factor A, group mean scores of respondents whose mothers held blue collar jobs had slightly higher scores than those whose mothers held white collar jobs. For Factor B, respondents whose mothers held white collar jobs had slightly higher mean scores than those whose mothers held blue collar jobs.

Fathers' education

The results of the ANOVA for Factor A and Factor B by fathers' education are reported in Table 11. No significant differences by fathers' education were found for either Factor A or Factor B. For
Table 10. Group means and t-values for factors by mothers' occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Group means</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>46.82</td>
<td>48.97</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>31.11</td>
<td>30.89</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Groups indicated as: 1 = white collar; 2 = blue collar.

b t-value of 1.96 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 1 and 332 degrees of freedom.

Table 11. Within group means and F-values for factors by fathers' education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Within group means</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>48.05</td>
<td>50.30</td>
<td>49.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30.14</td>
<td>30.85</td>
<td>32.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Groups indicated as: 1 = high school and lower; 2 = college; 3 = graduate; 4 = technical training.

b F-value of 3.00 is significant at the .05 level of significance at 3 and 228 degrees of freedom.

Factor A, group mean scores of respondents whose fathers had a college degree were slightly higher than respondents whose fathers were of other educational levels. For Factor B, group mean scores of respondents whose fathers received technical training were slightly higher than those whose fathers had other educational training.
Mothers' education

The results of the ANOVA for Factor A and Factor B by mothers' education are reported in Table 12. No significant differences by mothers' education were found on either Factor A or Factor B. For Factor A group mean scores of respondents whose mothers had graduate degrees were slightly higher than for those whose mothers were of other educational levels.

Table 12. Within group means and F-values for factors by mothers' education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>1a</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>49.44</td>
<td>48.16</td>
<td>51.43</td>
<td>46.17</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30.66</td>
<td>31.41</td>
<td>31.14</td>
<td>30.67</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Groups indicated as: 1 = high school and lower; 2 = college; 3 = graduate; 4 = technical training.

b F-value of 3.00 is significant at the .05 level of significance with 3 and 239 degrees of freedom.

Discussion of Findings

Attitudes of early adolescents.

The findings showed that the respondents had neutral attitudes in three areas regarding single-parent and stepparent families. These areas included: children's feelings, school personnel's perceptions of these families, and how single-parent and stepparent families are viewed by society. Neutral responses to Likert-type scales are typical
of respondents who do not have knowledge about a situation or topic. Cronbach (1964) and Bardo and Yeager (1982) indicated that neutrality is a result of evasion of attitude judgment where the respondent has no strong opinion.

The lack of strong opinions regarding single-parent and step-parent families may reflect the limited information that early adolescents have about these families. This limited information may be a result of lack of knowledge from parents or from the school curriculum. In addition, early adolescents may lack strong opinions regarding single-parent and stepparent families because of their inability to imagine how members of these families feel, since they may have had little or no experience with such families. Also, early adolescents may not be clear in their values regarding these families. As Kholberg (1969) contends, early adolescents are at the developmental stage when they are concerned with making explicit their own personal positions in relation to values and beliefs of society. Therefore, this may be reflected in their neutral response if they have not yet clarified their values regarding single-parent and stepparent families.

The respondents agreed with items concerning family members' responsibilities and communication in single-parent and stepparent families. Respondents agreed that female single parents have to work outside the home and that children in single-parent families have more responsibilities than other children. Further, respondents agreed to the importance of communication in single-parent and stepparent families. This substantiates several researchers' findings.
(Welden, 1985; Goldstein & Solnit, 1984; Sager et al., 1981a) that adolescents expressed concern for family relationships and need to be informed about what is happening in their families.

Finally, it is not surprising that early adolescents disagreed with the idea that children in single-parent families feel relieved with the absence of the other biological parent. Research indicates that adolescents in single-parent and stepparent families have as their greatest desire the reunion of their biological parents (Lutz, 1983; Pill, 1981; Swihart & Brigham, 1981). In addition, children, in general, want their parents to be together. Thus, disagreement with the above statement may be a result of empathy for children in single-parent and stepparent families. In other words, respondents perhaps felt that youth in single-parent families would have a great desire for parents to remain together.

Factors derived from the factor analysis

The two factors derived from the factor analysis were: Factor A: Feelings about Family Members and Factor B: Adjustment to Restructured Family. No research using these two factors is available, but the reader will recall that the issues on which this questionnaire is based were considered important by other authors.

Factor A refers to feelings about single-parent and stepparent family members which included how children within these families feel (Barnes & Coplan, 1980), and how these families are viewed by school personnel and society (Lombana, 1983; Swihart & Brigham, 1982).
Factor B refers to strategies that can be used by family members to facilitate adjustment to single-parent and stepparent families, which included explaining why the family is restructured (Goldstein & Solnit, 1984; Sager et al., 1981b), developing relationships with new family members (Barnes & Coplan, 1980; Johnson, 1980; Porter & Chatelain, 1981), and promoting acceptance of the new family (Furstenberg, 1980; Hetherington, 1981).

**Relationship between factors and respondent characteristics**

Findings from the one-way analysis of variance and t-tests showed no significant differences in Factor A and Factor B for sex, grade, place of residence, family structure, mothers' occupation and mothers' and fathers' educational level. Significant differences were found for Factor B by fathers' occupation.

Previous research has shown significant differences in sex-role attitudes by sex, with males being more traditional than females (Roper & LaBeff, 1977). However, males have been found to have more favorable attitudes toward divorce than females (Ganong, Coleman, & Brown, 1981). The results of this study indicate that males and females were similar in their attitudes toward single- and stepparent families. This supports Kagan and Coles (1972) and Thornburg (1980a) who contend that classification of beliefs and values are similar for males and females in early adolescence.

With regards to grade level, the findings were consistent with the literature on adolescents which suggests no significant differences in the attitudes of teenagers regarding family life.
by grade (Angrist, Mickelsen, & Penna, 1977). Thornburg (1980b) and Kagan and Coles (1972) also strongly support this position by asserting that 10-14 year-olds who comprise grades six, seven, and eight are fairly homogeneous in their thinking.

The findings related to place of residence were not in agreement with the literature which indicates that rural dwellers are less accepting of divorce (Larsen, 1978) and premarital sex (Weiss & Jurich, 1985). In the present study, few respondents were from metropolitan areas. Thus, the comparison was mainly from respondents from rural areas and small towns who may have similar attitudes regarding single-parent and stepparent families.

The findings regarding family structure were contrary to other studies which found differences in attitudes by family structure. For example, Ganong, Coleman, and Brown (1981) found adolescents from stepparent families had more favorable attitudes toward divorce than those from intact and single-parent families. Also, Nunn, Parish, and Worthing (1983) found adolescents from single-parent families to be less positive of their families than were adolescents from stepparent families. The results of this study suggest that early adolescents, regardless of family structure, may view single- and stepparent families in a similar fashion. Also, because respondents were asked about single- and stepparent families in general rather than their specific families, their responses reflect a more global view of these family forms.

With regards to parents' occupation and educational level, the findings support previous research which showed no relationship between
mothers' educational level and occupation and adolescents' attitudes toward family orientation (Angrist, Mickelsen, & Penna, 1977). In addition, Penna (1976) found no significant differences in attitudes about family life by parents' occupation. The difference found on Factor B by fathers' occupation suggests that adolescents from blue collar family backgrounds may believe that strategies for coping with a restructured family situation are important.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The primary purpose of the study was to determine early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families. Specifically, the objectives were to: (1) develop a valid and reliable instrument for determining the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families; (2) assess the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families; (3) determine the relationship of early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families to sex, grade level, place of residence, family structure, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' education; and (4) make recommendations regarding family life curriculum at the middle/junior high school level.

The questionnaire developed consisted of three parts: (1) 15 items regarding the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent families; (2) 16 items regarding respondents' attitudes toward stepparent families; and (3) eight items designed to obtain information on background characteristics. The questionnaire was pilot tested with 20 early adolescents not included in the sample. Revisions were made following the pilot test.

A proportionate random sample of early adolescents was drawn from 23 schools in Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 in Iowa whose principals agreed for their schools to participate in the study. Packets of materials, which were sent to each principal, included a cover letter thanking the principals for agreeing for their schools
to participate in the study, specific instructions for selecting the sample, directions for administering the instrument, and a comment sheet. Follow-up telephone calls were made to principals whose questionnaires were not received. Of the 344 questionnaires distributed, 335 were returned, and 333 provided usable data.

Data from the questionnaires were analyzed as follows: (1) frequency counts and percentages were computed for the demographic data; (2) a factor analysis procedure was employed to determine how the attitude items clustered; and (3) differences in the attitudinal factors by selected variables were determined by using t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

An analysis of the demographic data revealed that the majority of the respondents were 12 and 13 years of age, Caucasian, from towns with a population of less than 5,000, from blue collar backgrounds, and from intact families. The majority of respondents' parents had a high school education level or lower.

Regarding respondents' attitudes, the data revealed that respondents were neutral in their response to items concerning children's feelings in single-parent and stepparent families, school personnel's perceptions of these families, and how single-parent and stepparent families are viewed by society. Respondents agreed to items regarding the lifestyles of single-parent family members and the importance of communication in single-parent and stepparent families. A large percentage of the respondents disagreed that children in single-parent families feel relieved with the absence of the other biological parent.
Two factors emerged from the factor analysis and were labeled according to the dimensions they appeared to describe. These factors were: Factor A: Feelings about Family Members and Factor B: Adjustment to Restructured Family. Factor A contains 12 items which refer to how children in single-parent and stepparent families feel and how parents within these families are viewed by school personnel and society in general. This factor has a reliability of .75, an average item mean of 4.05, and accounted for 16% of the variance. Factor B contains six items which refer to strategies that can be used by family members to facilitate adjustment to single-parent and stepparent families. These strategies include explaining why the family is restructured, developing relationships with new family members, and promoting acceptance of the new family. This factor has a reliability of .58, an average item mean of 5.15, and accounted for 40% of the variance.

Respondent characteristics selected for the analysis were sex, grade, place of residence, family structure, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and fathers' and mothers' educational level. Analysis of the factors by the selected variables revealed significant differences on Factor B by fathers' occupation. Respondents whose fathers held blue collar jobs were more positive to adjustment to restructured family than those whose fathers held white collar jobs. The findings do not substantiate those of Penna (1976) who found that fathers' occupation had little or no influence on adolescents' attitudes about family life. The findings of the present study suggest that
early adolescents of blue collar workers may feel that strategies for adjusting to the restructured family are important.

Recommendations

The findings of the study suggest a number of recommendations for home economics curriculum at the middle/junior high school level. In addition, recommendations will be made for further research in the area of attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families.

Recommendations for home economics curriculum

1. In general, respondents were neutral in their responses to the items. This finding may be interpreted in two ways. First, this may suggest lack of information about single-parent and stepparent families. Information about these families could be included in the curriculum to help early adolescents develop a realistic view of these families. On the other hand, the neutral responses could indicate an unbiased opinion of single-parent and stepparent families by early adolescents, suggesting that these youngsters accept these family structures. In this case, education regarding single-parent and stepparent families may not be necessary in the curriculum. Further research will be needed regarding early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families before curriculum decisions can be made.

2. Except for fathers' occupation, there were no differences in adolescents' attitudes toward single- and stepparent families. This suggests that if curriculum is developed, it need not take these
student characteristics into consideration. Moreover, with no grade level differences, a curriculum on family could be designed and used at any grade level within the middle/junior high school.

3. It is recommended that teachers stress communication in the family. In this study, respondents expressed agreement with the importance of communication in single- and stepparent families. Previous studies showed similar findings (Goldstein & Solnit, 1984; Porter & Chatelain, 1981). General communication concepts could be covered (Smith et al., 1986) as well as assigning special projects which would require interaction between parents and children. In addition, parents could be involved by providing adult education programs on family life, and by using parents from various family structures as resource persons when implementing the family life curriculum.

Recommendations for future research

1. The instrument, "What I Think About Single-Parent and Stepparent Families," has 39 items with eight of these items seeking demographic information. The factor analysis produced two factors with reliabilities of .75 and .58, respectively. The instrument could be refined by increasing the number of items which might increase the reliability of the factors.

2. The sample for this study did not have adequate numbers for rural-urban and racial/ethnic group comparisons. Therefore, a similar study could be conducted using a sample with adequate representation from these groups.

3. This study has addressed the attitudes of early adolescents
toward single-parent and stepparent families. Additional research needs to be done to determine the attitudes of various groups (such as school personnel, parents, high school students) toward single-parent and stepparent families.

4. The review of literature found no consensus on the content of the home economics curriculum for the middle/junior high school, particularly in the family life area. Studies are needed to determine what is being taught at these grade levels.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


I greatly appreciate the support and guidance provided by many people during my graduate work, especially during this study. Specifically, I would like to thank Dr. Penny Ralston, advisor and co-major professor, for her guidance, support, and encouragement during some difficult times, and for her comprehensive suggestions throughout the study.

My thanks also go to: Dr. Irene Beavers in appreciation for her willingness to be my co-major professor; Dr. Mary Huba for her assistance and guidance with reviewing my questionnaire and with data analysis; Dr. Joyce Mercier for her assistance in reviewing my questionnaire; and Dr. Edward Powers and Dr. Sally Williams for their willingness to serve on my committee.

I also wish to thank Albert for his support and assistance during difficult times, my sincere thanks to Bonnie Trede for her excellent skill in typing my thesis, and to Letha DeMoss who graciously and effectively completed the typing at the last minute.

My sincere thanks to my father, Mr. Z. Colyard, for his confidence in me; my sisters, Derine McLaughlin and Claudette Phipps, for their continuous support and faith during my entire career, and also for helping me realize my fullest potential.

Thanks also go to my daughter, Claudine, for her understanding and willingness to cope with a part-time mother who could not spend as much time with her as I would have liked to during my study.

Last, but certainly not least, I greatly appreciate the efforts of the early adolescents for completing my questionnaire, and would like to
thank the principals who kindly consented to have their schools participate in the study and administered the questions. Without them, this study would not have been possible.
APPENDIX A:

QUESTIONNAIRE
WHAT I THINK ABOUT
SINGLE-PARENT
AND
STEP-PARENT FAMILIES
Dear Student:

The Department of Home Economics Education at Iowa State University is conducting a study to find out the attitudes of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students toward single-parent and stepparent families. Students in several schools in Iowa are involved in the study. The results will be used to make recommendations for home economics curriculum at the middle school level.

Your name will in no way be associated with your responses, and all responses will be kept in total confidence. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

For this study, single-parent families are families in which there is only one parent who is separated, divorced, widowed, or never married and has at least one child. Stepparent families refer to families in which there is a biological parent, a stepparent and at least one child.

PART I. Attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families.

Directions: Please read each of the following statements carefully. Section A refers to attitudes toward single-parent families. Section B refers to attitudes toward stepparent families. Circle the appropriate response, using the following scale:

If you strongly agree with the item, circle "7".
If you strongly disagree with the item, circle "1".
If you neither agree nor disagree with the item, circle "4". A score of "2" or "3" indicates the degree to which you disagree with the item; a score of "5" or "6" indicates the degree to which you agree with the item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

A. Attitudes toward single-parent families

1. I believe that single parent families have less money to live on than families with both parents.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

2. It is my opinion that women who are single-parents usually have to work outside the home rather than being full-time homemakers.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

PLEASE GO TO THE NEXT PAGE
3. I think children in single parent families have to assume more household responsibilities than children in families with both parents.

4. I believe that in single-parent families parents try to help maintain as positive an image of the absent parent as possible.

5. I think in some single-parent families children feel a sense of relief with the absence of the other parent.

6. I believe children in single-parent families become closer to the biological parent who is present.

7. I think children in single-parent families feel rejected and abandoned by the absent parent.

8. I think in a single-parent family children often feel it is their fault that their parents are not together anymore.

9. I believe children from single-parent families feel as good about themselves as children from other family forms.

10. In my opinion parents in single-parent families should explain to their children why they are in a single-parent family.

11. I believe parents in single-parent households who do not plan to remarry should help their children to understand this.
12. I think teachers and principals believe that children in single-parent families have more behavior problems in school than children in other family forms.

13. In my opinion children from single-parent families have as many friends as children from other families.


15. In my opinion children in single-parent households often feel hostile toward the absent parent.

B. Attitudes toward stepparent families

1. I believe the two households to which stepchildren belong often have different rules.

2. I think children in stepparent families become closer to the stepparent than to the absent biological parent.

3. In my opinion children brought up in stepparent families learn how to cooperate and share with step-siblings.

4. I believe children in stepparent families feel as good about themselves as children from any other family.

5. I think children in stepparent families feel rejected and abandoned by the absent parent.

PLEASE GO TO THE NEXT PAGE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I believe children experience a sense of loss when their parents remarry.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I think society considers step-parent families as &quot;regular&quot; families.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I believe it is easy for members of a step-parent family to accept each other.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I think children in step-parent families are ashamed of the fact that they belong to this type of family.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I believe children in step-parent families readily accept the stepmother or stepfather as a parent.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>In my opinion some stepfathers sexually abuse their step-children.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I think it may be necessary for children in stepparent families to learn how to relate to their new family members.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Being in a stepparent family often makes it difficult for step-children to have contact with all their grandparents.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>In my opinion there is some truth to the idea that stepmothers are &quot;wicked.&quot;</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>In my opinion teachers should plan activities (such as activities for Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day) for children from step-parent families.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>In my opinion society more readily accepts the stepparent family than the single-parent family.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE GO TO THE NEXT PAGE
PART II. Background Information

Directions: Please write in or check (/) your response where appropriate.

1. What is your age? ______ years.

2. What is your sex?
   ___ 1. male
   ___ 2. female

3. In what grade are you in school? (check one)
   ___ 1. 6th grade
   ___ 2. 7th grade
   ___ 3. 8th grade
   ___ 4. 9th grade
   ___ 5. other (please specify) _________________________

4. To which ethnic/racial group do you belong?
   ___ 1. White/Caucasian
   ___ 2. Black/Afro-American
   ___ 3. Asian American
   ___ 4. Hispanic American
   ___ 5. Native Indian American
   ___ 6. other (please specify) _________________________

5. In which of the following locations do you live? (check one)
   ___ 1. rural (farming)
   ___ 2. rural (non-farming)
   ___ 3. town (less than 5,000 population)
   ___ 4. city (5,000-50,000 population)
   ___ 5. metropolitan area (over 50,000 population)
   ___ 6. other (please specify) _________________________

6. What type of family do you have? (check one)
   ___ 1. stepparent family (family where one biological parent and one
   stepparent have major responsibility for the household).
   ___ 2. single-parent family (family where one parent has major
   responsibility for household).
   ___ 3. intact family (family where biological parents have major
   responsibility for household).
   ___ 4. other (please specify) _________________________

7. Who lives in the same household with you? (Check all that apply.)
   ___ 1. mother
   ___ 2. father
   ___ 3. stepmother
   ___ 4. stepfather
   ___ 5. brother(s) how many? ______
   ___ 6. sister(s) how many? ______
   ___ 7. stepbrother(s) how many? ______
   ___ 8. stepsister(s) how many? ______
   ___ 9. other (please specify) ________________________
8. (a) What is your father's occupation? ______________________________
    Describe what he does in this job. ______________________________

    What is your father's highest level of education?
    __ 1. grade school
    __ 2. high school
    __ 3. college degree
    __ 4. graduate degree
    __ 5. other (please specify) ______________________________
    __ 6. don't know

(b) What is your mother's occupation? ______________________________
    Describe what she does in this job. ______________________________

    What is your mother's highest level of education?
    __ 1. grade school
    __ 2. high school
    __ 3. college degree
    __ 4. graduate degree
    __ 5. other (please specify) ______________________________
    __ 6. don't know

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP
APPENDIX B:

COUNTIES IN SAMPLE
APPENDIX C:
CORRESPONDENCE
Dear Principal:

The Department of Home Economics Education at Iowa State University is conducting a study to investigate the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families. This letter concerns obtaining your approval to have your school involved in the study.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families;
2. determine the relationship of early adolescents' attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families to (a) grade level, (b) race/ethnicity, (c) place of residence, and (d) family structure;
3. make recommendations regarding curricula for secondary home economics programs.

This information seems pertinent considering that the conventional nuclear family is no longer the dominant family structure and that there continues to be an increase in the number of children under 18 who live in single-parent and stepparent families.

Although the number of stepparent and single-parent families is increasing, there is little information about these families included in instructional materials for teachers. For example, a review of secondary textbooks revealed that over half contained no information related to stepparent and single-parent families and the remaining devoted from one paragraph to two or three pages to the topic. This study would provide the research base for the development of family life education materials for the junior high/middle school level.

We would like permission for your school to be involved in this study by administering a questionnaire to a small, randomly selected group of seventh and eighth grade students. Sixth grade is also requested if available at your school. The questionnaire would be administered by you or your designate and would require no more than 20 minutes to complete. A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed for your review. The data will be collected in late October 1985.

If you are willing to participate in the study, please indicate your decision for participation and return the card for us by October 9, 1985. Thank you for your time and consideration. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Dr. Ralston at 515-294-3924/6444 or Ms. Colyard 515-294-4757/6444.

Sincerely,

Penny A. Ralston, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Home Economics Education

Valerie Colyard, Ed.S.
Graduate Student
Home Economics Education

Enclosures
I agree to participate in the study to investigate the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families.

Number of students in Grade 6 ___ Grade 7 ___ Grade 8 ___

I do not agree to participate in the study.

Signature of Principal ______________________________

Name of School ______________________________

PLEASE RETURN BY OCTOBER 9, 1985.

PAR/VC
Dear Principal:

Thank you so much for agreeing for your school to participate in the study regarding the attitudes of early adolescents toward single-parent and stepparent families.

We are enclosing the following copies of the instrument for the designated number of students at your school (see "Directions" sheet):

1. a copy of "Directions to Principal/Designate for Administering Instrument,"
2. some helpful hints on "How to Select A Sample,"
3. a "Comment Sheet,"
4. envelope of random numbers,
5. self-addressed, stamped return envelope.

Please return the completed questionnaires and the Comment Sheet in the self-addressed envelope by Tuesday, November 26, 1985.

We again want to thank you for your time and effort in administering the instrument. Your assistance is a major contribution to our research effort and is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Penny A. Ralston
Associate Professor
Home Economics Education

Valerie Colyard
Graduate Student
Home Economics Education

Enclosures
"What I Think About Single-Parent and Stepparent Families" is a questionnaire being administered to students in grades 6, 7, and 8 in Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 schools in Iowa to determine their attitudes toward single-parent and stepparent families. The findings of the study will be used to make recommendations for family life curriculum at the middle/junior high school level.

From the information you sent us, we have determined that we need the following number of students per grade to be selected for the study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Number of Students to Select for Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before administering the instrument, please do the following:

1. Randomly select the designated number of students from each grade. (See attached sheet for ideas on sample selection.)
2. Read through the questionnaire to make certain you understand how students are to respond to each item.
3. Plan to set aside at least 20 minutes to administer the instrument.
4. Select a time and place at your convenience to administer the instrument (for example, study hall, home room, etc.)
5. Call the investigator (Valerie Colyard, 515-294-4757 or 294-6444) if you have any questions about the instrument or data collection procedures.

Please follow these guidelines for administering the questionnaire to students:

1. After handing out the questionnaire, read the "Dear Student" section to the students. Emphasize that the students' responses are confidential, that their participation is voluntary, and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time.
2. Students may have questions as they complete the questionnaire: You may help students define words that they may not understand. However, do not attempt to interpret the meaning of items. If students have problems understanding an item, read the item to them slowly and indicate the type of response mode they are to use.
3. Let students work at their own pace. When students have finished the questionnaire, ask them to review the instrument to make sure they have answered all items.
4. A COMMENT SHEET is being included in the packet of materials for you to write down any occurrences during administration of the instrument that might be important for the researcher to know.
5. Please return completed questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by Tuesday, November 26, 1985.
HOW TO SELECT A RANDOM SAMPLE -
WITH LESS EFFORT!"

The investigators of this research realize that choosing a sample for a study can be time consuming and that you are a very busy person. We want to make the sample selection process as simple as possible.

These are the procedures we would like for you to follow:

1. Locate separate lists of all students in grades 7 and 8. A list of sixth graders is also requested if available in your school. (You may have student names in card files or in computer file).

2. Select the designated number of students by doing the following:
   A. Consecutively number students on each list.
   B. Place numbers from the attached envelope in a box.
   C. Pull numbers until the designated number of students is acquired.
   D. Repeat this procedure for each grade level.

3. Use students for study whose numbers were pulled from the box.
1. Please indicate below the number of students who completed the questionnaire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Please indicate average time taken for students to complete questionnaire:

______ minutes

3. Please list items that students may have asked questions about or had trouble understanding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Briefly discuss any occurrences (for example, fire drill, disciplinary problems, etc.) during the administration of the instruments that might be important for the researchers to know.

5. General comments.

Name: ____________________________________________

School: __________________________________________

Please return with questionnaire.

Thank you for your help and cooperation!!
APPENDIX D:

CODING PLAN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column No.</th>
<th>Identification</th>
<th>Code 1</th>
<th>Code 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Place of Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Family Structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mother Lives in Household</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Father Lives in Household</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Stepmother Lives in Same Household</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Stepfather Lives in Household</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Number of Brothers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Sisters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Code 1</td>
<td>Code 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column No.</td>
<td>Identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Number of Sisters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Stepbrothers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code 1 = Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Number of Stepbrothers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Stepsisters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code 1 = Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Number of Stepsisters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Others in Household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-28</td>
<td>Father's Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Father's Highest Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code 1 = grade school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = high school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = college degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 = graduate degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 = don't know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-31</td>
<td>Mother's Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Mother's Highest Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code 1 = grade school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = high school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = college degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 = graduate degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 = don't know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column No.</td>
<td>Identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-47</td>
<td>Items 1-15 on attitude toward single-parent families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-63</td>
<td>Items 1-16 on attitude toward stepparent families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E:

ITEMS WHICH DID NOT CLUSTER
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single1</td>
<td>Single-parent families have less money than other families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single2</td>
<td>Female single-parents have to work outside the home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single3</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families have to assume more household responsibility than other children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single4</td>
<td>Single-parents try to maintain a positive image of the absent parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single5</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families feel a sense of relief with the absence of the other parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single6</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families become closer to the biological parent who is present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single7</td>
<td>Children in single-parent families have as many friends as children in other families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step1</td>
<td>The two households to which stepchildren belong have different rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step2</td>
<td>Children in stepparent families become closer to the stepparent than to the absent biological parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step6</td>
<td>Children experience a sense of loss when their parents remarry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step10</td>
<td>Children in stepparent families readily accept the stepparent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step13</td>
<td>Being in a step relationship makes it difficult for stepchildren to have contact with all their grandparents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step15</td>
<td>Teachers should plan activities for children from stepparent families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step16</td>
<td>Society more readily accepts the stepparent family than the single-parent family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F:
HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL FORM
1. Title of project (please type): Attitudes of Early Adolescents toward Single-Parent and Stepparent Families: Implications for Home Economics Curriculum

2. I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to insure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected. Additions to or changes in procedures affecting the subjects after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review.

Valerie L. Colyard 10/16/85 Valerie Colyard
Typed Name of Principal Investigator Date Signature of Principal Investigator

220A MacKay 4-4757
Campus Address Campus Telephone

3. Signatures of others (if any) Date Relationship to Principal Investigator

4. ATTACH an additional page(s) (A) describing your proposed research and (B) the subjects to be used, (C) indicating any risks or discomforts to the subjects, and (D) covering any topics checked below. CHECK all boxes applicable.

☐ Medical clearance necessary before subjects can participate
☐ Samples (blood, tissue, etc.) from subjects
☐ Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to subjects
☐ Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects
☐ Deception of subjects
☐ Subjects under 14 years of age and/or ☐ Subjects 14-17 years of age
☐ Subjects in institutions
☐ Research must be approved by another institution or agency

5. ATTACH an example of the material to be used to obtain informed consent and CHECK which type will be used.

☐ Signed informed consent will be obtained.
☒ Modified informed consent will be obtained.

6. Anticipated date on which subjects will be first contacted: Month Day Year

Anticipated date for last contact with subjects: Month Day Year

7. If Applicable: Anticipated date on which audio or visual tapes will be erased and/or identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments:

8. Signature of Head or Chairperson Date Department or Administrative Unit

9. Decision of the University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research:
☐ Project Approved ☐ Project not approved ☐ No action required

George G. Karas
Name of Committee Chairperson Date Signature of Committee Chairperson