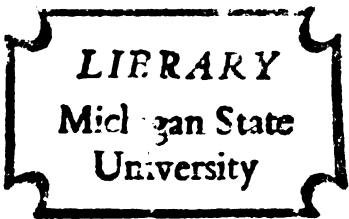


THE RELATION OF MOTHERS'  
PREFERENCES ABOUT EATING TOGETHER  
TO FAMILY EATING PATTERNS AND  
SELECTED HOUSING FEATURES AND  
FURNISHINGS

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## ABSTRACT

### THE RELATION OF MOTHERS' PREFERENCES ABOUT EATING TOGETHER TO FAMILY EATING PATTERNS AND SELECTED HOUSING FEATURES AND FURNISHINGS

by Janice Martin Pletcher

A general concern for identifying qualities determining an environment favorable to man has led to an interest in learning if housing can be said to influence family activities. The present study was completed under a Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station project and was planned as one of a series of three to ascertain if housing features and furnishings are related to the family activity of eating together. The two former studies attempted to identify housing features and furnishings associated with the frequency of eating together in two socio-economic levels. The current study introduced a third variable, mothers' preferences.

The objectives of the study were to determine whether the three family eating patterns and housing features and furnishings associated with eating were related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.

Preference scores were established for mothers according to their responses toward families eating together. Housing features were given condition ratings in the food preparation area and in the area where food was

most often eaten; housing furnishings were placed in categories according to the respondents' answers concerning what they had or perceived to be their needs and desires.

An interview schedule was administered to 30 mothers residing in Lansing, Michigan, and suburban areas who met the criteria established for the professional-managerial families and to 29 mothers of assisted families in Lansing who were serviced by the Family Helper Program. All subjects had no children above elementary school age living at home.

The pre-coded data were analyzed by relating each selected spread variable to the control variable of mothers' preferences. Relations were determined by computing the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks test for selected background information and the family eating patterns, and the Spearman rank correlation test for the ratings of housing features. A non-statistical test using differences between mean scores was employed for the furnishings inventory.

The background factor of mothers' education was found to be positively related to mothers' preferences for the assisted family sample. No relations were found for the professional-managerial sample.

Three hypotheses were formulated to be tested in the research:

Hypothesis I: There are significant differences

in mothers' preferences about families eating together among families who almost never eat together, those who sometimes eat together, and those who almost always eat together.

No relation was found to exist between the three patterns of eating and mothers' preferences for either the professional-managerial or the assisted families; therefore the hypothesis was fully rejected.

Hypothesis II: There are positive relations between housing features associated with eating and mothers' preferences about eating together.

Housing feature categories found to be positively related to mothers' preferences in the professional-managerial sample were "traffic patterns" and "chairs." "Air circulation and heating and artificial light" was the feature category found to be significant in the assisted family sample. Four features were found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences. The hypothesis was accepted for the named variables.

Hypothesis III: There are significant differences between housing furnishings associated with eating and mothers' preferences about families eating together.

Trends emerged for mothers with high and low preferences for eating together in a comparison of adequacy of the items in the furnishings categories associated with

"eating," "serving," "preparation" and "entertainment."

No trends emerged for the furnishings associated with "cleaning," "storage," and "accessory furnishings." No statistical significance could be attributed to the furnishings inventory due to the way the items were recorded, but the hypothesis was tentatively accepted for the variables cited above.

The data from this study indicate there are, for the samples tested, relations between certain specific housing features and furnishings and mothers' preferences about eating together; there are relations between certain specific housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns; there are no relations between mothers' preferences and family eating patterns. Therefore, it appears from this study that certain housing features and furnishings are a greater determinant of family eating patterns than are mothers' preferences.

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ABOUT EATING TOGETHER TO FAMILY EATING PATTERNS  
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By

Janice Martin Pletcher

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### General Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether selected housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together in both professional-managerial families and assisted families.

#### Origin and Importance of the Study

Winston Churchill once said that "we shape our buildings and then they shape us." There appears to be increased acceptance and some research evidence to support that in housing people have to adjust themselves to the limitations the living space presents.

Although each study of the present master project is a highly segmental part, the ultimate objective is to determine the nature of any relationship between housing and family interaction. McCray<sup>1</sup> cited research substantiating

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<sup>1</sup>Jacquelyn Williams McCray, "Housing Features and Furnishings Perceived by Mothers to Aid or Impede Family-Shared Mealtime" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Textiles, Clothing and Related Arts, Michigan State University, 1967).

interaction or family-shared activity to be an element contributing to family solidarity. The research of the present study was viewed as a necessary preliminary step in the process of studying the relationship of housing features and furnishings to the quality and quantity of family interaction.

In the preceding phases of the research project,<sup>1</sup> of which this study is one part, attempts were made to establish relationships between selected housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns among two different socio-economic classes. In addition, reviews of literature were written relative to 1) the family interaction process, 2) the eating activity, 3) the physical space and furnishings of the eating area, and 4) research implications specifically for families in the low socio-economic level.

The present study is an attempt to learn whether family eating patterns and the adequacy of housing features and furnishings are associated with mothers' preferences about families eating together. Ruth<sup>2</sup> found almost no

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<sup>1</sup>L. Gertrude Nygren, research in progress concerning housing features and furnishings in relation to family activities (Agricultural Experiment Station, Michigan State University), Research Project No. 71-6854.

<sup>2</sup>Jenny M. Ruth, "The Relation of Selected Housing Features and Furnishings to Eating Patterns in Professional-Managerial Families" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Textiles, Clothing, and Related Arts, Michigan State University, 1967).

evidence and Hussey<sup>1</sup> found some evidence to support the hypothesis that families eat together within the limitations of their housing features and furnishings. By looking at two socio-economic levels Ruth and Hussey reasoned it would be possible to identify isolated housing variables related to the frequency of eating together. It was found that Ruth's professional-managerial sample ate together more frequently and had higher housing adequacy scores and condition ratings than the families in Hussey's assisted family sample. It was theorized that some families might not be able to acquire the housing which enables them to implement their preferences.

Factors such as type of job or occupation, distance to work, family mobility, and family activities inside and outside the home are recognized as possible determinants of eating patterns and are classified as "other factors." No attempt has been made to define these factors in the present study.

The importance of identifying families' values as they relate to housing is documented by a number of authorities in the area of housing. Beyer writes:

Better understanding of the personal value orientations of American families may hold the key to many

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Hussey, "The Relation Between Housing Features and Furnishings and Family Eating Patterns in Assisted Families" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Textiles, Clothing, and Related Arts, Michigan State University, 1967).

factors, including more appropriate design of housing for different groups, which could add to greater satisfaction with life in general. Certainly, if value patterns could be adequately identified in individual families, and if it were known what housing characteristics would best satisfy the different value orientations, we could provide more satisfactory housing in the future than in the past.<sup>1</sup>

Rosow states:

Although surveys and the like may reveal considerable agreement about the categories of housing complaints or desired housing features, the research on "liveability" has not "weighted" these factors, especially by class and social typology variables, to reveal how important housing values actually are to different groups.<sup>2</sup>

Bauer verifies this need for information:

To gauge needs, we should know a great deal more than we do about people's behavior, welfare and attitudes under different external conditions. But even if it is known that certain social phenomena are likely to occur in a given type of milieu, this fact alone is not very helpful to the planner or housing designer. Manmade physical environment is the sum of a number of distinct and variable elements, and what the planner wants to know is--the specific effect of a particular factor in environment over which he has some bona fide control, and the interrelation between one factor and another.<sup>3</sup>

Since we are dealing with decisions that affect the long-term future, research should distinguish between average behaviour and attitudes under status quo conditions, and emerging trends in

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<sup>1</sup>Glenn H. Beyer, Housing and Society (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965), pp. 65-66.

<sup>2</sup>Irving Rosow, "Specialists' Perspectives and Spurious Validation in Housing," Marriage and Family Living, XIX, No. 3 (August, 1957), p. 274.

<sup>3</sup>Catherine Bauer, Social Questions in Housing and Town Planning (London: University of London Press, 1952), p. 10.

social values and activities, which may often require testing under new and experimental conditions.<sup>1</sup>

Realizing the importance of needed research in the area of people's values and preferences as they relate to housing, one must be equally aware of the problems involved. Bauer poses an important question:

How do we decide what kind of housing promotes adequate family life, or a real community? Housing legislation provides powerful instruments for the achievement of such goals, but little instruction as to what these goals are in three-dimensional terms.<sup>2</sup>

A further problem:

Conscious consumer wants are limited by experience and knowledge: by and large, you can only want what you know. . . . What we really need to know therefore is what people would want if they understood the full range of possibility on the one hand, and all the practical limitations on the other.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, conflicting wants must somehow be resolved. Different individuals and groups often want things that are mutually exclusive. Personal desires are frequently in unavoidable conflict with standards and needs that are collectively determined. And even a single individual attaches so many different values to his home that his wants may be incompatible for all practical purposes.<sup>4</sup>

These statements tend to leave one with a strong feeling of need for research with little direction as to where to begin and how to proceed. One clarifying approach

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

seems to come from Dean who suggests that we should relate housing to family life much more broadly. Instead of merely trying to relate housing design to housing values, we should relate the whole socio-housing environment to the residents' total scheme of values. We should ask what are the basic value patterns of individuals and families and how, in this particular housing environment, they become converted into a characteristic way of life.<sup>1</sup>

The following review of related literature will be concerned primarily with empirical research on values and preferences as they relate to housing. In addition, supportive materials to the total research project, heretofore unreported, will be included in order to make as comprehensive a review of the related literature as possible.

#### Review of Literature

Becker wrote: "Nowhere does man's ever-present tendency to develop and define his values appear more striking than in the family."<sup>2</sup> His home is most often the outward expression of these values.

What is meant by values and preferences and their relation to housing varies somewhat according to the author.

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<sup>1</sup>John P. Dean, "Housing Design and Family Values," Land Economics, XXIX (May, 1953), p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Howard Becker, Through Values to Social Interpretation (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1950), p. 7.



An attempt to arrive at an acceptable definition is imperative. Williams states, "Values are thus 'things' in which people are interested--things that they want, desire to be or become, feel as obligatory, worship, enjoy. Values are modes of organized conduct--meaningful, affectively invested pattern principles that guide human action."<sup>1</sup>

In a pilot study by Beyer, Mackesey and Montgomery they state that "values are based on the totality of a number of factors, such as an individual's ideals, motives, attitudes and tastes, which are determined by his cultural background, education, habits and experiences."<sup>2</sup>

In a later study by Beyer the concept of values was extended and a distinction made between preferences and values. "A value differs from a preference inasmuch as a preference generally is based on an individual's range of experience and may not be justified on the basis of any commonly accepted standards or moral judgements . . . a preference will change more rapidly than a value; values tend to endure."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robin Williams, American Society (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1952), p. 375.

<sup>2</sup>Glenn H. Beyer, Thomas W. Mackesey, and James E. Montgomery, Houses Are for People--A Study of Home Buying Motivations, Research Publication No. 3 of the Cornell University Housing Research Center, 1955, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup>Glenn H. Beyer, Housing and Personal Values, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station Memoir 364 (Ithaca, New York, July, 1959), p. 5.

Part of the importance of values in any study of housing rests in their relationship to motivations, because, they tend to establish the direction in which action is taken. . . . Although much remains to be learned about the complex linkage between values and motivation, it should be possible to use values in predicting behavior.<sup>1</sup>

A current study of values has been done by Engebretson.<sup>2</sup> Her research concerns the relationship between values and home management, specifically by identifying individuals' values and the organization of their values. Her purpose was pursued by using a projective data collection device and a constructed typology method of analysis.

Engebretson defined values as "conceptions of the desirable which affect an individual's choices among possible courses of action."<sup>3</sup> They are abstractions, organizing principles or normative standards which have a regulatory effect upon behavior. They may be held implicitly or explicitly and since they are on a higher level of abstraction, may be distinguished from wants, needs and desires. The required property, conceptions of the desirable, or what ought to be, separates values from goals, interests, attitudes and preferences.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Carol L. Engebretson, "Analysis by a Constructed Typology of Wives' Values Evident in Managerial Decision Situations" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of Home Management and Child Development, Michigan State University, 1965).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

This specific definition is accepted by this researcher and will be used in the present study to distinguish questions stated in preference and value modes within the interview schedule. (See Appendix, p. 127.) Questions in the preference mode will ascertain what a mother would want to do, whereas the questions in the value mode will ascertain what a mother thinks should be done.

Operating on the assumptions that: 1) values of individuals can be identified, 2) values of individuals are relatively stable, and 3) values operate as one of the governing factors in decision situations of wives,<sup>1</sup> Engebretson organized individuals' values into a system corresponding to one of four types: traditional, social, autonomous, or change prone. Her sample was from the middle socio-economic class, with extremes from both the upper-middle and lower-middle levels.

In addition to a comprehensive review of literature and theoretical base for the accepted definition of values used for her study, Engebretson also contributed the following findings which are relevant to this research:

1) In future researches, maintaining a distinction between values and wants or between the desirable and desired is a crucial direction to follow.

2) Additional support was given by the study to the hypothesis that values vary with socio-economic level,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

for the findings showed some differences in values between the respondents with less education and lower incomes and those with more education and higher incomes.

3) Values relating to the house and its furnishings were somewhat more autonomous (responses indicating recognition, achievement, and economic concerns) than those relating to the children and family members. More study is needed to identify the specific value positions associated with each of the various areas of home responsibilities.

4) As many authors have written, family members probably share values since the family is more stable than most other small groups and values are instilled in the children through the family unit. A study aimed at identifying the values of family members would yield important findings to support or refute these ideas.<sup>1</sup>

Other studies that have focused on values are those of Cutler,<sup>2</sup> Beyer,<sup>3</sup> Johnson,<sup>4</sup> and Fortenberry.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 129-130.

<sup>2</sup>Virginia F. Cutler, Personal and Family Values in the Choice of a Home, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 840 (Ithaca, New York, November, 1947).

<sup>3</sup>Beyer, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Billie Reed Johnson, "Association of Seven Values with Choice of Floor Coverings in New Farm Houses" (unpublished Master's dissertation, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, 1962).

<sup>5</sup>Frances Elizabeth Fortenberry, "Measurement of Values Relating to Kitchen Design" (unpublished Master's dissertation, Department of Family Economics, Kansas State University, 1963).

Cutler was one of the first researchers in home economics to work in the area of values. She selected a list of 10 broad, general values relating to housing; included were beauty, comfort, convenience, location, health, personal interests, privacy, safety, friendship activities, and economy.

Cutler interviewed 50 families, in which every member over 10 years old completed a questionnaire consisting of three main parts: 1) ranking 10 items--each incorporating one of the values, 2) selecting a preferred item from each of 45 pairs of items similar to those ranked, and 3) completing 10 sentences, each of which was about the values. Analysis of the data included comparisons of the first two parts and tabulating the topics represented in the answers to the incomplete sentences.

Beyer used a scale-analysis method and a forced choice technique, similar to Cutler's, for researching values concerned with housing. The nine values selected for study were family centrism, equality, physical health, economy, freedom, aesthetics, prestige, mental health and leisure. Three to six definitions of each of the values composed by Beyer's research staff comprised the items of both techniques.

Interviews were conducted in both rural and urban areas. Six hundred ninety-four were taken in the rural sample and 1066 in the urban sample. In addition, for the analysis, data from the pilot study in Buffalo were included.

Important among the results of Beyer's research was:

The significant finding, in this comparison, is that the 4 values that ranked highest under the forced-answer technique (in all three studies) usually ranked among the first 4 under the scale-analysis technique, sometimes in practically the same order.<sup>1</sup>

These four values were family centrism, equality, physical health and economy. Beyer also found:

In conclusion, 2 natural groupings tend to develop out of the analysis of these 9 values among the 3 population groups sampled. On the one hand, there are the individuals oriented toward family centrism, equality, economy, and, generally, physical health who tend to have two characteristics in common: a) they have adjusted to the reality of living as a group, and b) are generally less sensitive to matters of the material world. On the other hand, there are the individuals oriented toward freedom, mental health, aesthetics, prestige, and leisure. These people are more individualistic and generally express a high degree of sensitivity to the material world.<sup>2</sup>

In the opinion of this reviewer, limitations of Beyer's study include: 1) lack of mutually exclusive values as illustrated through the grouping of supposedly independent values, 2) the apparent grossness of the instrument and the oversimplifications of such a complex concept as values, and 3) the use of statistical interpretations inappropriate to the data. Ranking of ordinal data in a forced-answer technique implies a hierarchy with equal degrees of importance between responses, which is doubtful

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<sup>1</sup>Beyer, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 16, 17.

in this research.

Dealing with more specific phases of housing and home furnishings are the studies of values by Johnson and Fortenberry.

Johnson's respondents included 143 new homeowners living in a stratified random sample of counties in Iowa. The instrument used for the interviews included three techniques for determining the relative importance of seven selected values associated with floor coverings. These techniques were: a) specifying features of floor coverings considered by the respondents as "important" and "unimportant" to them in their selections of coverings, b) attitude-belief inventories for smooth and soft coverings, and c) paired comparisons of the seven values.<sup>1</sup>

Appearance, comfort, durability, economy, maintenance, safety and style preference comprised the seven values of the third part of the instrument.

In the definition of values which was used, and throughout the instrument, no distinctions were made between desires, preferences and values. Therefore, in the opinion of some, Johnson's study appears to contribute more to the knowledge of preferences and desires in floor coverings and their rankings than to values. Nowhere in the interview schedule does the required property, conceptions of the desirable, seem to be evident.

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<sup>1</sup>Johnson, op. cit., p. 98.

Cluster analysis, scale analysis, analysis of variance and chi-square tests were used by Johnson in the analysis of the data. A recommendation to note, which resulted from this study, was that additional research is needed to develop more sensitive instruments for measuring personal and family values.<sup>1</sup>

Fortenberry chose the values of physical convenience, family-centered living, and social standing for consideration in her study, but made an interpretation of values similar to Johnson. The research was designed:

1) to test the hypothesis that of the values relating to kitchen design, physical convenience was more important than social standing and family-centered living to selected Mississippi Home Demonstration Club Leaders, and 2) to determine relationship of age and education of leaders, number and ages of children living at home to dominant value.<sup>2</sup>

The schedule consisted of three parts: 1) personal data, 2) statement to be rated as to intensity of agreement, and 3) paired statements for the forced-choice technique. The schedule was completed by 239 white homemakers from 15 Mississippi counties. The dominance of physical convenience was found to be highly significant in the results of both techniques. The age of respondent and number and ages of children living at home were found to be significantly related to the dominant values. Younger respondents

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>2</sup>Fortenberry, op. cit., p. 3.



preferred family-centered living; middle age respondents preferred physical convenience; and older members preferred social standing. Respondents who preferred family-centered living had younger children, whereas those who preferred physical convenience and social standing had older children. The majority of the respondents who preferred family living had two or more children living at home, whereas those who preferred social standing had no children at home.

To construct the statement of both schedule techniques, Fortenberry used actual responses of homemakers to the question, "a kitchen should be..." These descriptive statements were then ranked and classified according to the three values by a panel of judges. However, before the data were collected, the statements were changed from a "should" mode to "I would like my kitchen to be..." This shift was made because "the study was intended to measure what the leaders valued personally and not what they thought a kitchen ought to be."<sup>1</sup> By making this transition in statements, it appears that Fortenberry collected data more closely related to desires than values and thereby weakened the basis of both techniques, for after the shift the schedule elicited data with a different emphasis than that for which it was originally constructed.

Fortenberry concluded "there were implications that other values, such as beauty, friendship and social activities,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

should also be considered in future studies."<sup>1</sup>

Montgomery<sup>2</sup> conducted a study in 1960 involving women college students, in which his general concern was the desires (preferences), goals, and expectations, or images the students held concerning their future housing in an attempt to gain some measure of understanding of this phenomenon. He attempted to ascertain how "realistic" young people are in their thinking about housing...whether they have given much thought to their future housing needs, desires, and expectations in terms of present realities.<sup>3</sup>

Montgomery's study was made of a sample of women undergraduate students who attended publicly supported universities located in four geographic regions of the United States. The phase of the investigation reported here had three purposes: 1) to determine the extent to which geographic location affected housing desires and expectations, 2) to examine the nature and content of housing images, and 3) to identify the factors which students thought had affected their ideas about housing.<sup>4</sup> In 1960 a self-administered questionnaire was completed by 1,947

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>James E. Montgomery, The Housing Images of Women College Students, College of Home Economics Research Publication 202 (University Park, Pennsylvania, April, 1963).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

undergraduate women students who were enrolled in state-supported colleges in four regions of the United States. The colleges were in Oregon, Tennessee, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup>

It appeared from Montgomery's findings that socio-economic status and type of parental community were infrequently related to housing desires and expectations. There were definitely leveling factors at work in the formation of housing goals. Undoubtedly many of the "strains" toward a common house image took place before the students entered college, and too, there was evidence that a "catching up" was occurring while the students were in college.<sup>2</sup>

Montgomery's study, in most instances, examined housing preferences in relation to expectations. Noticeable differences were found between the two sets of data. It can be concluded that the students wanted much in the way of housing but that expectations were, for the most part, unspectacular. When these two phenomena were confronted one with the other, the statement is warranted that if that which is desired borders on a dream house, that which is expected is quite firmly anchored in reality. That which the students wanted set the present limits of their dreams, but only time and circumstances would reveal what would happen to their housing desires and expectations.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-44.

Smith, Kivlin, and Sinden undertook a study 1) to discover causative factors which impelled families to move from one owned house to another; 2) to develop a configuration of housing features with a high value rating for a large range of family situations, and to determine which features have a different value rating in particular family situations; and 3) to relate changes in situations to changes in choices concerning housing.<sup>1</sup>

Interviews were conducted with 154 homemakers of a small city and 100 homemakers in a suburban area. All participants had lived in their present houses from one to five years and had moved from a previously owned house located within the area.

Using as their defined concept of values, "values are the goals or ends of action and are, as well, components in the selection of adequate means," they assumed that the choices families make in the selection of housing would reflect values of these families in relation to housing.<sup>2</sup>

Smith, Kivlin and Sinden found in the two samples called Small City and Suburb that of the additional space in the new homes 66 and 73 per cent respectively had larger kitchens and that the greatest difference between the two

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<sup>1</sup>Ruth H. Smith, Laura D. Kivlin, Cecile P. Sinden, Housing Choices and Selections as Evidenced by Residential Mobility, College of Home Economics Research Publication 204 (University Park, Pennsylvania, May, 1963), p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

communities in respect to space was in the percentage of families who obtained larger dining rooms. Fifteen per cent of Small City families and 45 per cent of Suburb families increased the size of the dining room.<sup>1</sup>

Factors which impelled families to move from one residence to another were felt to be indicative of family values as related to housing. However, such items were evidence only of dissatisfactions with the former house and did not indicate the family needs which the house had satisfied.<sup>2</sup>

A card sort method was used to determine reasons for moving. The dominant reason for moving was lack of space. The only two variables which seemed to have much bearing on reasons given for moving were stage of the family life cycle and size of family.<sup>3</sup>

Generally, families wanted large living rooms and dining areas in the kitchen. It was noted that a dining area in the kitchen was already one of two such areas for 76 and 89 per cent of the Small City and Suburb families, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

For the most part, as the size of the family

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-20.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 26-27.

increased, there was a progression in the importance placed on lack of space as a causal factor of moving.<sup>1</sup>

At the completion of Smith, Kivlin and Sinden's research the question remained as to whether family living patterns determine the housing choice, or whether choice is determined by other factors, with living patterns being shaped by the choice.<sup>2</sup>

In this writer's opinion the definition selected for values and the design of the questions used by Smith, Kivlin, and Sinden are more indicative of preferences than of values. In the instrument used for determining the value ratings of housing features, all alternatives were expressed as items families might or might not "want" to attain.

Foote<sup>3</sup> summarized research on housing preferences regarding eating facilities in the following way:

In 1936, the first year in which preferences on the subject were studied, 11,207 families responded to a questionnaire which asked if they would be willing to combine the living and dining areas of their homes. In reply, 83 per cent insisted that the living room be separate. . . . By the mid-1940's, surveys (primarily among subscribers to home magazines) showed that the percentage insisting on keeping the separation had dropped, but only to about 66 per cent.

On the other hand, the realities of rising construction

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>3</sup>Nelson N. Foote, Janet Aber-Lughod, Mary Mix Foley, Louis Winnick, Housing Choices and Housing Constraints (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960).

costs have effectively thwarted this preference. In 1950, for instance, very few new houses contained dining rooms. The minimum post-war builder cottage, . . . the predominant house size built in 1950, offered at most a tiny dining ell or alcove between the kitchen and living room. But even expensive custom-built houses contained dining rooms less often than might be expected. . . . In 1949, only 51 per cent chose separate dining rooms, . . . 31 per cent accepted the combined living-dining room, and the remainder . . . selected . . . a separate living room, no dining room, but space in the kitchen for eating.

A comparable group in 1955 had compromised still more . . . 38 per cent got separate dining rooms, 39 per cent took combined living-dining rooms, . . . and the remainder chose separate living rooms and forfeited dining rooms.

At the same time that the preferences for separate dining rooms has been slowly dropping, and the chance of getting them plummeting, the demand for eating facilities in the kitchen has remained steady, high, and widespread. Studies of low-income tenants of public housing show that between 89 and 100 per cent of such families prefer to eat regularly in the kitchen; when the room is large enough, most visitors are also entertained in this room. High-income families eat less often in the kitchen, although even here the number is substantial. Among middle-income families with children, the demand for eating facilities in the kitchen is just as high (93 per cent) as it is among public housing tenants.

Moreover, the dining room, for which the consumer still registers substantial desire, receives, when it is obtained, comparatively little use. Low-income tenants of public housing projects, . . . provided with dining rooms, use them less frequently and for fewer purposes, than do respondents from the wider economic and social range represented in home magazine surveys. But even among the latter, the percentage with dining rooms who regularly serve meals in them is surprisingly low.

This is confirmed by . . . the survey for the year 1957-1958 by the Market Research Corporation of America for 4,000 families in all income brackets and in all sections of the country. It shows that 70 per cent of all home meals are served in the kitchen. Guests are present at 14 per cent of all

meals, but a full 40 per cent of these guest meals also are served in the kitchen.

Another confirmation of the desire for eating facilities in the kitchen is found in a survey of 1949-1950 house buyers which investigated the satisfaction with their eating arrangements as expressed some months after purchase. Of these consumers, 56 per cent obtained separate dining rooms . . . 17 per cent purchased houses with dinettes, breakfast nooks, or alcoves off the kitchen, and the remaining 27 per cent bought houses in which the kitchen was the only place for eating.

Although most were satisfied with their choice, 29 per cent were not. Least satisfied were those who had only one place in which to serve meals, even though the one place was the desired dining room. Some 43 per cent of those who could eat only in the kitchen, and 42 per cent of those who could eat only in a dining room or living room ell, were dissatisfied. If the single eating place were a dinette, the family was more likely to be satisfied than if it were kitchen or dining room proper. However, purchasers of such houses were primarily young couples without children who are generally less concerned with kitchen activity than larger families.

The most satisfied of all purchasers were those whose homes contained both a dinette or breakfast space in the kitchen and a more formal dining area, either in a separate room or in a corner of the living room.

The desire for two types of eating space, one informal for family meals, especially in homes with very young children, and one more formal for entertaining company and training older children in proper manners, seems fairly widespread except among the lower-income group. One could speculate, therefore, that the low-income consumer would be best served by a large kitchen, a living room, and no dining room. The middle- and upper-income groups, especially families with children, would be happier with a kitchen-breakfast nook combination, a living room, and a supplementary dining space. Since middle-income families in particular tend to use the dining room for other activities, including children's play, a separate dining room in a traditional house and a "family room" in a house of modern design would probably best suit their needs. . . .



No income group or family type (with the possible exception of single adults and newlyweds in small apartments) wants the minimum "efficiency" kitchen once recommended so highly by home economists as a step saver. A number of magazine studies made in the 1940's revealed that the kitchen size most frequently preferred as a minimum was 9 x 12 feet. . . . Of 1940-1950 house buyers, almost half wanted some changes in their kitchens, and half of these could be categorized as wanting "more space," either for eating or for additional work room.

The importance of the kitchen is further indicated by a study of British housewives, which may also apply to Americans. A high correlation was found between kitchen satisfaction and total housing satisfaction.<sup>1</sup>

Much concern on the part of families' preferences, therefore, appears to deal with the matter of space. This concern is compounded by the fact that although most consumers have definite attitudes about space or the lack of space, these attitudes are often quite subjective and present many baffling contradictions. Riemer<sup>2</sup> notes this "paradox" and comments:

As some desires are satisfied, the concern of the family turns to other items of need. Size and number of rooms may not be high on the scale of preferences as long as the family does not have a bath tub. Once tolerable occupancy standards have been achieved, the housewife will begin to consider the adequacy of storage facilities. Where lower-middle class standards are fairly well satisfied, the family will begin to feel the need for a second bathroom. Needs appear, are satisfied, and fade out, only to make place for new needs. A lack of desire for storage facilities may mean that present facilities are adequate, but it may also mean that other

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 246-250.

<sup>2</sup>Svend Riemer, "Architecture for Family Living," Journal of Social Issues, VII, Nos. 1, 2 (1951).

needs are so much more urgent that not much thought is given to the need for storage space.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently it is much more difficult for large families than for small to achieve housing satisfaction. Rossi discovered that the amount of space available is apparently not as important as the experience of shifts in the relationship between the space and the size of the family. A family living in a dwelling with a particular amount of space becomes accommodated to that space over time. When the family expands, the space is then experienced as inadequate.<sup>2</sup>

A study by Riemer is apparently the only consumer survey which has attempted to relate the ranking of types of complaints by a number of variables, including density, size of family and income. In addition, by using the percentage of actual, out of possible, complaints made by any group as an index of dissatisfaction, Riemer has been able to compare rankings of complaints as well as the comparative levels of complaints among his sub-groups of housing consumers.

Riemer found that consumers living at densities of more than one person per room rated the most unsatisfactory aspects of the homes as being (in descending order) space

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>2</sup>Peter Rossi, Why Families Move (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1955), pp. 71-80.

for leisure time, for cooking, for sleeping, and for eating.<sup>1</sup>

Although not empirically tested, Dean explored the idea of relating housing design to family values. He tentatively hypothesized that four aspects of housing design were most crucial to family life. They were: 1) the location of the dwelling unit with regard to other major social environments where family members participate (or would be likely to participate), 2) the orientation of neighborhood dwelling units to each other and to local neighborhood contact centers, 3) the extent to which the housing design encourages or discourages performance of the living functions within the dwelling space or outside the home through congregate facilities or special ad hoc arrangements, and 4) the ways in which the style and plan of the house are related to the interaction of family members with each other and with their close personal contacts outside the home.<sup>2</sup>

Dean further categorized family values into clusters or ideal constructs that may be approximated in a real life setting. These types were the 1) familistic, 2) integrated individualized, 3) emancipated, and 4) status-striving.<sup>3</sup>

Dean felt that use patterns of family members were probably more important than the design per se in determining

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<sup>1</sup>Svend Riemer, "Maladjustment to the Family Home," American Sociological Review, X (October, 1945), pp. 642-648.

<sup>2</sup>Dean, op. cit., p. 132.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 136-137.

how well a dwelling "worked" for a given family. On the basis of an unpublished pilot study concerning the values of family members that were most frequently invoked in evaluating the living arrangements, Dean hypothesized the following criteria as most salient: 1) Does it (a given aspect of the living arrangements) promote or impede the efficient operation of household tasks? 2) How does it look to friends or relatives or others whose opinions matter? 3) Does it hamper attempts to live up to accepted moral standards about family living, especially what family members expect of each other? and 4) Does it facilitate or inhibit the spontaneous personal reaction and activities of different family members?<sup>1</sup>

In a pilot study for the present research, McCray attempted to learn whether housing features and furnishings were perceived by mothers to be related to eating together, as a step in the process of learning if family interaction is in any demonstrable way dependent upon housing.<sup>2</sup> The major purposes of her study were to answer for a given population of 30 mothers with children (all white) enrolled in the Michigan State University Laboratory Preschool the following questions: 1) What were their preferences concerning family-shared mealtime? 2) What housing features and furnishings were perceived as being related to family-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 138-139.

<sup>2</sup>McCray, op. cit., p. 1.

shared mealtime? 3) What housing features and furnishings appeared to be associated with their preferences regarding family-shared mealtime?<sup>1</sup>

McCray used an unstructured interview schedule to elicit responses dealing with personal data on the families, mothers' preferences, present routines of mealtime, and housing features and furnishings.<sup>2</sup>

The following suggestions which appear relevant to the present study were made by McCray:

An analysis of responses indicated the need for a more precise preference measure. Wide variances were detected in the definition of family-shared mealtime indicating that perhaps the mothers' preferences did not include full family membership at mealtime.<sup>3</sup>

From her sample, McCray found that 28 out of 30 mothers stated preferences for sharing family mealtime and said that they frequently did share mealtime. The remaining two respondents reported that they did not prefer to share mealtime, even though their families did share meal-times.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, no comparisons could be made with any degree of confidence concerning the relation between mothers' preferences for family-shared mealtime and their perception of housing features and furnishings found to aid or impede

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 47-48.

mealtime.<sup>1</sup> McCray suggested:

A study of a predetermined number of families where the respondent's values or preferences for an activity are known to be different could serve as a basis for a comparison of housing features and furnishings and insure useable numbers for purposes of analysis.<sup>2</sup>

This suggestion was not followed in the present research, for the data were collected simultaneously with the data for two other studies.

In the companion studies to the present research, conducted by Ruth and Hussey, an attempt was made in both cases to identify the housing features and furnishings associated with eating among families who almost always ate together, who sometimes ate together, and who almost never ate together. Families were assigned to one of these three eating patterns according to the mothers' responses to questions designed to establish frequency of eating together. The only structured differences in the parallel studies by Ruth and Hussey were in the socio-economic groups selected for study and in the aspects on which they chose to concentrate in their review of literature. Ruth's sample consisted of a group of "professional-managerial" families, as identified and verified by the background factors selected for study. Hussey's sample consisted of "assisted families"--a lower socio-economic class obtained through a social service agency. Families in both samples met the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 52-53.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

criterion of having no children above elementary school age living at home.

A common interview schedule was used. The contents were designed in three parts, Part A and Part C being pertinent to Ruth and Hussey's research. The divisions of the schedule were:

Part A: Biographic Information and a Daily Eating Schedule.

Part B: Mothers' Responses to Statements in the Value and Preference Modes.

Part C: A Condition Rating of the Food Preparation and Eating Areas and an Adequacy Inventory of Furnishings.

Ratings of features were derived by defining three categories of condition. Features were rated as "functional," indicating that the feature was present and working properly; "partially functional," meaning that the feature was present, but was not of adequate size, required some maintenance, or was not in good working order; or "non-functional," indicating that the feature was not present or was present, but did not operate.<sup>1</sup>

Ratings of furnishings were broken into six categories of items associated with eating, serving, storage, preparation, cleaning, and entertainment and a seventh category called accessory furnishings. Responses were solicited to fit the following categories in regard to

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<sup>1</sup>Ruth, op. cit., p. 39.

the furnishings mentioned: 1) "I have the item and use it," 2) "I have the item and don't use it," 3) "I don't have enough of the item and would like more," 4) "I don't have the item but want it," and 5) "I don't have the item and don't want it."<sup>1</sup>

Ruth found that for her sample of 30 families, three families almost never ate together, 10 families sometimes ate together, and 17 families (over half of the sample) almost always ate together.<sup>2</sup> These patterns of eating did not appear to be related to the background characteristics or to variables dealing with various aspects of family mealtime routines.

The data showed no evidence that housing features, with the possible exception of the placement of doors, varied from one eating pattern to another. However, the three housing furnishings found to be significant seemed to indicate that the presence of these furnishings might vary according to eating patterns. Significant relationships at the .02 level were found to exist for three variables: "I don't have enough and would like more," for "Items associated with eating" and for "Items associated with serving," and "I don't have the item but want it," for "Items associated with preparation." Housing furnishings

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 41-42.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 50.



tested according to the three patterns of eating were analyzed by Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks.<sup>1</sup>

Giving impetus to the present research were these statements by Ruth:

Whether families who sometimes or almost always ate together acquired different housing furnishings in order that they might implement those [their preferred] eating patterns, or whether they embraced such patterns of eating because of the availability of housing furnishings, is not known. Likewise, it was not established if families who almost never ate together adopted this eating pattern because they could not acquire particular furnishings or whether they did not acquire these items because other things were more important to them. Such investigations must be left to further studies.<sup>2</sup>

Hussey found that of the 30 families interviewed, five families almost never ate together, 18 families (or over half of the sample) sometimes ate together and seven of the families almost always ate together.<sup>3</sup>

Insofar as ratings of features are concerned, Hussey found more variables, thus more evidence than Ruth, to support a belief that housing features and frequencies of families eating together are related. The functional ratings of traffic patterns in the food preparation area increased as the frequency of families eating together increased.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 84-85.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 86-87.

<sup>3</sup>Hussey, op. cit., p. 27.

Convenience of the seating arrangement in the eating area and the amount of space at the table decreased for families who almost never ate together, therefore appearing to be a limiting factor.<sup>1</sup>

Needs and usages of housing furnishings and the patterns of eating were significantly related to patterns of eating in three categories: "I don't have the item but want it," for items associated with serving; "I don't have the item but don't want it," for items associated with storage; and "I have the item and use it," for items associated with entertainment.<sup>2</sup>

Education of mothers was a non-housing factor which seemed to be related to the frequency with which families ate together.<sup>3</sup> Aside from this factor, no other background variables were found to be related to eating patterns.

An important recommendation from Hussey's study was:

The relation of housing features and furnishings to preferences and values of eating together needs to be investigated to gain insight into why some families eat together and others do not, when their housing features and furnishings differ.<sup>4</sup>

Ruth and Hussey found some evidence to indicate

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 67-68.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

that housing and patterns of eating were associated, but no attempt was made to determine if families were forced into housing with limitations, whether they chose these patterns of eating due to their preferences, or whether other factors dictated the patterns of eating.

A summary of the literature dealing with values and preferences as related to housing shows a general consensus that a definite distinction can be made between the two concepts. Values are a higher level of abstraction; they are conceptions of the desirable which affect an individual's choices among possible courses of actions. They are organizing principles or normative standards which have a regulatory effect upon behavior. They may be distinguished from preferences, which are conceptions of the desired. Preferences (wants) vary more readily than values, and are more easily fulfilled. Values may be expressed as what should be done, whereas preferences may be expressed as what one would want to do.

Studies by Cutler, Beyer, Engebretson, and Montgomery have succeeded in keeping a distinction in their theoretical framework between the usage of the terms, values and preferences, thereby strengthening their research. Studies by McCray, Ruth and Hussey give definite impetus to the present research in values and preferences as a crucial question in helping to identify whether housing features and furnishings are, in fact, influencing factors in family eating patterns or more a result of mothers'

preferences. If the latter is supported, it would appear that selected housing features and furnishings are determined by mothers' preferences regarding families eating together. If not supported, it would appear that housing features and furnishings influence the family eating patterns and mothers' preferences do not affect them.

Conclusions from the preceding review of literature would appear to support research to determine the relation of mothers' values and preferences to housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns. Questions posed in this investigation are: 1) Which statement made would be a better measure to elicit the most accurate responses from mothers?<sup>1</sup> 2) If mothers' preferences are related to eating patterns, how then does this affect housing features and furnishings? and 3) If mothers' preferences are related to housing features and furnishings, how then does this affect eating patterns?

### Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To determine whether the three family eating patterns are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.

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<sup>1</sup>Even though the topic of values was treated extensively in the review of literature, it was not included in the analysis due to a technical error in the collection of data. The error concerning values will be treated in Chapter II, Procedure of the Investigation.

2. To determine whether housing features associated with eating are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.
3. To determine whether housing furnishings associated with eating are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.

### Hypotheses

To accomplish the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There are significant differences in mothers' preferences about families eating together among families who almost never eat together, those who sometimes eat together, and those who almost always eat together.
2. There are positive relationships between housing features associated with eating and mothers' preferences about eating together.
3. There are significant differences between housing furnishings associated with eating and mothers' preferences about families eating together.

### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, and to provide continuity among the studies of the master project, the following operational definitions were employed:

1. Professional-managerial families: Terminology used to describe more specifically the first of two samples in this study. Kahl, in his description of the upper-

middle class, defined its members as "college-educated, prosperous people who are technicians, professionals, managers, and businessmen."<sup>1</sup>

2. Assisted families: Terminology used to describe more specifically the second sample in this study. Lower class families in the sample met the criterion of families serviced by the Family Helper Program.
3. Preferences: Mothers' wants or desires as determined by choices given among selected alternatives in a hypothetical situation concerning families eating together.
4. Families who eat together: All family members living at home and eating together. (Exception: Those members physically or mentally unable to eat with the family.)
5. Family eating patterns (according to the mother's best ability to recall):
  - a. Eating Pattern I: Families who almost never eat together--those who eat together between one-third and two-thirds of the time, or seven or fewer meals per week.
  - b. Eating Pattern II: Families who sometimes eat together--those who eat together between one-third and two-thirds of the time, or eight through 14 meals per week.

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph A. Kahl, The American Class Structure (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1957), p. 193.

- c. Eating Pattern III: Families who almost always eat together--those who eat together over two-thirds of the time, or 15 or more meals per week.
6. Housing features: Structural or relatively permanent parts of the food preparation area or of the area where the family eats most often.
7. Housing furnishings: Movable items associated with serving, storage, and food preparation as well as eating, clean-up and entertaining.
8. Eating area: Any part of the house or yard where food is normally eaten by the family.

#### Limitations of the Research

The limitations posed in the research by Ruth and Hussey which also apply to this study are:

1. Limited experience of interviewers and possible resultant personal bias in the condition ratings of the food preparation and eating areas.
2. Limited generalizations due to lack of random selection of samples.
3. Small sample size, thereby possibly obscuring some differences which might emerge with a larger sample.
4. Uncontrolled variable concerning family composition in both samples. It was impossible to discern whether families without fathers had different patterns of eating than did families with fathers.

In addition, the following limitations are posed

in regard to the present research:

1. A forced-answer technique, which was used for the responses to questions in the value mode and the preference mode, might have tended to obscure possible alternatives and to elicit responses atypical of those which might be elicited on a less structured interview schedule. The forced-answer technique, however, was justified on the basis of attempting to test the correlation of responses to the parallel questions in the value and preference modes, and as a measure to ascertain the type of question most easily and precisely understood and answered by the respondents.
2. Failure of communication with the interviewers resulted in a misinterpretation of the expected responses to the questions in the value mode. Although a three-point rating scale was used, respondents were encouraged to answer on a two-point scale. This failure tended to eliminate, almost without exception, the given alternative of "no strong feelings" and consequently removed the possibility of having prepared a comparable form against which to check responses.
3. Length of the questionnaire and the repetitiveness of the questions might have created fatigue or disinterest on the part of the interviewee, resulting in careless responses.
4. A three-point rating scale offers very limited choice in response. However, the scale was justified due to



the difficulty in being able to reasonably rank statement alternatives to questions in the preference mode.

5. The range of responses to the questions in the preference mode was limited, due to the necessary extremeness of given alternatives which would show a high preference for eating together and a low preference for eating together.

## CHAPTER II

### PROCEDURE OF THE INVESTIGATION

#### Design of the Study

For the purposes of the study it was decided to obtain data from mothers of families with no children above elementary school level living at home. The families were classified under terms indicative of two different socio-economic levels; professional-managerial representing the upper-middle class and assisted families representing the lower class. To obtain the classification income, education, occupation, and housing were employed as control variables. Families in the professional-managerial class were required to meet at least three of the following criteria: 1) a minimum annual income of \$7500, 2) a minimum of some college education for the head of the family, 3) professional or managerial occupation for head of the family, or 4) residence in "single-family homes in the suburbs,"<sup>1</sup> which were of sound structure, well maintained and in a "respectable" neighborhood. Residence was judged visually by the interviewer at the time of the interview.

Families in the assisted group met the criteria

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<sup>1</sup>Kahl, op. cit., p. 194.

of families serviced by the Family Helper Program.

The limitation of studying only families with children of elementary school age or younger was imposed because it is believed that patterns of living are greatly altered as children become involved in the activities of teenagers. If, however, there were older children who were no longer living at home, the activities of members still in the home were thought to be characteristic of a family primarily in the early stages of the family life cycle.

No attempt was made to interview only families with both parents living at home, as the interview schedule was designed to be used with all socio-economic levels. This criterion would have increased substantially the difficulty in obtaining a sample and also it might have rendered the sample non-representative of certain socio-economic levels.

#### Development of the Interview Schedule

The present study is the final one in a present series conducted as part of a project of the Michigan State University Agricultural Experiment Station. A pilot study, by McCray, was conducted to determine whether housing features and furnishings were perceived by mothers to be related to family-shared mealtime. Studies by Ruth and Hussey followed, in which the topic was narrowed in scope to pertain only to the activity of eating, and in which the relationship between family eating patterns and selected housing features and furnishings was studied for two different

socio-economic groups. The current investigation is an extension of Ruth and Hussey's work and attempts to analyze an additional variable, preferences and values, contingent upon their research. In the latter three studies a common interview schedule was used; the data were collected simultaneously.

The interview schedule consisted of and was administered in three parts:

Part A. Biographic Information and a Daily Eating Schedule. (See Appendix, p. 129.)

Part B. Mothers' Responses to Statements in the Value and Preference Modes. (See Appendix, p. 142.)

Part C. A Condition Rating of the Food Preparation and Eating Areas and an Adequacy Inventory of Furnishings. (See Appendix, p. 154.)

Only segments of Part A and C were used in the present research; Part B was used in total. The schedule was planned so that the interview could be completed within the period of one hour.

The questions deemed pertinent to this research and thereby selected for analysis were:

Part A. The background data consisted of personal information concerning composition of the family, as well as questions on income, employment, and type of home acquisition. A number of the questions were included merely to verify that the families did fit the appropriate socio-economic level according to the pre-established criteria,

and to describe the samples. The questions dealt with husband's occupation, age, and educational level; type of home acquisition; range of income; mean age and sex of children. Questions that appeared to have some possible relation to mothers' preferences were asked. These consisted of items dealing with age, educational level, marital status, volunteer work and possible employment of mothers; time spent outside the home for work and total number of children.

The three eating patterns were established by asking the respondent to calculate the average number of meals her family ate together during a typical week.

Other factors describing family eating situations were covered by questions asking if the family stayed together until everyone had finished eating; and if the current eating pattern differed from the mother's eating pattern as a child.

Three questions were included which were preference oriented. They involved asking the mothers what changes, if any, would be made if they could change parts of the home where they ate, and reasons for these changes. Mothers were also asked where they would most enjoy eating, if they could eat anywhere inside or outside of the house. A hypothetical question was included to ascertain the room or space most desired, assuming the house did not have a place where the family could all sit down and eat together.

Part B of the instrument consisted of two main sections, each consisting of 18 questions. Section A was

designed to elicit responses to questions in a value mode and Section B was designed to obtain responses to questions in a preference mode. Each question in Section A had a parallel question, subject wise, in Section B. In both cases questions were considered to be hypothetical situations. In Section A, the more projective of the two measures, the respondent was asked to think about a mother with a particular problem concerning the eating activity and what she should do. Alternatives given for Section A were "yes," "no," and "no strong feelings." Alternatives were precoded. The number "two" was assigned to the response indicating the highest value for eating together, "one" indicated the respondent did not care either way, and "zero" indicated the lowest value for eating together.

In Section B the respondent was asked to think about herself when faced with a particular problem concerning the eating activity and what she would want to do. Three alternatives were given in statement form and designed so each one was indicative of either a definite high, medium, or low preference for eating together. They were precoded in a corresponding manner again, utilizing "two," "one," and "zero."

Although all of the 18 questions in each section were concerned with mothers' values and preferences about families eating together, the specific situations involved the following problems: mothers who are busy all day and tired by the evening meal; husbands offered new jobs with

better pay, but acceptance means they will need to work during the evening meal; eating areas with poor ventilation, little light, and in need of paint; mothers offered jobs, but acceptance means they will need to work during the evening meal; children who want to watch television during the evening meal; mothers who are up late nights and tired when the family wants to eat breakfast; cramped and uncomfortable, but convenient eating areas; telephone calls during the evening meal; family members in several activities at different times, which conflict with regular eating times; teenagers involved in sports activities that meet during the regular eating period for a long period of time; family friction during mealtimes; inadequate facilities to comfortably eat together and no money to buy more; using mealtimes to encourage family discussion; children who don't come home when called for mealtime; children who become hungry before the father gets home from work; difficult accessibility to the eating area; families with inadequate table appointments; and children who want to snack on food prepared for the evening meal.

A final question was included for the purpose of securing the respondent's general impression about whether she preferred or did not prefer that her family eat together. The question was intended to be a check to learn whether the mother's general preference was consistent with the preference response rankings from the hypothetical questions.

The instrument was designed to be used ultimately

in all socio-economic classes in different stages of the family life cycle. Therefore, the questions had to be in a general nature and hypothetically stated in order to have any relevance to all the respondents in each of the different samples. An attempt was made to present typical problems facing a large percentage of families today, regardless of status or stage of the life cycle.

The two methods, questions in the value mode and questions in the preference mode, were chosen because the more effective measure to elicit the most accurate and meaningful responses could not be ascertained prior to the gathering of the data. No literature was found to support the use of one measure over the other, particularly with the lower socio-economic level, as methodology with this population is still in an infant stage. It was known only that it appears difficult for people in the lower socio-economic class to be able to project themselves beyond their own realm of present experience.

McCray, in the pilot study, attempted to study mothers' preferences. In response to the question, "Do you feel it is important for family members to share meals?" she found that 28 mothers of the sample responded positively; two responded negatively. With this extreme distribution, analysis was impossible. An effort was made to locate patterns of responses for mothers' preferences because consistencies of responses could suggest areas worthy of



study in future research.<sup>1</sup> Mothers' preferences were compared to the background data and no relationships were found, with the possible exception of years married. Both mothers giving negative responses had been married less than 10 years.<sup>2</sup>

McCray also attempted to identify factors relating to preferences and mealtime routines, which gave some basis for the identification of problems at mealtime. For morning and midday meals "occupation" and "childrens' activities" were the most frequently mentioned reasons for present mealtime routines; "planned" was most frequently mentioned for evening meals followed closely by "occupation" and "just happened."<sup>3</sup> Because McCray's preference measure consisted of one question her study was useful only to the extent of supporting need for further investigation of mothers' preferences using a more refined instrument.

Part C. The final section of the interview schedule consisted of a survey of housing features and furnishings related to the activity of eating. It included an adequacy rating of condition of features in the food preparation area, an adequacy rating of condition of features in the area where food is most often eaten, and an inventory

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<sup>1</sup>McCray, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

of furnishings most often associated with eating.

The scale for condition ratings of features in the food preparation area and the area where food is most often eaten was developed by Ruth and Hussey from a "Housing Quality Measuring Scale"<sup>1</sup> and a Michigan Agricultural Extension Service Bulletin, "Check Your Kitchen."<sup>2</sup> A scale, unique to the research, was developed of "non-functional," "partially-functional," and "functional" features. "Zero," "one," and "two" were used to represent the three types of ratings, respectively. "Zero" indicated lack of an item, poor condition, poor placement, consistent maintenance required, or inability to function; "one" indicated easily repaired conditions, satisfactory placement, some maintenance required or incorrect functioning of an item; and "two" indicated good condition, good placement, little maintenance required, or correct functioning of an item.

Rating was done by interviewers, if no objection by the interviewee, for it was felt that it would allow for a more consistent appraisal and expedite the interview.

In the area used for preparation of food, the presence of a sink, refrigerator, range, freezer, and dishwasher was investigated. Counter space, storage space, handling

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<sup>1</sup>Annette J. Schaeffer and Carlton M. Edwards, "A Housing Quality Measuring Scale," Michigan State University, 1966, Appendix B, pp. 16-26.

<sup>2</sup>"Check Your Kitchen," Michigan Agricultural Extension Service Bulletin, Michigan State University (February, 1966).

of garbage, arrangement of the work center and traffic patterns, and conditions of walls, ceiling and floors were also rated.

Location of the area where the family most often ate together was identified and rated on condition and maintenance of walls, ceilings, floors; tables and chairs; windows, doors and storage; type of air circulation, heating, artificial and natural light; orientation; privacy; convenience of the seating arrangement; space at the table and the number of individuals at the table. The eating arrangement was sketched. With the exception of the latter two variables, all condition ratings of housing features were analyzed by structured groupings for the purpose of relating housing features to mothers' preferences in this research.

If a family never ate together or if no specific eating area could be identified, the condition ratings of the eating area were omitted.

The furnishings inventory consisted of 72 items categorized as associated with 1) eating--including dishes, flatware, glasses, tables, and chairs; 2) serving--including serving dishes and table linens; 3) storage; 4) preparation--including small electrical cooking equipment, small electrical food preparation equipment, and non-electrical cooking equipment; 5) cleaning; 6) entertainment; and 7) accessory furnishings. Some items which did not appear to be directly related to the activity of eating

were omitted.

Each item was read to the respondent and checked in the appropriate column according to the response given. The columns were headed: 1) "I have the item and use it," 2) "I have the item and don't use it," 3) "I don't have enough of the item and would like more," 4) "I don't have the item but want it," and 5) "I don't have the item and don't want it."<sup>1</sup> The five categories were developed in order to give the respondent a choice of answers so that she would more accurately express her feelings about each item.

The furnishings inventory was used in total for the purpose of relating housing furnishings to mothers' preferences in this research.

#### Pretesting the Interview Schedule

Prior to the collection of the data, the interview schedule was administered to 12 mothers in families with children in various stages of the family life cycle. Some of the pretest sample were sophisticated in research methodology. Since subjects in the assisted families willing to cooperate were not plentiful, four Family Helpers, the women working with the assisted families, also became

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<sup>1</sup>Response categories were used in abbreviated form in the interview schedule (see Appendix, p. 162), but will be referred to in their full form throughout the text.

pretest subjects. The pretest was designed to check for clarity of questions; to check for thoroughness of the schedule in eliciting desired information; to give interviewers practice in reading the schedule to the respondents; and to determine whether the assisted group would be capable of giving valid responses.

Several changes in the schedule resulted. Introductory statements were included at the beginning of the schedule and each major part. The vocabulary was simplified further to include more colloquial terms; questions were deleted when it was felt they were redundant or unnecessary to the purposes of the study; and questions were ordered in a more related sequence.

In the initial interview schedule, Part B consisted of alternating questions in the value and preference modes; the questions in the value mode about the hypothetical mothers were followed by the statement, "What would you want to do in a situation like this?" The alternatives followed. This tended to simplify the schedule and avoid repetition, but it appeared from the pretest that respondents were answering the second part on the basis of their recall of their responses to the first part of the question. To separate the statements seemed necessary to decrease the chances of comparing responses and therefore insure a more independent measure of the value and preference responses.

### Selection of the Samples

The sample for the first socio-economic level consisted of 30 mothers in the Lansing, Michigan, area from professional-managerial families referred to as the upper-middle class by Kahl. He stated:

The upper-middle class is close to, but not at the top of the system. . . . They are the active people who are the leaders of the American work world. They are trained specialists in business or professional pursuits who make the daily decisions that guide the work of the little people. Upper-middle class people do not have jobs, but occupy positions; they do not work, they pursue careers.<sup>1</sup>

Respondents were selected according to four criteria--income, education, occupation, and housing--three of which they were required to meet. All of the mothers had children of elementary school age or younger. The limitation was imposed with the feeling that families' activities are often guided by those of the children, and as children reach adolescence they engage in many additional activities outside of the home.

No attempt was made to obtain a random sample due to no known, readily feasible way of identifying the population to be studied. Willing subjects who met the criteria for the sample were utilized as respondents.

The sample for the second socio-economic level consisted of 29 mothers selected from families served by the Family Helper Program. The Family Helper Program, under

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<sup>1</sup>Kahl, op. cit., p. 193.

the jurisdiction of Section 4 of the Michigan State Aid Act of 1966, serves culturally disadvantaged children in the Lansing School District. Referrals of children who are having difficulties in school thought to be related to problems at home, are made through the principal's office of the school.

Under Section 4 of the Michigan State Aid Act, children in need of specialized educational programs by virtue of certain environmental factors and handicapping conditions may be:

- a. Members of families with incomes under \$3,000 per year.
- b. Members of families whose chief supporters are unemployed.
- c. Members of a minority group family.
- d. Members of families receiving public or private aid or welfare assistance.
- e. Members of families that are migrant, transient or experiencing great mobility.
- f. Those having a physical handicap as certified by an appropriate diagnostician.
- g. Those having a mental handicap as certified by an appropriate diagnostician.<sup>1</sup>

The Family Helper Program was chosen because families served by the Program met most, if not all, of Kahl's

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<sup>1</sup>Hussey, op. cit., p. 21.

criteria for the lower class. He states:

[They are] people who have the lowest paid jobs, work irregularly (especially in bad times), live in slums. They usually have not gone beyond grammar school (and often have not finished it), their family life is unstable, their reputations poor, and their values are based on apathy or aggression, for they have no hope.<sup>1</sup>

Experiences of other research workers with families in the lower class have revealed high refusal rates, numerous incomplete interviews and high personal safety risk at times. Since Family Helpers were in a position to have established rapport with the families serviced by the Program, acceptance of Helpers by families was believed might help in overcoming difficulties such as valueless interviews and many refusals.

Mothers were interviewed, rather than other family members, for it was felt they were most highly involved in decisions concerning family meals. As in the previous sample, no attempt was made to obtain a random sample; in fact, the mothers were intentionally selected.

#### Locating the Sample

To obtain the professional-managerial sample, a local chapter of the American Association of University Women was contacted for names of members who might have children of elementary school age or younger. Nine names were given and each woman was then contacted by telephone.

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<sup>1</sup>Kahl, op. cit., p. 216.



The source through which her name was obtained, the objective of the study, and the general type of interview were explained to her. An appointment was made if the mother met the criteria and was willing to cooperate. Following each interview the respondent was asked if she had acquaintances who would meet the criteria and would likely be willing to cooperate. The given individuals were then contacted by telephone and likewise asked to cooperate.

Thirty-four interviews were conducted in order to secure a sample population of 30. Four early interviews were discarded, as they failed to meet the stated criteria. No mothers contacted refused to cooperate.

To obtain the second sample, prior approval of the administrative staff of the Family Helper Program was gained, followed by the Family Helpers themselves choosing the families to be interviewed. In a few cases the families failed to meet all lower class criteria as established by Kahl.<sup>1</sup>

Family Helpers were requested to choose mothers who could respond to the questions in the interview schedule. Interviewing a mother who could not comprehend the content of the questions or whose responses were in another language was of no useful purpose to the study and might have been harmful to the mother's involvement with the Family Helper Program.

Prior to the interview, Family Helpers asked the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 210-215.

respondents if they would be willing to cooperate and appointments were made for interviews. Thirty-six mothers were contacted to get a sample of 30 used in the study by Hussey. A further schedule had to be deleted for the present study because of one respondent's failure to comprehend the preference statements. Two women did not have sufficient command of the English language to understand or adequately respond to the interview schedule; two had children above elementary school age living at home; one refused to cooperate; and one completed interview schedule was discarded when the Family Helper and research worker concluded either their presence or the instrument prompted indifferent attitudes by the respondent.

#### Collection of the Data

The data were collected in June and July, 1967, by two research workers and two paid interviewers. The personal interviews were approximately 50 minutes in length and were conducted in the homes of the respondents. For the assisted families, questions 1 through 4 (Appendix, p. 129) were answered from records kept on each family served by the Family Helper Program. Collection of these biographical data from records avoided subjecting the mothers of the assisted families to unnecessary personal questions, and decreased the amount of time required to obtain responses.

With the exception of the condition ratings of the food preparation area, the eating area, and the information

obtained from records, the questions were read to the respondent by the interviewer and her responses were recorded. In the professional-managerial sample the food preparation and the eating area were rated by the interviewer. In the assisted families the Family Helper aided the research workers in assessing the condition of the food preparation and eating areas, and furnishings in some cases. In instances where the research workers were not invited to judge the condition of the housing areas by observation, or if the respondent appeared reluctant to give her permission for rating, the respondent or Family Helper was asked to aid the interviewer. In all cases, the remainder of the data were collected at the time of the interview. In some cases help from the interviewer was needed in order for the respondents to complete the inventory of housing furnishings.

#### Statistical Analysis of the Data

Data for analysis consisted of responses to 59 interviews. The schedule had been precoded at the time of its development in preparation for machine computation. All calculations, with the exception of the median test and the housing furnishings inventory, were done by the CDC 3600 computer using programs prepared by the Computer Institute for Social Science Research at Michigan State University.

Four types of statistical tests were chosen for analysis of the data--median test, chi square, Kruskal-Wallis

one-way analysis of variance by ranks, and Spearman rank correlations. The median test was used to establish whether the professional-managerial and assisted families differed regarding central tendencies on their preference scores.

Chi-square was used to identify whether there were any consistencies in responses to questions in the value and preference modes. (Part B of the schedule).

Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was used with six background factors, one preference-oriented question, two eating pattern-oriented questions, and the measure that established family eating patterns (all in Part A of the schedule), to determine if these were related to mothers' preferences about eating together.

Because Yates' correction for small frequencies was not available on the computer program, a more stringent level of significance was applied to the data. The level of significance was set at .02. Although .05 level was recorded, it is to be interpreted with caution.

Spearman rank correlation was used in the first two sections of Part C of the interview schedule. Condition ratings of housing features in the food preparation area and area where food was most often eaten were analyzed to determine the correlation to rankings of mothers' preferences. All questions were analyzed, with the exception of items reconfirming the area where the

family ate most often, seating arrangement for most meals, and the numbers of individuals at the table. These questions were felt to be independent of mothers' preferences.

Significance point was set at .05 using a one-tail test. This was not a particularly stringent level, but was chosen in order not to obscure data in an exploratory study.

In all of the statistical analyses the professional-managerial and assisted families were treated independently.

A non-statistical method was used for the furnishings inventory, for there was no known method of statistically analyzing the data in a meaningful manner, considering the way in which the data were recorded. Due to the grossness of the analysis and the desire for the most distinct differences possible, the two samples were combined, making  $N=59$ . The method chosen was a comparison of mean scores on total items checked in each of the response columns of the seven furnishings categories. Comparison was made between the 10 highest and the 11 lowest preference scores.

## CHAPTER III

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Findings

The professional-managerial sample consisted of 30 mothers of families residing in Lansing, Michigan, or surrounding suburban areas. The criteria for the study which the mothers were required to meet were based upon educational level of children living at home, occupation and education of the head of the family, housing, and income.

The assisted family sample consisted of 29 mothers of families served by the Family Helper Program of the Lansing, Michigan, School District and who had no children above elementary school age living at home. Families were also selected according to the mothers' abilities to comprehend and respond to questions in the interview schedule.

Families in each sample were rank ordered according to their total score on the preference measure in Part B of the interview schedule. This measure was constructed with 18 questions, all concerned with problems families might encounter in the activity of eating. A statement of the problem was made concerning a family and was followed by a question in a preference mode to the effect:

"If you were faced with this situation what would you want to do?" Three alternatives were given, each indicative of a high, medium or low preference for eating together. The respondents were asked to choose among the given alternatives the one that would most nearly approach their choice.

Data from this study were analyzed in the following way: 1) the instrument: a description of consistency of responses by mothers to questions in the value and preference modes, 2) background data associated with mothers' preferences, 3) family eating patterns, and 4) housing features and furnishings associated with mothers' preferences.

Two methods originally were chosen to determine how mothers felt about families eating together. When the instrument was designed and pretested it was impossible to determine which method would be apt to give the more meaningful responses.

Since concern of the study was a general indicator of mothers' preferences about families eating together and not a finite analysis of each hypothetical question, it was possible to sum each of the questions giving a total score which would be considered the control variable for the study.

Since the responses obtained met the criteria for ordinal data and were directional from positive to negative, the type of statistical analyses chosen were those involving rank ordering: Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of

variance by ranks, and Spearman rank correlation. Chi-square analysis was used to determine which, if any, of the questions in the value mode were significantly related to the questions in the preference mode.

A distribution of the preference scores revealed that the professional-managerial sample was quite homogeneous in the rating of preferences. The range of scores for this group was 12, as opposed to a range of 20 for the assisted families. The possible high score was 36; the recorded high score was 31 and the recorded low score was 12. Both extreme scores were made by mothers of assisted families.

No attempt was made to group the two samples, as it was felt that this would obscure the differences accorded to socio-economic levels. Also, no attempt was made to divide the preference scores into sub-groups of high, medium, and low for statistical analysis due to the nature of the distribution, and again because grouping tends to mask pertinent data. The distribution of scores for the preference measure revealed a peaked and negatively skewed curve; the number of cases in both of the extremes was very small.

A median test was applied to the total preference scores of the samples of the professional-managerial and assisted families. Probability was determined by the chi-square test corrected for continuity. No significant difference was found between central tendencies, so it appeared



that the two samples could be combined for analyses involving preference scores. It was decided, however, to treat the samples separately on the supposition that relationships to the previous studies would be easier to isolate since the samples had originally been treated independently.

Data employed to identify mothers' values and preferences about families eating together were collected in Part B of the interview schedule. The instrument was divided into two sections: 1) questions in the value mode, and 2) questions in the preference mode. To ascertain the degree of consistency of responses between the two modes, each of the 18 parallel situations was analyzed by the chi-square test of significance for both the professional-managerial and the assisted families, independently (see Table 1.)

Each question of the value measure was rated by the 59 respondents in the two samples according to "yes," "no," and "no strong feeling." Each question of the preference instrument was rated by the respondent in the two samples according to responses given to statements implying a high, middle, or low preference for eating together.

In the professional-managerial sample five parallel situations were found to have a chi-square value significantly different from zero, indicating a relationship between questions in the value and preference modes. The parallel situation with the highest level of significance (.001) described the following problem: a mother is offered

Table 1. A summary of chi-square values and levels of significance for the eighteen situations in the value and preference modes for mothers in the professional-managerial and assisted families

	X <sup>2</sup> Value		Level of Significance	
	P-M F	A F	P-M F	A F
Mother busy all day; tired by evening meal	0.074	3.043	NS	NS
Husband offered new job with better pay but works during meal	14.530	14.827	.01	.01
Eating area with poor ventilation and light; needs paint	8.241	4.801	NS	NS
Mother offered job but works during evening meal	15.000	6.895	.001	NS
Children want to watch T.V. when it is time to eat	0.667	1.467	NS	NS
Mother up late nights; tired at breakfast	13.082	7.094	.02	NS
Cramped and uncomfortable but convenient eating area	7.417	11.383	NS	.01
Telephone calls during evening meal	2.719	1.458	NS	NS
Family members' activities conflict with mealtime	0.315	3.859	NS	NS
Teenager's sports meets regularly during eating period	1.034	5.905	NS	NS
Family friction during mealtime	4.471	9.513	NS	.05
Inadequate facilities to eat together; no money to buy more	2.442	10.345	NS	.05
Mealtimes to encourage family discussions	0.207	10.515	NS	.05
Children who don't come home when called for meals	13.235	7.684	.02	NS
Children hungry before father gets home from work	2.792	7.202	NS	NS
Difficult accessibility to eating area	0.000	0.967	NS	NS
Inadequate table appointments; eating is difficult	6.277	8.485	NS	.02
Children want to snack on food for evening meal	13.467	7.076	.01	.05

P-M F = Professional-Managerial Families

A F = Assisted Families

NS = No Significance

a job that she would like, but it means that she will not be home to eat the evening meal with her family. Should she take the job?

Significant at the .01 level were two questions. The first described the problem: a husband is offered a new job with better pay, but he will always have to work during the evening meal. Should he take the job? The second question significant at the .01 level concerned a mother whose children were hungry before mealtime. If she let them snack on the food prepared it would not leave enough for the evening meal. Should she make the children wait?

Two parallel situations were found at the .02 level to be significantly related for the professional-managerial families. The first question concerned a problem about breakfast: a mother is up late three or four nights per week. She is tired when the family gets up in the mornings to eat. Should she sleep late? The second question concerned a problem about a mother who knows where her child is, but he does not come home when called to eat. Should the rest of the family eat without him?

In the assisted families sample seven situations were found to be significantly related. At the highest level of significance (.01) were two questions. The first described the problem: a husband is offered a new job with better pay, but he will always have to work during the evening meal. Should he take the job? This question was also

found to be significant at the .01 level in the professional-managerial class. The second question significant at the .01 level concerned a home in which there was a convenient eating area (breakfast nook) but it was so small that the family was cramped and uncomfortable when they all ate at the same time. Should the mother still have her family eat together?

One parallel situation was found to be significantly related at the .02 level for the assisted families. The question concerned a family who did not have enough plates, spoons, and forks. Eating at the same time was thus difficult. Should the family try to eat together?

Four parallel situations were found to be significantly related at the .05 level, but these findings should be interpreted with caution, as heretofore mentioned. The first question dealt with a situation in which the family's evening meal was always a problem. The family just did not get along together and everyone was fussy by the end of the meal. Should everyone eat at a different time to see if things will calm down? The second question concerned a situation in which a family did not have a large enough table or enough chairs to eat together and they did not have enough money to buy more. Should they still try to eat together? A third situation concerned a mother who wanted her family to talk things over together. Should she have her family eat together because it encourages family discussions? The fourth question at the .05 level of

significance for the assisted families was found also to be significant at the .01 level for the professional-managerial families. It was the situation in which children want to snack before the evening meal. If the mother were to let them snack on the food prepared it would not leave enough for the meal.

In every case, with the exception of the questions involving husband's job and the child who does not come home when called to eat, the frequency of responses indicated the mothers in both samples tended to choose the alternative indicating the highest preference for eating together. In the professional-managerial group the sample was fairly evenly distributed, with some mothers feeling that the husband should take the job regardless of its effect on mealtime. In the assisted families the trend was for more mothers to feel it was important for the husband to take the job. For the question involving the child who does not come home when called, the mothers in the professional-managerial sample tended to feel the family should eat without the child.

Thirteen question sets in the professional-managerial class and 11 in the assisted families sample were not found to be significantly related. The majority of parallel situations in the value and preference modes elicited different responses, evidenced by the fact that only five and seven questions, respectively, out of 18 were significantly related.

A final question in Part B of the schedule was included to ascertain, in a gross way, each mother's preference about her family eating together. It was felt that the question might serve as a double-check or summary reflection of the previous responses, but in analysis it was found that the question did not function as expected. Fifty-six of the mothers responded that they preferred their families to eat together; one mother had no strong feeling; two of the mothers preferred that their families not eat together. The high frequency of high preferences was not borne out using the more strenuous and less direct methods of measurement which included hypothetical problems encountered while attempting to implement either preferences or values. The researcher felt the location of the gross question at the end of Part B and the extreme generality of the question decreased the chances of producing valid responses. The question bears similarity to McCray's preference measure, further emphasizing the inadequacy of one question to elicit meaningful responses concerning a complex subject.

Background data associated with  
mothers' preferences

Selected background data were subjected to the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks test in order to learn whether these factors were related to mothers' preferences. None of the background variables for the professional-managerial class was found to be significantly related when preferences were summed and ranked.

Only one variable in the assisted families was related to preferences. Therefore, the data are reported by frequency or mean in order to describe the samples. Other background information which was gathered was not statistically analyzed because 1) the information merely verified if the respondents did meet the criteria for the sample, and 2) the frequencies for particular variables were too small to warrant analysis.

Background variables tested for significance in relation to preferences were mother's age, educational level, marital status, volunteer or service work; total number of children per family; and type of home acquisition.

Of the 30 mothers in the professional-managerial sample, 12 placed their ages in the twenties, and 18 in the thirties. An educational level of high school graduation had been attained by three respondents and some college or an undergraduate degree had been attained by 27 of the respondents. All of the mothers in the sample were married at the time of the interview. Eleven mothers indicated that they did some volunteer work; 19 did not. Total number of children in the families was 70, including 37 males and 33 females. The mean number of children was 2.33; mean age of the children was 4.59. Twenty-eight families owned their homes; two rented unfurnished houses.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 29 mothers in the assisted families, 14 were

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<sup>1</sup>For a more detailed description of the sample see Ruth, pp. 50-52.

recorded in the 20 to 29 age group, 13 were recorded in the thirties, and two were in the forties. Fourteen were recorded as having an elementary school education, 14 had a high school education and one had some college or a college degree. Sixteen mothers were classified as married, four were separated, one was a widow and seven were divorced. No husband or father was identifiable in one case. Four of the mothers did volunteer or service work. The total number of children was 163, including 89 males and 74 females. The mean number of children per family was 5.62 and the mean age of the children was 6.01 years. Seven families owned their own homes, and 22 rented houses (3 furnished and 19 unfurnished).<sup>1</sup>

The variable found to be significantly related to mothers' preferences in the assisted families was mothers' educational level. The variable was significant at the .03 level, and had a Kruskal-Wallis H value of 6.7552.

Three questions considered to be preference-oriented were included in Part A of the interview schedule (see items 15, 38, and 40). The first, a multiple-part question, attempted to find out what changes, if any, the mothers would like to make in the parts of their home where they ate. Applying the Kruskal-Wallis test, a desire to change was found to be related to mothers' preferences at the .02 level for the professional-managerial sample.

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<sup>1</sup>For a more detailed description of the sample see Hussey, pp. 28-30.



Kruskal-Wallis H value was 5.511. Twenty-three mothers indicated they would make changes; seven would not. Of those responding in the affirmative, the changes they would make were labeled as "addition" and "replacement" of furniture, "add on a dining room," "enlarge the eating area," and "miscellaneous" changes. Reasons given for the changes were "don't like eating in the preparation area," "too crowded--not enough space," "need more to accommodate family," "want place for informal dining," "want place for formal dining," and "miscellaneous" (see Table 2). Those responding negatively to the question accounted for their choices: one said "custom," one "planned it this way," and five indicated they "like it the way it is."

No relation was found between desire to change parts of the home where families ate and mothers' preferences in the assisted families. Twenty-one mothers indicated they would make changes; eight would not. Of those responding in the affirmative, the changes they would make were labeled as "addition," "placement," "deletion," and "replacement" of furniture; "add on" both a breakfast nook and a dining room; "enlarge the eating area," "add storage space," and "miscellaneous." Reasons given for the changes were "don't like eating in the preparation area," "too crowded--not enough space," "need more to accommodate the family," "I saw it done elsewhere and liked it," "too inconvenient," and "miscellaneous" (see Table 2). Those responding negatively accounted for their choices: one

Table 2. Frequency count of mothers' responses to sub-questions when affirmatively answering that they would make changes in the parts of their homes where they ate, if they could

Mothers' responses to the question, "What would you change if you could?"	P-M F N=23	A F N=21	Mothers' responses to the question, "Why would you make this change?"	P-M F N=23	A F N=21
Addition of furniture	2	1	Don't like eating in the preparation area	2	1
Placement of furniture	-	1	Too crowded--not enough space	9	11
Deletion of furniture	-	1	Need more to accommodate family	2	1
Replacement of furniture	1	3	Want place for formal dining	3	-
Add on breakfast nook	-	1	Want place for informal dining	2	-
Add on dining room	7	3	I saw it done elsewhere and liked it	-	1
Enlarge eating area	10	8	Too inconvenient	-	2
Add storage space	-	1	Miscellaneous	5	5
Miscellaneous	3	2			

P-M F = Professional-Managerial Families

A F = Assisted Families

"planned it this way," six indicated they "like it the way it is," and one "can't afford to change."

A second preference-oriented question was asked to elicit the place where most mothers would like their families to eat. This question was not statistically analyzed, as it was felt the responses were seasonally oriented due to the time of data collection, and this fact would tend to decrease reliability markedly. However, 10 mothers in the professional-managerial sample indicated their preference as the "dining room," eight indicated "patio-yard," four responded "kitchen," three each responded "family room" and "porch," and two preferred "eating out."

In the assisted families, 13 mothers indicated preference as the "dining room," five said "patio-yard," three indicated "kitchen," two indicated "eating out," one each responded "porch" and "living room" (because the T.V. is there), and four said "miscellaneous," which in all cases was identified as a "park."

The third preference-oriented question was not analyzed nor frequencies given. The alternatives were not mutually exclusive and the question was poorly worded because it suggested the desired response (Item 38, Part A).

Two questions in Part A of the interview schedule were statistically analyzed, for it was felt they might be related to mothers' preferences. The first was asked of families who did eat together and concerned whether or not the families stayed together until everyone was finished

eating. The second question was asked to ascertain if the present eating pattern reflected the mother's mealtime experience in her family when she was a child in grade school (Items 34 and 36).

No relationship was found to exist between either of the two questions and mothers' preferences about families eating together.

Family eating patterns associated  
with mothers' preferences

The three patterns of eating were defined according to the number of meals families eat together per week and were determined by question 35 in Part A of the interview schedule. An attempt was made to find if mothers' preferences about eating together were related to the established eating patterns. Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was the statistical test applied to test the hypothesis that there was a significant difference between the two factors. At a significance level of .05, no relationship was found to exist between mothers' preferences about eating together and the frequency of eating according to those who almost never ate together, those who sometimes ate together, and those who almost always ate together in the two samples. The number of families in each of the three eating patterns is found in Table 3.

Table 3. Number of families in the professional-managerial and assisted families samples according to the three patterns of eating

Sample	Eating <u>Pattern I</u> Families Who Almost Never Ate Together	Eating <u>Pattern II</u> Families Who Sometimes Ate Together	Eating <u>Pattern III</u> Families Who Almost Always Ate Together
Professional- Managerial (N=30)	3	11	16
Assisted Families (N=29)	4	18	7

Housing features and furnishings  
associated with mothers' preferences

Data employed to measure the two hypotheses seeking to identify whether housing features and housing furnishings were related to mothers' preferences about families eating together were collected in Part C of the interview schedule. The data were divided into three sections for ease of handling. The condition ratings of housing features in the food preparation area and the condition ratings of housing features in the eating area were tested for relationship to the rankings of mothers' preferences about families eating together by the non-parametric Spearman Rank Correlation test of significance. The inventory of housing furnishings was analyzed for observed relationships employing a non-statistical method of comparison by using mean scores according to high and low preference rankings.

Each of the 13 items in the food preparation area was rated for the 59 respondents in the two samples according

to "functional," "partially functional," and "non-functional." These ratings were rank ordered. The preference ratings for each individual respondent were totaled and then rank ordered. Correlations were then made between the individual ranked adequacy ratings and the ranked preferences.

The significance level was less stringently applied than in previous statistical tests for the analysis of housing features and furnishings. Alpha level was set at .05 using a one-tail test and hence will be referred to as the point of significance when reached. The use of a less stringent significance test was employed in order not to obscure pertinent data from a small sample in an exploratory type of research.

In the professional-managerial sample "traffic patterns" was the only item found to be significantly related to mothers' preferences. The point of significance was found to be .04. The correlation was positive, indicating that as the preference score increased the adequacy of the traffic pattern also increased (see Table 4).

In the assisted families two items were found to be significantly related to mothers' preferences. These were the sink and the range top. The point of significance for both was established at .01. The correlation for both was negative, meaning that as the preference score decreased the adequacy of the sink and range top increased.

The area where food was eaten most often was utilized

Table 4. A summary of rank correlations and levels of significance for ratings of condition in the food preparation area according to mothers' preference scores

Items Rated in Food Preparation Area	RHO Values		Levels of Significance (one-tail)	
	P-M F	A F	P-M F	A F
Sink	0.0000	-0.4082	NS	.01
Refrigerator	0.0000	-0.1125	NS	NS
Range	0.0000	-0.4082	NS	.01
Oven	0.0000	-0.2913	NS	NS
Freezer	0.1248	0.0000	NS	NS
Dishwasher	-0.1500	0.0000	NS	NS
Counter Space	-0.1242	0.1512	NS	NS
Base Storage Space	-0.1962	0.0766	NS	NS
Wall Storage Space	-0.2060	0.0857	NS	NS
Garbage--Trash	0.0865	-0.1717	NS	NS
Arrangement of Work Center	-0.0399	-0.2531	NS	NS
Traffic Pattern	0.3287	-0.2888	.04	NS
Walls, Ceiling, Floor	-0.2158	-0.0622	NS	NS

P-M F = Professional-Managerial Families  
A F = Assisted Families  
NS = No Significance

for the condition ratings of features in the eating area. Ratings were acquired for each group of items in this section (10 groups in all); the ratings were totaled and then rank ordered. As before, the preference rating measure for each individual was totaled and rank ordered and correlations were run between the preference measure and the adequacy ratings (see Table 4).

In the professional-managerial sample for housing features in the area where food was most often eaten, two items were found to be significantly related to mothers' preferences: 1) a grouping called "air circulation and heating and artificial light" and 2) a grouping called "chairs," which consisted of condition and ease of maintenance ratings. The point of significance for the first item was .03 and for the second, .02. "Air circulation and heating and artificial light" was negatively correlated to mothers' preferences, indicating that as preference scores increased the adequacy of these features decreased. A positive correlation was found between "chairs" and mothers' preferences. In all cases where significant relationships were found in the professional-managerial families, the correlations were relatively low, ranging from -0.35 to 0.39. Findings are to be interpreted with caution (see Table 5).

In the assisted families, for housing features in the eating area, two items were found to be significantly related to mothers' preferences: 1) a grouping called



Table 5. A summary of rank correlations and levels of significance for ratings of condition in the eating area according to mothers' preference scores

Items Rated in the Eating Area	RHO Values		Levels of Significance (one-tail)	
	P-M F	A F	P-M F	A F
Walls, Ceilings, Floors (condition and maintenance)	-0.1452	-0.1085	NS	NS
Air Circulation and Heating and Artificial Light	-0.3509	0.5206	.03	.002
Windows (condition, natural light, view)	-0.0066	-0.1221	NS	NS
Doors (condition and placement)	-0.1852	-0.2702	NS	NS
Tables (condition and maintenance)	-0.1748	-0.0387	NS	NS
Chairs (condition and maintenance)	0.3923	-0.0111	.02	NS
Storage (condition and size)	0.1606	-0.1942	NS	NS
Orientation of Eating Area (placement and traffic patterns in relation to kitchen)	-0.1440	-0.4687	NS	.005
Convenience of Seating Arrangement and Space at Table	0.1970	-0.0207	NS	NS
Privacy of Eating Area	0.0160	-0.2891	NS	NS

P-M F = Professional-Managerial Families

A F = Assisted Families

NS = No Significance

"air circulation and heating and artificial light" and 2) a grouping called "orientation of the eating area," which consisted of adequacy ratings on placement and traffic patterns in relation to the kitchen. The point of significance for the first item was .002 and for the second, .005. "Air circulation and heating and artificial light" was positively related (the inverse of the professional-managerial families) and "orientation of the eating area" was negatively related. Apparently as mothers' preferences for eating together increased, the adequacy of the air circulation, heating, and artificial light increased and the adequacy of the eating area orientation decreased. In all cases where significant relationships were found in the assisted families, the correlations were higher than in the professional-managerial sample. The range was from -0.47 to 0.52. Findings in the assisted families sample can be interpreted with a greater degree of confidence than findings in the professional-managerial sample (see Table 5).

The non-statistical method employed for the furnishings inventory was chosen, as there was no known method of statistically analyzing the data in a meaningful manner considering the way in which the data were recorded. Because of the grossness of the analysis and the desire to have as distinct differences as possible, the professional-managerial sample and the assisted families sample were

combined, giving a total sample of 59.<sup>1</sup>

The high preference mean score was established by using the 10 highest scores according to the preference measure; the low preference mean score was established by using the 11 lowest scores according to the preference measure. The combined extremes equalled approximately one-third of the total sample size. It is interesting to note that the largest number of cases in both the high and low extremes was from the assisted families; thus, perhaps the findings are more typical of that sample than of the professional-managerial sample. The high preference mean score consisted of two professional-managerial families and eight assisted families; the low preference mean score consisted of three professional-managerial families and eight assisted families.

The housing furnishings were divided into seven categories: "Items associated with eating," those associated with "serving," "storage," "preparation," "cleaning," "entertainment," and "accessory furnishings." For each of the 72 items listed in the inventory of furnishings

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<sup>1</sup>It is to be noted that at no time is there an attempt to find significant relationships between the professional-managerial and the assisted family samples, as this is not a purpose of the study. Findings are reported in all other analyses except the housing furnishings inventory by individual groups. The combining of the two samples in the above non-statistical test can be justified on the basis of the median test, which revealed no differences in central tendency on total preference scores.

related to the mealtime activity, respondents were asked to express whether they had and used the item, had the item but did not use it, did not have enough of the item and would like more, did not have the item but wanted it, or did not have it but did not want the furnishing. The total checks for each of the five possible responses in all of the seven furnishings groupings were summed and a mean number of checks calculated for mothers with the 10 high preference scores, and likewise for the 11 mothers with the low preference scores. No attempt was made to analyze each individual furnishing item. The mean scores for the high preference group and the low preference group were compared to see how closely they corresponded. An arbitrary number of 1.0 was selected as the breaking point for the difference between mean scores and was used to distinguish the items which either appeared to be or did not appear to be related to mothers' preferences. When the difference in the mean scores was equal to or greater than 1.0, it was assumed that at least a trend could be noted in regard to the item and its relatedness to mothers' preferences. If the difference between the mean scores was less than 1.0, it was assumed there was no distinct relation between the item and mothers' preferences.

Differences of more than 1.0 were noted in seven cases. For "Items associated with eating" (such as dishes, flatware, glasses, tables, and chairs), the mothers with a high preference for eating together had a higher mean

score under the response "I don't have enough of the item and would like more"; and the mothers with a low preference for eating together had a higher mean score under the response "I don't have the item but want it" (see Table 6).

Table 6. Mean scores in the category\* of furnishings "Items associated with eating" according to a preference rating

Preference Rating	Have and Use	Have and Don't Use	Don't Have Enough-- Want More	Don't Have but Want	Don't Have but Don't Want
High Preference (N=10)	9.50	1.20	2.80	1.60	2.90
Low Preference (N=11)	9.64	.54	1.73	2.73	3.36
Difference	.14	.66	1.07	1.13	.46

\*The category was comprised of 18 items.

For "Items associated with serving" (such as serving dishes and table linens), mothers with a low preference for eating together had a higher mean score under the response, "I don't have the item but want it"; and the mothers with a high preference for eating together had a higher mean score under the response, "I don't have the item and don't want it" (see Table 7).

Table 7. Mean scores in the category\* of furnishings, "Items associated with serving" according to a preference rating

Preference Rating	Have and Use	Have and Don't Use	Don't Have Enough-- Want More	Don't Have but Want	Don't Have but Don't Want
High Preference (N=10)	6.80	.90	.10	1.80	3.40
Low Preference (N=11)	7.09	.45	.27	2.91	2.27
Difference	.29	.45	.17	1.11	1.13

\*The category was comprised of 13 items.

For "Items associated with preparation" (such as small electrical cooking and food preparation equipment, and non-electrical cooking equipment), mothers with a low preference for eating together had a higher mean score under the response, "I don't have the item but want it"; and the mothers with a high preference for eating together had a higher mean score under the response, "I don't have the item and don't want it" (see Table 8).

Table 8. Mean scores in the category\* of furnishings, "Items associated with preparation" according to a preference rating

Preference Rating	Have and Use	Have and Don't Use	Don't Have Enough-- Want More	Don't Have but Want	Don't Have but Don't Want
High Preference (N=10)	7.50	.20	1.60	5.50	6.20
Low Preference (N=11)	6.91	.45	1.27	7.36	5.00
Difference	.59	.25	.33	1.86	1.20

\*The category was comprised of 21 items.

For "Items associated with entertaining" (such as a radio, record player and television), mothers with a low preference for eating together had a higher mean score under the response, "I have the item and use it" (see Table 9).

Table 9. Mean scores in the category\* of furnishings, "Items associated with entertaining" according to a preference rating

Preference Rating	Have and Use	Have and Don't Use	Don't Have Enough-- Want More	Don't Have but Want	Don't Have but Don't Want
High Preference (N=10)	1.00	.60	.01	.70	.60
Low Preference (N=11)	2.27	.09	.00	.27	.36
Difference	1.27	.51	.01	.43	.24

\*The category was comprised of 3 items.

There were no differences of a great enough magnitude to consider them trends for "Items associated with storage" and "cleaning" and "accessory furnishings."

### Discussion

#### The instrument

Five value and preference mode questions answered by the professional-managerial sample and seven questions answered by the assisted families sample were found to be significantly related. Four of the latter were to be interpreted with caution, due to the low level of significance. In 13 and 11 question sets, respectively, no significant relationships were found. As no strong relations appeared to exist between questions in the value and preference modes, a decision was made to use only one measure for hypothesis testing. Reasons for selection of the one measure will be discussed later. Had the measures been highly related, it would have been possible to use either one.

Questions in the value and preference modes were not intended to measure the same thing, for it is accepted that these two concepts do differ. The two instruments were designed in an attempt to determine which would be the more meaningful for use in the research. All else equal, this would have been determined by the measure showing the greatest relation to eating patterns. There are theoretical arguments to support the use of either measure. On the one hand, it is felt that values, being in a higher



level of abstraction than preferences, remove the respondent from the present situation into the realm of what "ought" or "should" be; they are conceptions of the desirable, which will affect the individual's choices among possible courses of action. Some individuals find difficulty in thinking this abstractly; it is hard to project beyond what is known or wanted. However, even if a mother is able to express a value, other factors may restrict the implementation of this choice. It is felt that limited implementation and a too demanding level of abstraction may be critical problems in eliciting values from assisted families. On the positive side, values are felt to be more lasting than preferences.

Preferences, on the other hand, being at a lower level of abstraction, are easier to understand and respond to; they are within the individual's awareness, for they are her own wants or desires. Preferences, for the most part, may be a more realistic expression in terms of predicting behavior, for they appear to be easier to implement. Preferences are more tangible, hence easier to relate to. A disadvantage is that they appear to change more readily over a period of time.

This researcher can see justification for attempting to measure both concepts in relation to housing features and furnishings, but in this study, the instrument employing questions in the value mode was deleted for hypothesis testing, due to a misinterpretation in directions by the

interviewers. The use of the middle category called "no strong feeling" in the question alternatives was discouraged, thereby forcing respondents to submit to a "yes" or "no" response. As a result the value measure was rendered less useful in further analysis and less consistent with the preference measure. In a possible 1062 times when the response could have been used, respondents answered "no strong feeling" only 40 times. In addition, it is possible that ease of response using the simple "yes" or "no" reply might have encouraged careless answering of questions, particularly with the assisted families.

A factor, inherent in both instruments, was that some questions still could have been beyond the interest and understanding of the interviewee, thereby eliciting meaningless responses. It appears from related research that responses do vary according to the particular stage in the family life cycle. Therefore, respondents who were in an early stage of the life cycle might have been indifferent to situations involving older children in teenage activities, sports, and telephone conversations. In addition, mothers in the professional-managerial sample might have found questions concerned with extremely inadequate accommodations in such items as plates and spoons irrelevant to their experiences.

It seemed rather apparent from the significant relationships that occurred that some questions described current critical problems or decisions which were typical

of families in the early stages of the family life cycle and were much a part of the present realm of experience. For example, the questions on husband's or wife's employment and the problem of snacks before mealtime are typical of decisions in early stages of the family life cycle. This trend appeared particularly vivid in the assisted families, where three of the seven questions involved lack of or inadequate accommodations or space in the areas associated with mealtime. None of these problems was found to be significant in the professional-managerial families, where family size and amount of space appear to be inversely related to families in the lower socio-economic levels. This reasoning is substantiated by Hussey, when she concludes that:

Although functions of other features in the food preparation area did not seem to be related to family eating patterns in the assisted group, the high non-functional and partially functional ratings may be relevant when compared with family eating patterns among other socio-economic levels or other stages of the family life cycle.

Two eating area features also seemed to bear relationship to the frequency of families' eating together. Convenience of the seating arrangement and amount of space at the table appeared to be limiting factors for the families in eating Pattern I, where the mean number of people seated at the table was seven.<sup>1</sup>

It seems from these data, that in addition to space and accommodations, family relationships may also be a prevalent problem among the assisted families, as two significantly

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<sup>1</sup>Hussey, op. cit., p. 68.

related questions dealt with family mealtime interaction.

Questions that did not result in significant responses perhaps 1) need testing with a different socio-economic class in a different stage of the family life cycle, 2) need revision in an attempt to set them in a more meaningful context, or 3) need to be repeated as designed, in order to ascertain if administration of the interview schedule or actual differences in values and preferences account for the lack of relatedness between responses. These questions dealt with problems of a mother who is tired by the evening meal and questions whether to eat with her family; a family whose eating area is unaesthetic and uncomfortable; a poorly accessible dining area; interruptions in the form of television viewing and telephone calls during mealtimes; prolonged and temporary family activities interfering with mealtime (more teenage oriented); and children who become hungry before the father can get home from work (not a critical problem in the Lansing vicinity, where traffic problems and accessibility to work do not take long hours of commuter time, such as might be found in a larger city).

#### Background data

No background information for either sample, statistically tested, was related to mothers' preferences about eating together, with the exception of mothers' educational level for the assisted families. Fourteen mothers in the

assisted group had less than a high school education; an equal number had graduated from high school and only one had some college or a college degree. Mothers' preferences for eating together increased as educational level increased, but whether education is a causal factor in determining preferences is not known.

No attempt was made in this study to identify whether mothers had any home economics or family living education, so one cannot say whether home economics may or may not be a factor in establishing preferences toward families eating together. McCray identified the number of years of home economics training the mothers in her study had, but found no relationship to the mothers' preferences for eating together. Her study was conducted, however, among upper-middle socio-economic class families.

Hussey found mothers' educational level in the assisted families sample to be the only background variable significantly related to the frequency with which families ate together. Her relationship was inverse to that found in the present study. The trend seems to be that the lower the educational level the more the assisted families ate together and the less they preferred eating together; the higher the educational level, the less they ate together and the more they preferred to eat together. There is no way at present to know whether housing features and furnishings or other factors could explain these relationships, as they were not investigated in the present

study. The fact that a relation between education and eating patterns and preferences tends to be recurrent seems to warrant further investigation of this variable in succeeding studies.

There appears to be a relation between professional-managerial mothers' preferences about eating together and their desire to make changes in the areas of their home in which they eat. Over two-thirds of the sample desired to make changes. By far the most frequent change would be to enlarge the eating area. Although the eating areas may be termed "functional" by a rating scale, as the vast majority were according to Ruth, even homes of professional-managerial families may be accounted for by the fact that the families were in an early stage of the life cycle and operating within a period of many demands for space and some limitations of income.

Ruth found that more than half of the sample identified the kitchen as the area where food was most often eaten. She questioned whether this was due to preferences or to lack of other alternatives. It appears there is some support for the latter reason, because the second most frequently mentioned change was to add on a dining room. This comment could also be attributed to a "style of life" factor associated with the professional-managerial families, or a mother's desire to eat someplace other than in the preparation area.

It appears that some people are able to find or

design housing to satisfy their needs, as five of the professional-managerial sample indicated they would not make changes in the eating area for they liked it the way it was.

Mothers in the assisted families expressed an approximately equal number of most desired changes in the place where they most often eat as compared to the mothers in the professional-managerial sample, but no significant differences were found in relation to their preferences.

#### Family eating patterns

The relationship of family eating patterns to mothers' preferences was measured in order to identify specific variables felt to be related to the activity of eating. No evidence was found to support the hypothesis that family eating patterns--the frequency with which families ate together--were related to mothers' preferences in either the professional-managerial or the assisted families sample.

#### Housing features and furnishings

In three cases the condition ratings of housing features were found to be related to mothers' preferences about families eating together in the professional-managerial sample; in the assisted families, in four cases.

In the professional-managerial sample "traffic patterns" was the only feature in the food preparation area found to be significant. This finding tends to re-emphasize mothers' desires to enlarge their eating area,

as determined by the question designed to find out what changes, if any, mothers would like to make to the area of their home in which they ate. In this sample, over 50 per cent of the mothers indicated that they ate in the kitchen. It appears the problem might be lack of eating space, compounded by traffic problems. The finding gives support to Ruth's sighting of a trend showing a relation between family eating patterns and the placement of doors,<sup>1</sup> the latter being an important factor influencing both available space and traffic flow. Ruth found that two families in her sample had "non-functional" traffic patterns, 16 had "partially functional" patterns, and only 12 had "functional" traffic patterns.<sup>2</sup> Since the relationship between traffic patterns and mothers' preferences was positive, it seems that traffic problems may be enough of an inconvenience to limit or discourage mothers from wanting their families to eat together.

In the same sample a housing feature grouping called "air circulation and heating and artificial light" was found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences. Apparently these items were not critical enough in this sample to greatly affect family mealtime and the desire for eating together. Ruth gave support for this when she reported

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<sup>1</sup>Ruth, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 138.



that air circulation was one of the two items rated most often in the category of "partially functional." Twenty-six of the 29 respondents who were able to identify their eating areas had natural air movement or some mechanical means of cross ventilation, while the other three possessed air-cooled eating areas.<sup>1</sup>

A grouping called "chairs" was found to be positively related to mothers' preferences in the professional-managerial sample. Chairs were evaluated on the basis of condition and maintenance. Only three "partially functional" ratings were given in the sample; the rest were considered to be "functional."<sup>2</sup> It appeared that in the families with the least functional chairs the mothers had lower preference scores for eating together. This finding should be cautiously interpreted, due to the low point of significance.

In the assisted families two items in the food preparation area were negatively related to mothers' preferences at the .01 significance point. These were the "sink" and "range top." According to Hussey only two families had "partially-functional" sinks and range tops; the remainder were listed as "functional."<sup>3</sup> In her sample these two items had more "functional" ratings than any other features in the food preparation area. It appears, therefore, that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 139-140.

<sup>3</sup>Hussey, op. cit., p. 24.

mothers with lower preferences for eating together have as adequate or more adequate sinks and range tops than the mothers with the high preferences for eating together. The fact that all of the sinks and range tops had "partially functional" or "functional" ratings could be attributed to the fact that the assisting agency was known to provide a variety of items and equipment for these families. Basic equipment such as ranges, refrigerators, and sinks were therefore probably checked carefully for their condition by the Family Helpers. A sample of unassisted low income families might reveal different findings, insofar as adequacy ratings of housing features.

At this point no evidence can be presented to confirm the reason why the conditions of the sink and the range top were better when the mothers expressed lower preferences for eating together. No attempt was made to learn how much food preparation was done in order for meals to take place in the different families. One possible explanation is that these features were in better condition simply because they were used less frequently.

In the same sample two items in the area where food was most often eaten were found to be significant at a rather high point. The first, a grouping called "air circulation and heating and artificial light," was positively related to mothers' preferences. The vast majority of these ratings, 57, were rated as "partially functional"; only 30

were rated as "functional."<sup>1</sup> These housing features appear to be related to mothers' preferences, for as the functional ratings increased, preferences for eating together also increased.

A grouping called "orientation of the eating area," consisting of condition ratings on placement and traffic patterns in relation to the kitchen, were found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences at a rather high point. Hussey cited that in only two cases is the orientation of the eating area rated as "partially functional"; the remainder are listed as "functional" ratings.<sup>2</sup> This would indicate that adequacy increased as preferences decreased. However, it seems imperative to note that the item referred to the difficulty and distance encountered in reaching the eating area from the food preparation area. This means, when over half or 15 of the assisted families ate in the kitchen, they automatically received functional ratings for "orientation of the eating area." The two cases in the "partially functional" rating account for the significant relation cited. These two mothers evidently had a high preference for eating together and their families did eat somewhere other than in the kitchen. Otherwise, they would have had no rating. The data do not indicate whether the family members ate together. It appears that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid..

the category called "orientation of the eating area" would be more meaningful if limited only to those families who ate in another room or area other than the kitchen.

In summary, seven features were found to be at a point significant enough to make them appear to be related to mothers' preferences about eating together. Four features: "air circulation and heating and artificial light" in the professional-managerial sample; and "sinks" and "range tops" and "orientation of the eating area" for the assisted families were found to be negatively related to preferences indicating that their condition was associated with mothers' preferences, but not positively. Three features: "traffic patterns" and "chairs" in the professional-managerial sample and "air circulation and heating and artificial light" in the assisted families sample were found to increase in adequacy as the mothers' preferences for eating together increased, indicating a positive relation to preferences. "Traffic patterns" was found to be related at the lowest point of significance, but is mentioned in particular due to the degree of consistency in which the factor has appeared in each of the preceding studies.

A non-statistical method used to analyze the furnishings inventory according to mothers' preferences revealed differences in seven cases. Mothers with a high preference for eating together had higher mean scores under the responses, "I don't have enough of the item and would like more," for items associated with "eating," and "I don't

have the item and don't want it," for items associated with "serving" and "preparation." Mothers with a low preference for eating together had higher mean scores under the responses, "I don't have the item but want it," for items associated with "eating," "serving," and "preparation," and "I have the item and use it," for items associated with "entertaining."

Respondents in both preference groups expressed needs for items associated with "eating." Mothers with high preferences, if they implemented them, apparently did not consider necessary for eating together some of the items associated with serving and preparation, whereas those with low preference scores did not have the items, but wanted them. The question remains, would their preference rating change if they were to obtain the items desired?

Mothers with the low preference scores for eating together said they had and used items associated with entertaining; radio, record player, and television. This finding may be an indication that these items replace interaction at mealtime or the mealtime activity completely. It would support the idea that much time is spent around the family television set.

Implications from these furnishings and preferences relations are only cited as possible trends, as there are no tests of significance to support them. Also, due to the large percentage of assisted families that fall in the

high and low preference groups used for this analysis, it is probable that the furnishings data are more reflective of their preferences than those of the professional-managerial families.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Origin and Importance of the Study

In the past, an overriding criterion for housing design, construction, and decision making has been the economic factor. Relatively little consideration has been given to other aspects of this most important complex of the living environment. The minute amounts of research that have been conducted have concentrated for the most part on the economic and physical aspects of housing, with few questions asked about the relatedness of housing to man's socio-psychological behavior. Today there is increased awareness and felt need manifested for this abstract and difficult to isolate knowledge and the concrete way in which it related to man's shelter in his near environment. The complexities of the research are compounded by the infancy of the research methodology, the limitations imposed by lack of research, and lack of a substantive theoretical base. An acute need for explicit information is felt, for the word "housing" describes or identifies one of the most critical problems associated with contemporary society at this time.

The present research can be identified as only a

short step in building the stockpile of needed research in the socio-psychological aspects of housing. The purpose of the study involves three concepts, best illustrated in triangular form. At the apex of the triangle is the housing factor: housing features and furnishings associated with eating. At the base are the concepts of preferences and family eating patterns. At present there is some research evidence to support a linkage between the housing factor and family eating patterns. This study is an attempt to complete the linkage by establishing relations, if any, between housing and preferences, and eating patterns and preferences. If relations are found to exist between these three factors in the order described, it can be assumed that a relation exists between housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns, thus giving additional support to the research completed. In addition, the finding will give support to the premise that housing does affect family living activities.

#### Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To determine whether the three family eating patterns are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.
2. To determine whether housing features associated with eating are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.



3. To determine whether housing furnishings associated with eating are related to mothers' preferences about families eating together.

#### Summary of the Procedures

An interview schedule was designed to obtain background information about the families; to classify families in one of three patterns of eating which was determined by the frequency with which families ate together; to identify mothers' preferences and values about families eating together; and lastly, to identify selected housing features and furnishings associated with the activity of eating.

Preferences and values about families eating together were established by using a series of questions in the two modes; the answers were rated by the respondents and then totaled to give a score which was used in all further analyses. Housing features were given condition ratings in the food preparation area and in the area where food was most often eaten; housing furnishings were placed in categories according to the respondents' answers concerning what they perceived to be their needs and desires for the various items.

The instrument was administered to 30 mothers residing in Lansing, Michigan, and suburban areas who met the criteria established for the professional-managerial families, and to 29 mothers in Lansing who were serviced by the Family Helper Program and who could comprehend the

questions of the interview schedule. All subjects were required to have no children above elementary school age living at home.

The pre-coded data were analyzed by relating each of the selected spread variables to the control variable of mothers' preferences. The value measure was deleted for hypotheses testing, due to a misinterpretation in directions by the interviewers. Relations were determined by computing the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks test for selected background information information and the family eating patterns; the Spearman rank correlation test was used for the ratings of housing features. The chi-square analysis was used for the relation between the value and preference instruments and a median test was applied to see if the two samples differed insofar as central tendency on their preference scores. A non-statistical test using differences between mean scores was employed for the furnishings inventory.

### Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn for the three hypotheses established in order to attain the objectives of the study. Major conclusions of the study follow:

Hypothesis I: There are significant differences in mothers' preferences about families eating together among families who almost never eat together, those who sometimes eat together, and those who almost always eat together.

The first hypothesis was tested by application of the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks test of significance to the three patterns of eating, as established by definition, and to the ranked preference scores of each individual in each of the samples independently. Families were assigned to one of the three eating patterns according to mothers' responses to questions designed to establish frequency of eating together. Preference scores were derived using a preference measure consisting of 18 questions in the preference mode concerning problems families might encounter in the activity of eating.

No relation was found to exist between the three patterns of eating and mothers' preferences for either the professional-managerial or the assisted families. Therefore, the hypothesis was fully rejected.

Hypothesis II: There are positive relationships between housing features associated with eating and mothers' preferences about eating together.

The second hypothesis was tested by application of the Spearman rank correlation test of significance to the rankings of condition ratings for features in the food preparation and the eating areas, and to the rankings of mothers' preferences. Ratings of features were derived by defining three categories of condition which were: "functional," indicating that the feature was present and working properly; "partially functional," meaning that the

feature was present but was not of adequate size, required some maintenance or was not in good working order; or "non-functional," indicating that the feature was not present or was present but did not operate.

In the professional-managerial sample, for features in the food preparation area the category of "traffic patterns" was found to be positively related to mothers' preferences at the .04 point of significance, a rather low level. In the assisted families the category of "sink" and "range top" were found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences at the .01 point of significance.

In the professional-managerial sample, for housing features in the eating area the category of "air circulation and heating and artificial light" was found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences at the .03 point of significance and the category of "chairs" was found to be positively related at the .02 point of significance. In the assisted families one feature was found to be positively related to preferences. The grouping called "air circulation and heating and artificial light" was found to be significant at the .002 point. The feature called "orientation of the eating area" was found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences at a significance point of .005.

Therefore, in only two cases in the professional-managerial sample and one time in the assisted families

sample were housing features associated with eating found to be positively related to mothers' preferences about eating together, these being the categories called "traffic patterns," "chairs," and "air circulation and heating and artificial light." On this basis, the hypothesis was accepted for both the professional-managerial and assisted families samples.

In the two samples four features were found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences about families eating together. No relations, either of a positive or negative association, were found in the remaining 19 features.

Hypothesis III: There are significant differences between housing furnishings associated with eating and mothers' preferences about families eating together.

Hypothesis III was tested using a non-statistical test due to the instrument design. Therefore, it was impossible to ascertain if the differences that appeared were significant. It seems from the data that some relations might exist and they will be cited as trends. A test using the differences in mean scores between the 10 highest preference scores and the 11 lowest preference scores for the combined samples was employed for the seven categories in the furnishings inventory, which consisted of 72 items associated with "eating," "serving," "preparation," "cleaning,"

"storage," "entertaining," and "accessory furnishings."

The analysis revealed the following trends. Mothers in both the high and low preference levels had felt needs for items associated with "eating," including such things as dishes, flatware, glasses, tables and chairs. For items associated with "serving" and "preparation," mothers with a high preference appeared not to have and not to want some of the items, and those mothers with a low preference again did not have but did want such items as serving dishes, table linens, small electrical and non-electrical appliances and equipment. Mothers with low preferences for eating together also indicated that they had and used items associated with "entertaining," such as the radio, television and record player.

The hypothesis concerning housing furnishings was tentatively accepted, as a statistical test could not be applied to the data. It does appear that there are distinguishable trends existent between the items in the furnishings inventory and whether mothers have a high or low preference for eating together.

#### Major Conclusions of the Study

Mothers' preferences for families eating together were established for the two samples and tested for significance with selected background information, family eating patterns, and housing features and furnishings associated with eating. No relations were found to exist between

mothers' preferences and the background information, with the exception of a positive relation to mothers' education in the assisted families. Hussey found an inverse relation between mothers' educational level and family eating patterns. Thus a need for further study of this variable seems imperative in succeeding research of this type.

Patterns of eating were not found to be related to mothers' preferences in either sample. Since no relations were found to exist between these two variables, there is no basis for interpreting the positive and negative relations found to exist between housing features and furnishings and mothers' preferences.

In only two cases in the professional-managerial sample and once in the assisted group were housing features found to be positively related to mothers' preferences. Categories called "traffic patterns" and "chairs" and a grouping called "air circulation and heating and artificial light" were the features found to be significant, indicating that as preferences for eating together increased so did the adequacy of these features. Four features were found to be negatively related to mothers' preferences. Therefore, in these instances higher or lower preferences were associated with the inverse quality of housing features, as measured by rating of conditions.

Trends emerged for mothers with high and low preferences for eating together concerning their needs and

desires for items in the furnishings categories associated with "eating," "serving," "preparation," and "entertainment." No trends emerged for the items associated with "cleaning," "storage," and "accessory furnishings." No statistical significance could be attributed to this furnishings inventory, due to the way the items were recorded.

Neither Hypothesis II nor III was written in the belief that all items--or even a large amount of the items--would be significant. Rather, they were set up in an attempt to identify which, if any, features and furnishings might be associated with mothers' preferences about families eating together, thus suggesting a starting point for further study leading to experimental research.

From the results of this study, the linkage between the three concepts cannot be completed for either sample. Housing features in the professional-managerial sample did, in two cases--"traffic patterns" and "chairs"--appear to be related to mothers' preferences; patterns of eating did not appear to be related. From Ruth's study it was found that with the possible exception of the placement of doors, no evidence existed that housing features were associated with eating patterns.<sup>1</sup> Relations were found to exist for three of the 72 variables in the furnishings inventory in her study: the response, "I don't have enough of the item

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<sup>1</sup>Ruth, op. cit., p. 86.



and would like more," for items associated with "eating" and "serving" and the response, "I don't have the item but want it," for items associated with "preparation."<sup>1</sup> None of the features found to be related to preferences in the present study was the same as those found significantly related to eating patterns in Ruth's study. Furnishings found consistent in the two studies were the responses, "I don't have enough of the item and would like more," for items associated with "eating" and "I don't have the item but want it," for items associated with "preparation." Mothers with high preferences for eating together preferred the former, whereas mothers with low preferences preferred the latter. These two three-way relations are to be interpreted with much caution, as they are a result of non-statistical testing and the sample sizes are different.

Evidently it appears that houses of the professional-managerial sample were designed in such a way as to allow families a choice in the frequency of eating together, and preferences appeared to make no significant difference. Housing features and furnishings or preferences did not emerge clearly as highly influencing factors in the type of family eating patterns experienced by the families.

In the assisted families, "air circulation and heating and artificial light" was the only feature found to be positively related to mothers' preferences. Furnishings

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

were not statistically tested, so there is very little evidence of a relation between housing features and furnishings and mothers' preferences, and no evidence that family eating patterns were related to preferences in this study. Hussey found some evidence that housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns were related. The feature called "traffic patterns" was cited as a trend positively related to eating patterns; convenience of the seating area for conversation and access, and the amount of space at the table were significantly related to eating patterns at the .01 level. Furnishings were significant at the .02 level for items associated with "serving" under the response "I don't have the item and want it," and for items associated with "storage" under the response "I don't have and I don't want it." Items associated with "entertainment" were noted as a trend under the response, "I have the item and use it."<sup>1</sup> The feature found to be related to preferences in the present study was not found to be significantly related to eating patterns in Hussey's study. Furnishings found consistent in the two studies were the responses, "I don't have the item but want it," for items associated with "serving," and "I have the item and use it" for items associated with "entertainment." Mothers with low preferences had higher mean scores in both of these

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<sup>1</sup>Hussey, op. cit., pp. 65-67.

categories than did mothers with high preferences for eating together. As before, much caution must be employed in interpreting these findings.

At this point in research, for the assisted families it appears that houses may not be designed in such a way and with furnishings adequate enough to allow families a choice in the frequency of eating together. Mothers' preferences appear to make no significant difference. Only housing features and furnishings emerged as an influencing factor in the type of family eating patterns experienced by the families.

It is interesting to observe the recurrent theme of "traffic patterns" in both samples and in most all relations throughout the three studies. It appears that this factor may be deserving of additional depth investigation in succeeding studies. Likewise, the background factor of mother's educational level needs further investigation.

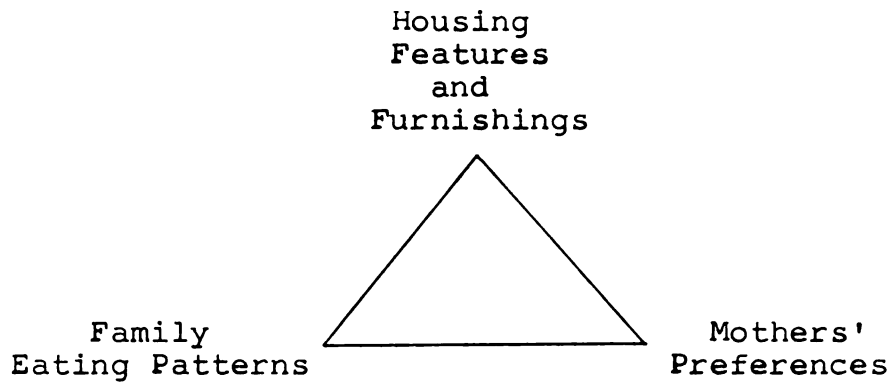
From these data it is possible to conclude only the following: there are some relations between housing features and furnishings associated with eating and mothers' preferences about eating together; there are some relations between housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns; there are no relations between mothers' preferences and family eating patterns. It therefore appears from this study that housing features and furnishings are a greater determinant of family eating patterns than are

mothers' preferences. There is no evidence to indicate that one can predict behavior as a result of studying preferences; there is only a small amount of evidence that one can predict the relation of certain features and furnishings to behavior on the basis of this concept.

Theoretically, however, it can be proposed that since some relations were found to exist between housing features and furnishings and mothers' preferences, and some relations between housing features and furnishings and family eating patterns, it follows that mothers' preferences should be related to family eating patterns. This was not borne out in this study, which may be due to limitations imposed by the study: small sample size, a faulty instrument or the variation in statistical procedures used. On the other hand, since the relations found were not particularly strong nor frequent, one must interpret the theoretical assumption with much caution. Further study of the specific variables found to be related in the three studies is warranted at this point.

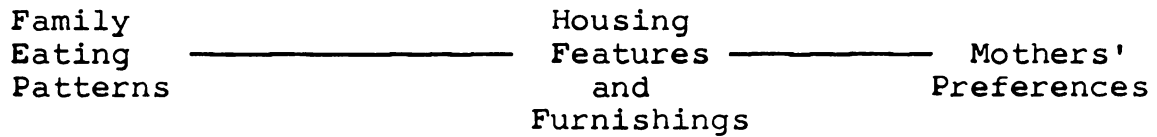
The triad relationship (Diagram I) originally conceived (p. 102) was not supported by the present research. The findings suggest the existence of a more linear relationship resembling Diagram II.

Diagram I: Hypothesized Representation of Relation of Variables



TRIAD RELATION

Diagram II: Revised Representation of Relation of Variables



LINEAR RELATION

It is to be noted that the use of the two extreme samples with assumed differences in housing features and furnishings was carried out on the premise that relations to eating patterns and preferences would be more apparent. Relations were identified in both samples, and they were different. However, the fact that more relations did not appear in the assisted families sample and their housing features and furnishings might be because the housing was not as low in quality as anticipated or required for significant differences to appear. This fact might be accounted for by the method used in acquiring the data and because of the help given the families by the social agency.

#### The Relationship of the Study to Previous Research

Fortenberry found that respondents who were younger homemakers and had children at home preferred family centered living. Findings from the present study seem consistent with this conclusion, in that the preference scores for both samples were rather high and the greatest amount of the distribution was in the highest part of the range. This indicated that the present samples of predominantly young homemakers had a predominantly high preference for eating together.

Smith, Kivlin, and Sinden found that the dominant reason for moving was dissatisfaction due to lack of space, and among the most important features in the selection of

housing in their samples was a large dining area in the kitchen. Both of these findings tend to support by the present research. Since lack of space in the eating area seemed to be the most apparent general dissatisfaction with housing associated with eating among the professional-managerial and assisted families, and since the majority of both samples did eat in the kitchen, approximately one-third of the total sample wanted to "enlarge the eating area" because it was "too crowded--not enough space."

In Foote's summary of research it appears that people are still wanting, but not in all cases getting, the much desired dining room. He found a desire for two types of eating space; one informal for family meals, especially in homes with very young children, and one formal for entertaining company and training older children in proper manners. This desire was widespread, except among the lower-income group. His reported findings coincide with the present study, in which seven professional-managerial families would like to add on a dining room, whereas only three assisted families indicated the same choice. In addition, Foote reported research indicating that no income group or family type wanted the minimum "efficiency" kitchen. This was borne out by the fact that 10 mothers in the professional-managerial and eight in the assisted families indicated that they wanted to enlarge the eating area. In over half of the cases this could be assumed to be the

kitchen, for 18 families in the former group and 15 in the latter group ate the majority of their meals in this area.

Many relationships in the companion studies by Ruth and Hussey were treated in the conclusions found in this chapter, due to their direct and important relation to the present research; hence they will not be treated again at this time.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

Several possibilities for future study became apparent as a result of this research project:

1) While no firmly established relatedness of housing to family activities can be supported from these investigations, there are bases for supporting a study to establish whether the findings reported here are reliable, while probing in greater depth the variables found related in this and the two preceding studies.

2) The instrument for determining mothers' values and preferences needs some revisions and retesting to verify its accuracy. Values should be investigated further, with consideration being given to them as a predictor of behavior rather than preferences. To win by default is not adequate for choosing one method of measurement over another.

3) It appears that the instrument for measuring preferences and/or values should be lengthened to increase reliability. It is also suggested that attempts be made to make the questions more representative of a particular



stage in the family life cycle, rather than being a general measure applicable to all. Too much information appears to be lost, for it is not meaningful to the respondent. This might also hold true in designing questions that supposedly apply equally among various income groups. From the results of this research it appears that professional-managerial mothers do not relate well to questions implying extreme inadequacy of housing features and furnishings.

4) A method to eliminate the reading of laborious alternatives to the questions in the value and preference modes might be improved by using a card sort process having a hierarchy of values or preferences on them concerning the activity of eating. This could increase the sophistication of the instrument by making more categories in the alternatives, but on the other hand, would have extreme limitations in use with low income families who do not read English readily.

5) The problems concerning family discussions and family dissention at mealtime in the value and preference measures might more adequately be in a sub-group of questions concerned with actual family interaction during the process of eating. This involves an entirely new area worth investigation as part of the present study.

6) Suggestions of a very specific nature concern Part C of the interview schedule. Elimination of grouping or regrouping would increase the accuracy of features in



the area where food is eaten. For example, the grouping called "air circulation and heating and artificial light" appears to contain three separate and independent features. A better name for the category called "orientation of the eating area" might more aptly be termed "accessibility of the eating area." In addition, for greater accuracy it should be limited to those families who eat other than in the kitchen because of the "built-in" accessibility of the area.

7) As the present interview schedule is improved and strengthened it might also be lengthened. Such a suggestion would mean, however, collecting the data in two separate interviews to insure against problems involved in interviewer or interviewee fatigue, but it would be worthwhile.

8) Expanding the sample size would allow for more subtle differences to emerge and increase the amount of confidence one could place in the findings.

9) The most useful direction for this research to follow appears to be with low income families, as differences in this class seem more distinct and emerge more clearly. In addition, from these studies the low income families' problems with space in housing appear to be most critical.

10) The study should be expanded to include activities other than family mealtimes, for housing designed

to accommodate other family activities may prove to be inadequate.

11) Studies are needed in other stages of the family life cycle and in other geographic areas.

12) An implication from the findings worthy of further research is that the people wanting changes in their eating area are the ones who have a high preference for eating together.

13) The desirability of conducting a study among low income families who are not receiving assistance to the extent of those involved in the Family Helper Program seems worthy of investigation. It is realized, however, the extreme difficulties that would undoubtedly be encountered in obtaining such a sample.

14) It is believed that many relations between housing features and furnishings were obscured, due to the small cell structure obtained when trying to relate the three variables. The small sample size appears to be a problem under the present methodology. It is suggested in further research at least one of the three variables--housing features and furnishings, eating patterns, or mothers' preferences--be controlled. This would eliminate the expenses incurred in obtaining extremely large sample sizes which would be needed to elicit the more subtle differences that did not appear in the present studies.

15) Differences in degree of importance to family

life appear to exist in the value and preference situations, for example, husband's job as compared to whether the family should watch television during the evening meal. It is suggested that in further research a panel of judges might assign weights to situations according to their estimate of the impact upon family life.

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## APPENDIX

PART A OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Code Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

There is reason to believe that housing affects the way people live and develop, but to date there has been only limited research in this area. All previous studies are over ten years old, and we think the needs and behavior of families may have changed since these studies were completed.

Because there are so many areas of housing yet to be explored it is difficult to know where to begin a study. I have chosen to investigate the way families eat, why they eat this way, and whether housing relates to this activity.

We cannot begin to know, however, what people want in housing unless we ask them. You can be a great help to those of us engaged in the planning, building, and teaching of housing by giving us this information.

There are three parts to this interview. First, I will need some general information about you and your family; secondly, I would like to know what you would want to do in certain situations; and finally, I will need to know what items are used for eating in your home.

FIRST OF ALL I NEED TO KNOW SOME THINGS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. LET'S START WITH YOU . . .

1. OCCUPATION	2. EDUCATION: THE LAST GRADE COMPLETED (H.S. = 12 YRS.)	3. AGE	4. MARITAL STATUS
Mother	DO YOU WORK FOR PAY? 0 Yes      1 No	0 Under 20 1 In the 20's 2 In the 30's 3 In the 40's 4 Over 50	0 Married 1 Separated 2 Widowed 3 Divorced
WHAT DO YOU DO? 0 Professional 1 Managerial 2 Clerical 3 Factory--skilled 4 Unskilled 5 Unemployed 9 Not applicable	0 Elementary 1 High school 2 Some college 3 College 4 Advanced degree 5 Professional--technical 9 Not applicable		
HOW MANY HOURS A WEEK DO YOU WORK? 0 0-10 (0-1/4 time) 1 11-20 (1/4-1/2 time) 2 21-30 (1/2-3/4 time) 3 31-40 (3/4-full time) 9 Not applicable			
DO YOU WORK SHIFTS? 0 Yes      1 No      9 Not applicable			
ARE THEY STABLE OR ROTATING? 0 Stable 1 Rotating 9 Not applicable			

DO YOU DO ANY SERVICE (VOLUNTEER) WORK? (SUCH AS RED CROSS OR HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS)

0 Yes  
1 No

	5. OCCUPATION AND WHERE EMPLOYED	6. EDUCATION: THE LAST GRADE COMPLETED (H.S. = 12 YRS.)	7. AGE
Father	<p>WHAT DOES YOUR HUSBAND DO?</p> <p>0 Professional            1 Managerial            2 Clerical            3 Factory--skilled            4 Unskilled            5 Unemployed            9 Not applicable</p> <p>WHERE DOES HE WORK?</p> <p>DOES HE WORK SHIFTS?</p> <p>0 Yes    1 No    9 Not applicable</p> <p>ARE THEY STABLE OR ROTATING?</p> <p>0 Stable            1 Rotating            9 Not applicable</p>	<p>0 Elementary            1 High school            2 Some college            3 College            4 Advanced degree            5 Professional--technical            9 Not applicable</p>	<p>0 Under 20            1 In the 20's            2 In the 30's            3 In the 40's            4 Over 50            9 Not applicable</p>

WOULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN NOW? LET'S START WITH THE OLDEST . . .

NO.	8. NAME	9. AGE OF CHILDREN	10. SEX 0 Male 1 Female	11. EDUCATION
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN				

DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN ABOVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE LIVING AT HOME?  
 0 Yes 1 No  
 IF YES, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

12. ARE THERE ANY OTHER PEOPLE LIVING IN THIS HOUSE?

0 Yes 1 No  
 If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 Not applicable

13. WOULD YOU MIND ANSWERING A QUESTION ON INCOME?  
IN WHICH OF THESE BRACKETS WOULD YOU SAY YOUR  
FAMILY'S YEARLY INCOME FALLS?

- 0 Under \$2,000
- 1 \$2,000 - \$4,999
- 2 \$5,000 - \$7,499
- 3 \$7,500 - \$9,999
- 4 \$10,000 - \$11,999
- 5 \$12,000 - \$14,999
- 6 \$15,000 - \$19,999
- 7 Over \$20,000
- 8 No reply
- 9 Not applicable

14. DO YOU OWN OR RENT THIS HOUSE?

- 0 Own

- 1 Rent

DO YOU RENT IT FURNISHED OR UNFURNISHED?

- 0 Furnished
- 1 Unfurnished
- 9 Not applicable

15. IF YOU COULD MAKE A CHANGE IN THE PARTS OF YOUR HOME WHERE YOU EAT, WOULD YOU? (FOR EXAMPLE: WHERE YOU EAT, AMOUNT OF SPACE, AMOUNT OF FURNITURE, OR WHERE THE FURNITURE IS PLACED.)

0 Yes

2 Undecided

1 No WHY?

- 0 Custom
- 1 Planned it this way
- 2 Like it the way it is
- 3 Can't afford to change
- 4 Since it's furnished we can't change
- 5 Be moving soon anyway
- 6 Not worth the time and expense
- 7 I'd like to but my husband won't let me
- 8 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Not applicable

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

- 0 Addition of furniture
- 1 Placement of furniture
- 2 Deletion of furniture
- 3 Replacement of furniture
- 4 Add on breakfast nook
- 5 Add on dining room
- 6 Enlarge eating area
- 7 Add storage space
- 8 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Not applicable

WHY?

- 0 Don't like eating in the preparation area
- 1 Too crowded--not enough space
- 2 Need more to accommodate family
- 3 Want place for formal dining
- 4 Want place for informal dining
- 5 I saw it done elsewhere and liked it
- 6 Too inconvenient
- 7 Don't like it for entertaining
- 8 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Not applicable



ONE OF THE THINGS I AM TRYING TO FIND OUT IS WHEN AND WHERE PEOPLE EAT. YOU CAN HELP ME WITH THIS BY DESCRIBING HOW YOUR FAMILY EATS ON AN ORDINARY WEEKDAY DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR. LET'S START WITH THESE QUESTIONS:

WILL YOU THINK BACK TO AN ORDINARY DAY:

16. DID YOUR FAMILY EAT TOGETHER IN THE MORNING?

0 Yes	What time?
1 No	Where?
8 Varies	

17. DID YOUR FAMILY EAT TOGETHER DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

0 Yes	What time?
1 No	Where?
8 Varies	

18. AND DID YOUR FAMILY EAT TOGETHER THAT EVENING?

0 Yes	What time?
1 No	Where?
8 Varies	

Code:

- 0 Living Room
- 1 Dining Room
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Dining-Living Room
- 4 Family Room
- 5 Porch
- 6 Patio-Yard
- 7 Recreation Room
- 8 Bedroom
- 9 Not applicable
- 
- 0 School
- 1 Work
- 2 Other
- 8 Place varies
- 9 Not applicable

(DISREGARD THIS PAGE IF THE FAMILY ALWAYS EATS TOGETHER ON WEEKDAYS.)

IF THE FAMILY DOES NOT ALWAYS EAT TOGETHER ON WEEKDAYS:

---

19. DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL TIME TO EAT IN THE MORNING?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL PLACE TO EAT IN THE MORNING?

- 0 Yes
  - 1 No
  - 2 Some of them do
  - 9 Not applicable
- 

20. DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL TIME TO EAT DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL PLACE TO EAT DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

- 0 Yes
  - 1 No
  - 2 Some of them do
  - 9 Not applicable
- 

21. DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL TIME TO EAT IN THE EVENING?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL PLACE TO EAT IN THE EVENING?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

22. THINK BACK ON THIS ORDINARY WEEKDAY. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON THAT YOUR FAMILY EATS LIKE THIS IN THE MORNING?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 Always done it this way; tradition                          | 0 Placement of furniture                                      |
| 1 Schedule of daily activities (work, school, clubwork, etc.) | 1 Too much furniture  |
| 2 Convenience   | 2 Too little furniture  |
| 3 Unforeseen circumstances                                    | 3 Eating area too small                                       |
| 4 We felt like it   | 4 Eating area inconvenient to food preparation area           |
| 5 Everyone is home  | 5 Condition of eating area unhealthy or unsuitable for eating |
| 8 No reply  | 6 Not aesthetically pleasing                                  |
| 9 Not applicable  | 7 Other   |
|   | 9 Not applicable  |

23. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON THAT YOUR FAMILY EATS THIS WAY DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 Always done it this way; tradition                          | 0 Placement of furniture                                      |
| 1 Schedule of daily activities (work, school, clubwork, etc.) | 1 Too much furniture  |
| 2 Convenience   | 2 Too little furniture  |
| 3 Unforeseen circumstances                                    | 3 Eating area too small                                       |
| 4 We felt like it   | 4 Eating area inconvenient to food preparation area           |
| 5 Everyone is home  | 5 Condition of eating area unhealthy or unsuitable for eating |
| 8 No reply  | 6 Not aesthetically pleasing                                  |
| 9 Not applicable  | 7 Other   |
|   | 9 Not applicable  |

24. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON YOUR FAMILY EATS LIKE THIS DURING THE EVENING?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 Always done it this way; tradition                          | 0 Placement of furniture                                      |
| 1 Schedule of daily activities (work, school, clubwork, etc.) | 1 Too much furniture  |
| 2 Convenience   | 2 Too little furniture  |
| 3 Unforeseen circumstances                                    | 3 Eating area too small                                       |
| 4 We felt like it   | 4 Eating area inconvenient to food preparation area           |
| 5 Everyone is home  | 5 Condition of eating area unhealthy or unsuitable for eating |
| 8 No reply  | 6 Not aesthetically pleasing                                  |
| 9 Not applicable  | 7 Other   |
|   | 9 Not applicable  |

NOW WILL YOU THINK BACK TO AN ORDINARY SUNDAY.....

25. DID YOUR FAMILY EAT TOGETHER ON SUNDAY MORNING?

0 Yes	What time?
1 No	Where?
8 Varies	

26. DID YOUR FAMILY EAT TOGETHER DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

0 Yes	What time?
1 No	Where?
8 Varies	

27. AND DID YOUR FAMILY EAT TOGETHER THAT EVENING?

0 Yes	What time?
1 No	Where?
8 Varies	

Code:

- 0 Living Room
- 1 Dining Room
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Dining-Living Room
- 4 Family Room
- 5 Porch
- 6 Patio-Yard
- 7 Recreation Room
- 8 Bedroom
- 9 Not applicable
- 
- 0 School
- 1 Work
- 2 Other
- 8 Place varies
- 9 Not applicable

(DISREGARD THIS PAGE IF THE FAMILY ALWAYS EATS TOGETHER ON SUNDAYS.)

IF THE FAMILY DOES NOT ALWAYS EAT TOGETHER ON SUNDAYS:

---

28. DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL TIME TO EAT IN THE MORNING?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL PLACE TO EAT IN THE MORNING?

- 0 Yes
  - 1 No
  - 2 Some of them do
  - 9 Not applicable
- 

29. DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL TIME TO EAT DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL PLACE TO EAT DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

- 0 Yes
  - 1 No
  - 2 Some of them do
  - 9 Not applicable
- 

30. DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL TIME TO EAT IN THE EVENING?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY HAVE A USUAL PLACE TO EAT IN THE EVENING?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Some of them do
- 9 Not applicable

31. THINK BACK ON THIS ORDINARY SUNDAY. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON THAT YOUR FAMILY EATS LIKE THIS IN THE MORNING?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 0 Always done it this way;<br>tradition              | 0 Placement of furniture  |
| 1 Schedule of Sunday activities (church, work, etc.) | 1 Too much furniture  |
| 2 Everyone is home on Sunday                         | 2 Too little furniture  |
| 3 Convenience  | 3 Eating area too small   |
| 4 We felt like it                                    | 4 Eating area inconvenient<br>to food preparation area              |
| 5 Unforeseen circumstances                           | 5 Condition of eating area<br>unhealthy or unsuitable<br>for eating |
| 8 No reply   | 6 Not aesthetically pleasing  |
| 9 Not applicable                                     | 7 Other   |
|  | 9 Not applicable  |

32. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON THAT YOUR FAMILY EATS LIKE THIS DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 0 Always done it this way;<br>tradition              | 0 Placement of furniture  |
| 1 Schedule of Sunday activities (church, work, etc.) | 1 Too much furniture  |
| 2 Everyone is home on Sunday                         | 2 Too little furniture  |
| 3 Convenience  | 3 Eating area too small   |
| 4 We felt like it                                    | 4 Eating area inconvenient<br>to food preparation area              |
| 5 Unforeseen circumstances                           | 5 Condition of eating area<br>unhealthy or unsuitable<br>for eating |
| 8 No reply   | 6 Not aesthetically pleasing  |
| 9 Not applicable                                     | 7 Other   |
|  | 9 Not applicable  |

33. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON THAT YOUR FAMILY EATS LIKE THIS IN THE EVENING?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 0 Always done it this way;<br>tradition              | 0 Placement of furniture  |
| 1 Schedule of Sunday activities (church, work, etc.) | 1 Too much furniture  |
| 2 Everyone is home on Sunday                         | 2 Too little furniture  |
| 3 Convenience  | 3 Eating area too small   |
| 4 We felt like it                                    | 4 Eating area inconvenient<br>to food preparation area              |
| 5 Unforeseen circumstances                           | 5 Condition of eating area<br>unhealthy or unsuitable<br>for eating |
| 8 No reply   | 6 Not aesthetically pleasing  |
| 9 Not applicable                                     | 7 Other   |
|  | 9 Not applicable  |

34. (DISREGARD THIS QUESTION IF FAMILY NEVER EATS TOGETHER). WHEN YOU DO EAT TOGETHER, DO YOU STAY TOGETHER UNTIL EVERYONE IS FINISHED?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Undecided
- 9 Not applicable

35. WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT YOUR DAILY EATING SCHEDULE. NOW CAN YOU SAY ABOUT HOW MANY MEALS YOU THINK YOUR FAMILY EATS TOGETHER DURING A WEEK?

- 0 0 to 7
- 1 8 to 14
- 2 15 or more

36. DOES THIS DIFFER FROM THE WAY YOU ATE IN YOUR FAMILY WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD IN GRADE SCHOOL?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No
- 2 Undecided

37. ARE THERE ANY OTHER TIMES BESIDES MEALS THAT YOUR FAMILY SPENDS TIME TOGETHER?

- 0 Yes
- 1 No

38. SUPPOSE YOU DIDN'T HAVE A PLACE WHERE YOU COULD ALL SIT DOWN AND EAT TOGETHER. AND SUPPOSE YOU COULD HAVE ONE--BUT ONLY ONE--OF THE FOLLOWING ROOMS OR SPACES. WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

- 0 A place where you could all sit down and eat together
- 1 A bedroom that is needed but you could manage without
- 2 A second bathroom
- 3 A fully finished basement
- 4 A larger living room or family room
- 5 A larger and more efficient kitchen





THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS ARE MORE GENERAL BUT STILL HAVE TO DO WITH THE WAY YOUR FAMILY EATS. LET'S TALK ABOUT INTERRUPTIONS FIRST.

39. DO INTERRUPTIONS SUCH AS ANSWERING THE DOOR AND TELEPHONE AND CHILDREN COMING TO PLAY MAKE IT HARD TO KEEP THE FAMILY TOGETHER WHEN THEY ARE EATING?

0 Yes 2 Sometimes	HAVE YOU DONE ANYTHING TO <u>STOP</u> INTERRUPTIONS LIKE THESE?
	0 Yes 1 No 2 Undecided 9 Not applicable

1 No	WHY?
	0 We don't have such interruptions 1 We have them but they don't bother us 2 We had such interruptions but have stopped them 9 Not applicable

40. IF YOU COULD EAT ANYWHERE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSE, WHERE WOULD YOU MOST ENJOY EATING?

- 0 Living room
- 1 Dining room
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Dining-living room
- 4 Family room
- 5 Porch
- 6 Patio, yard
- 7 Recreation room
- 8 Bedroom
- 9 Not applicable
- .....
- 0 School
- 1 Work
- 2 Eating out
- 3 Park
- 9 Not applicable

PART B OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU THINK PEOPLE SHOULD DO ABOUT EATING PRACTICES. THIS NEXT GROUP OF QUESTIONS DEALS WITH DIFFERENT MAKE-BELIEVE SITUATIONS WHICH I WILL DESCRIBE; EACH QUESTION WILL HAVE A YES-NO ANSWER. LET ME GIVE YOU A SAMPLE QUESTION:

THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHERE EVERYONE WANTS TO EAT AT A DIFFERENT TIME. SHOULD THE MOTHER INSIST THAT THEY EAT TOGETHER?

Yes

No

No Strong Feeling

Comments

41a. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO IS VERY BUSY EVERY DAY AND IS TIRED BY THE EVENING MEAL. SHOULD SHE STILL EAT THE EVENING MEAL WITH HER FAMILY?

2 Yes

0 No

1 No Strong Feeling

Comments

42a. THINK ABOUT SOMEONE WHOSE HUSBAND IS OFFERED A NEW JOB WITH BETTER PAY, BUT HE WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO WORK DURING THE EVENING MEAL. SHOULD HE TAKE THE JOB?

0 Yes

2 No

1 No Strong Feeling

Comments

43a. THINK ABOUT AN EATING AREA THAT HAS POOR VENTILATION, LITTLE LIGHT, AND NEEDS A COAT OF PAINT. THE FAMILY DOES NOT ENJOY EATING IN THIS ROOM BUT THERE IS NO OTHER PLACE. SHOULD THE MOTHER INSIST THAT THE FAMILY EAT IN THIS ROOM?

2 Yes

0 No

1 No Strong Feeling

Comments

44a. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO IS OFFERED A JOB THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE. IT MEANS THAT SHE WON'T BE HOME TO EAT THE EVENING MEAL WITH HER FAMILY. SHOULD SHE TAKE THE JOB?

0 Yes

2 No

1 No Strong Feeling

Comments

45a. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHERE THE CHILDREN WANT TO WATCH TV WHEN IT'S TIME TO EAT. SHOULD THE MOTHER LET THEM?

- 0 Yes  
2 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

46a. HERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT BREAKFAST: THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO IS UP LATE 3 OR 4 NIGHTS A WEEK. SHE IS TIRED WHEN THE FAMILY GETS UP IN THE MORNINGS TO EAT. SHOULD SHE SLEEP LATE?

- 0 Yes  
2 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

47a. THINK ABOUT A HOME THAT HAS A NICE CONVENIENT EATING AREA (BREAKFAST NOOK) BUT IT IS SO SMALL THAT THE FAMILY IS CRAMPED AND UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN THEY ALL EAT AT THE SAME TIME. SHOULD THE MOTHER STILL HAVE HER FAMILY EAT TOGETHER?

- 2 Yes  
0 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

48a. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHO GETS THREE OR FOUR TELEPHONE CALLS, WHILE EATING THEIR EVENING MEAL. SHOULD THE FAMILY TRY TO STOP THEM?

- 2 Yes  
0 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

49a. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY IN WHICH EACH FAMILY MEMBER IS IN SEVERAL ACTIVITIES AT DIFFERENT TIMES, LIKE SCHOOL, CHURCH, OR SPORTS. IF THE EVENING MEAL IS FIXED AT A REGULAR TIME IT MEANS SOMEONE WILL HAVE TO MISS HIS ACTIVITY. THE CHILDREN WANT TO EAT AND RUN. SHOULD THE MOTHER HAVE THEM EAT AT A REGULAR TIME ANYWAY?

- 2 Yes  
0 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

50a. THINK ABOUT A TEENAGER WHO WANTS TO PLAY FOOTBALL AFTER SCHOOL. IF HE DOES, HE WON'T BE HOME IN TIME TO EAT THE EVENING MEAL WITH THE FAMILY FOR TWO OR THREE MONTHS. SHOULD HIS MOTHER LET HIM?

- 0 Yes  
 2 No  
 1 No Strong Feeling  
 Comments

51a. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHOSE EVENING MEAL IS ALWAYS A PROBLEM. THEY JUST DON'T GET ALONG TOGETHER, AND EVERYONE IS FUSSY BY THE END OF THE MEAL. SHOULD EVERYONE EAT AT A DIFFERENT TIME TO SEE IF THINGS WILL CALM DOWN?

- 0 Yes  
 2 No  
 1 No Strong Feeling  
 Comments

52a. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WITHOUT A LARGE ENOUGH TABLE OR ENOUGH CHAIRS TO EAT TOGETHER. THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY MORE. SHOULD THEY STILL TRY TO EAT TOGETHER?

- 2 Yes  
 0 No  
 1 No Strong Feeling  
 Comments

53a. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO WANTS HER FAMILY TO TALK THINGS OVER TOGETHER. SHOULD SHE HAVE HER FAMILY EAT TOGETHER BECAUSE IT ENCOURAGES FAMILY DISCUSSIONS?

- 2 Yes  
 0 No  
 1 No Strong Feeling  
 Comments

54a. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO KNOWS WHERE HER CHILD IS, BUT HE JUST DOESN'T COME HOME WHEN CALLED TO EAT. SHOULD THE REST OF THE FAMILY EAT WITHOUT HIM?

- 0 Yes  
 2 No  
 1 No Strong Feeling

55a. THINK ABOUT CHILDREN IN A FAMILY WHO GET HUNGRY BEFORE THEIR FATHER COMES HOME FROM WORK. SHOULD THE MOTHER MAKE THE CHILDREN WAIT FOR THEIR FATHER TO COME HOME BEFORE EATING?

2 Yes  
0 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

56a. THINK ABOUT A HOUSE WITH AN EATING AREA THROUGH ANOTHER ROOM OR ACROSS THE HALL FROM THE KITCHEN. THE ONLY PLACE TO EAT IN THE KITCHEN IS STANDING AROUND THE COUNTER. SHOULD THE FAMILY EAT ALL THE MEALS STANDING AT THE COUNTER?

0 Yes  
2 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

57a. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHO DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH PLATES, SPOONS, OR FORKS. EATING AT THE SAME TIME IS DIFFICULT. SHOULD THEY TRY TO EAT TOGETHER?

2 Yes  
0 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

58a. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHOSE CHILDREN ARE HUNGRY. THEY WANT A SNACK BEFORE THE EVENING MEAL. IF SHE LETS THEM SNACK ON THE FOOD PREPARED IT WILL NOT LEAVE ENOUGH FOOD FOR THE MEAL. SHOULD THE MOTHER MAKE THE CHILDREN WAIT TO EAT THE MEAL?

2 Yes  
0 No  
1 No Strong Feeling  
Comments

THE NEXT GROUP OF SITUATIONS IS VERY SIMILAR TO THOSE I HAVE JUST DESCRIBED, BUT THIS TIME I AM TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU WOULD WANT TO DO IN A PARTICULAR SITUATION. I WILL GIVE YOU THREE CHOICES AND I WOULD LIKE YOU TO CHOOSE ONE OF THEM. THESE SITUATIONS ARE MAKE BELIEVE. HERE IS AN EXAMPLE:

THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHERE EVERYONE WANTS TO EAT AT A DIFFERENT TIME. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

Would you want to insist that the family always eat together;

Would you want to let everyone eat when he wants to; or

Would you want to eat together part of the time?

41b. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO IS VERY BUSY EVERY DAY AND IS TIRED BY THE EVENING MEAL. SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHETHER SHE SHOULD STILL EAT THE EVENING MEAL WITH HER FAMILY. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

2 Would you want to eat with the family at home or go out with the family;

1 Would you want to send the rest of the family out to eat and you stay home; or

0 Would you want to let everyone eat when he gets hungry?

42b. THINK ABOUT SOMEONE WHOSE HUSBAND IS OFFERED A NEW JOB WITH BETTER PAY, BUT HE WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO WORK DURING THE EVENING MEAL. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

0 Would you want him to take the job;

2 Would you want him to turn the job down; or

1 Would you want him to take the job so long as he can get home for meals on weekends?

43b. THINK ABOUT AN EATING AREA THAT HAS POOR VENTILATION, LITTLE LIGHT, AND NEEDS A COAT OF PAINT. THE FAMILY DOES NOT ENJOY EATING IN THIS ROOM BUT THERE IS NO OTHER PLACE. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

2 Would you want the family to eat in this room anyway;

0 Would you want to let them eat wherever they want to eat;  
or

1 Would you want to eat together in this room sometimes?

44b. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO IS OFFERED A JOB THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE. IT MEANS THAT SHE WON'T BE HOME TO EAT THE EVENING MEAL WITH HER FAMILY. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

0 Would you want to take the job;

2 Would you want to turn the job down; or

1 Would you want to take the job if you could plan a way for the rest of the family to eat their evening meal together?

45b. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHERE THE CHILDREN WANT TO WATCH TV WHEN IT'S TIME TO EAT. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

0 Would you want to let the children watch TV while eating;

2 Would you want to say that either everyone watches TV or no one watches TV; or

1 Would you want to let the children watch TV while eating-- if there is a special program?



46b. HERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT BREAKFAST: THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO IS UP LATE 3 OR 4 NIGHTS A WEEK. SHE IS TIRED WHEN THE FAMILY GETS UP IN THE MORNINGS TO EAT. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 2 Would you want to get up anyway and eat breakfast with the family;
- 0 Would you want to let your children get their own breakfast if they can; or
- 1 Would you want to sleep late sometimes and other times get up and eat breakfast with the family?

47b. THINK ABOUT A HOME THAT HAS A NICE, CONVENIENT EATING AREA (BREAKFAST NOOK) BUT IT IS SO SMALL THAT THE FAMILY IS CRAMPED AND UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN THEY ALL EAT AT THE SAME TIME. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 2 Would you want to have your family eat together anyway;
- 1 Would you want to have your family eat together part of the time and in shifts part of the time; or
- 0 Would you want to have your family eat in shifts?

48b. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHO GETS THREE OR FOUR TELEPHONE CALLS WHILE EATING THEIR EVENING MEAL. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 0 Would you want to answer the phone and talk as usual;
- 1 Would you want to answer the phone and make it as brief as possible; or
- 2 Would you want to answer the phone and ask people not to call back at this time in the future?

49b. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY IN WHICH EACH FAMILY MEMBER IS IN SEVERAL ACTIVITIES AT DIFFERENT TIMES LIKE SCHOOL, CHURCH, OR SPORTS. IF THE EVENING MEAL IS FIXED AT A REGULAR TIME IT MEANS SOMEONE WILL HAVE TO MISS HIS ACTIVITY. THE CHILDREN WANT TO EAT AND RUN. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 2 Would you want to insist that no activity can be joined if scheduled during the evening meal;
- 1 Would you want to change the eating time to meet most of the family's schedule; or
- 0 Would you want to let each person eat when and where he can?

50b. THINK ABOUT A TEENAGER WHO WANTS TO PLAY FOOTBALL AFTER SCHOOL. IF HE DOES, HE WON'T BE HOME IN TIME TO EAT THE EVENING MEAL WITH THE FAMILY FOR TWO OR THREE MONTHS. IF THIS WERE YOUR TEENAGER AND YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 0 Would you want to let your teenager play football;
- 2 Would you want to say no he can't play football; or
- 1 Would you want to let your teenager play football if he eats the evening meal with the family part of the week?

51b. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHOSE EVENING MEAL IS ALWAYS A PROBLEM. THEY JUST DON'T GET ALONG TOGETHER, AND EVERYONE IS FUSSY BY THE END OF THE MEAL. THE MOTHER HAS THOUGHT ABOUT HAVING THE FAMILY EAT AT DIFFERENT TIMES TO SEE IF IT WILL HELP CALM THINGS DOWN. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 0 Would you want to let everyone eat at a different time;
- 2 Would you want to stick it out with everyone eating together; or
- 1 Would you want to eat together only when you feel rested enough to cope with the situation?

52b. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WITHOUT A LARGE ENOUGH TABLE OR ENOUGH CHAIRS TO EAT TOGETHER COMFORTABLY. THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY MORE. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 2 Would you want to try something temporary like sitting on boxes, standing at a counter, or sitting on the floor if necessary so that the family could eat together;
- 1 Would you want to insist that they eat together at least part of the time even if it is uncomfortable; or
- 0 Would you want to let everyone eat as he wants to?

53b. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO WANTS HER FAMILY TO TALK THINGS OVER TOGETHER. SHE WANTS TO HAVE HER FAMILY EAT TOGETHER BECAUSE IT ENCOURAGES FAMILY DISCUSSIONS. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 2 Would you want to eat together so you could discuss family matters;
- 0 Would you want to let everyone eat when he gets hungry; family matters can be discussed at another time; or
- 1 Would you want to eat together only when there is something important to talk about?

54b. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHO KNOWS WHERE HER CHILD IS, BUT HE JUST DOESN'T COME HOME WHEN CALLED TO EAT. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 1 Would you want to start eating and if he didn't come home soon send someone after him;
- 2 Would you want to have the rest of the family wait to eat till he's home; or
- 0 Would you want to let the rest of the family eat without him?



55b. THINK ABOUT CHILDREN IN A FAMILY WHO GET HUNGRY BEFORE THEIR FATHER COMES HOME FROM WORK. THE MOTHER DOESN'T KNOW WHETHER TO HAVE THE CHILDREN WAIT FOR THEIR FATHER TO COME HOME BEFORE EATING. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 0 Would you want to let the children eat early;
- 2 Would you want to give them a snack when they get home from school and have them wait till father is home for the evening meal; or
- 1 Would you want to let the children eat early on week days if the family can eat together on weekends?

56b. THINK ABOUT A HOUSE WITH AN EATING AREA THROUGH ANOTHER ROOM OR ACROSS THE HALL FROM THE KITCHEN. THE ONLY PLACE TO EAT IN THE KITCHEN IS STANDING AROUND THE COUNTER. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION HOW WOULD YOU WANT YOUR FAMILY TO EAT?

- 2 Would you want your family to sit and eat together no matter how difficult serving the food may be;
- 1 Would you want to eat standing around the counter for some meals, like breakfast; or
- 0 Would you want to let everyone do as he pleases?

57b. THINK ABOUT A FAMILY WHO DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH PLATES, SPOONS, OR FORKS. EATING AT THE SAME TIME IS DIFFICULT. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 2 Would you want to eat picnic style and share all the utensils;
- 1 Would you want to sometimes eat picnic style and sometimes eat in shifts; or
- 0 Would you want to have your family eat in shifts?

58b. THINK ABOUT A MOTHER WHOSE CHILDREN ARE HUNGRY. THEY WANT A SNACK BEFORE THE EVENING MEAL. IF SHE LETS THEM SNACK ON THE FOOD PREPARED IT WILL NOT LEAVE ENOUGH FOR THE MEAL. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THIS SITUATION WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

- 0 Would you want to let your children snack when they are hungry;
- 1 Would you want to let them snack sometimes and other times make them wait; or
- 2 Would you want to have the children wait--hungry or not?

HERE IS A FINAL QUESTION:

59. WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU PREFER TO EAT TOGETHER, THAT YOU DO NOT PREFER TO EAT TOGETHER, OR THAT YOU HAVE NO STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT EATING OR NOT EATING TOGETHER?

- 2 Prefer
- 0 Do not prefer
- 1 No strong feelings

**PART C OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

## SECTION I

## FOOD PREPARATION AREA

Features

IT WOULD HELP ME GREATLY IF I COULD SEE THE AREA  
WHERE YOUR FOOD IS PREPARED.

(ASK THE QUESTIONS IF THEY PREFER NOT TO LET YOU  
SEE THE AREA.)

SINK

- 0 No sink or sink installed but not functioning
- 1 Sink with cold running water only
- 2 Sink with hot and cold running water

REFRIGERATOR

- 0 No refrigerator or refrigerator installed but not functioning
- 1 Refrigerator installed but not functioning correctly
- 2 Refrigerator installed and functioning correctly

RANGE TOP

- 0 No range top or range top installed but not functioning
- 1 Range top installed but not functioning correctly
- 2 Range top installed and functioning correctly

OVEN

- 0 No oven or oven installed and not functioning
- 1 Oven installed but not functioning correctly
- 2 Oven installed and functioning correctly

FREEZER

- 0 No freezer or freezer installed but not functioning
- 1 Freezer installed and not functioning correctly
- 2 Freezer installed and functioning correctly

DISHWASHER

- 0 No dishwasher or dishwasher installed but not functioning
- 1 Dishwasher installed but not functioning correctly
- 2 Dishwasher installed and functioning correctly



COUNTER SPACE

- 0 No counter space
- 1 Under 8'6" of counter space\*
- 2 8'6" of counter space or more

BASE STORAGE SPACE

- 0 No base storage space
- 1 Under 8'6" of base storage space
- 2 8'6" of base storage space or more

WALL STORAGE SPACE

- 0 No wall storage space
- 1 Under 8'6" of wall storage space
- 2 8'6" of wall storage space or more

GARBAGE AND TRASH

- 0 Garbage and trash not removed
- 1 Garbage and trash carried away from dwelling, buried or burned outside
- 2 Garbage and trash removed to recognized dump; incinerator or sink disposal

ARRANGEMENT OF WORK CENTER--SINK, RANGE, REFRIGERATOR

- 0 Poor arrangement; all not located in same room
- 1 Satisfactory arrangement; all in same room but not efficiently placed
- 2 Good arrangement; all in same room and efficiently placed

TRAFFIC PATTERNS

- 0 Many traffic lanes through work area
- 1 Some traffic lanes through work area
- 2 No traffic lanes through work area

GENERAL CONDITION OF FOOD PREPARATION AREA--WALLS, CEILING, FLOORS

- 0 Many repairs needed
- 1 One or two repairable cracks or defects
- 2 No defects, no cracks

---

\*Tessie Agan and Elaine Luchsinger, The House, Principles, Resources, Dynamics (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1965), p. 137.

## SECTION II

EATING AREA: PLACE WHERE FOOD IS MOST OFTEN EATEN

Features and Free-Standing Furniture

FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SAID PREVIOUSLY WOULD YOU AGREE THAT YOUR FAMILY EATS MOST OFTEN IN:

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 0 Dining room        | 5 Patio, yard                          |
| 1 Kitchen            | 6 Recreation room                      |
| 2 Dining-living room | 7 Bedroom                              |
| 3 Family room        | 8 Living room                          |
| 4 Porch              | 9 No specific place can be identified* |
- (\*In this case, disregard Section II)

NOW IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO ME IF YOU WOULD DESCRIBE THIS ROOM... OR WOULD YOU MIND IF I SAW IT?

WALLS, CEILINGS, FLOORSA. Condition of walls and ceilings

- 0 Many repairs needed
- 1 One or two repairable cracks and defects
- 2 No defects, no cracks
- 9 Not applicable

B. Finish on walls and ceilings--ease of maintenance

- 0 Non-washable
- 1 Rough but washable
- 2 Smooth and washable
- 9 Not applicable

C. Condition of floors

- 0 Badly worn; some holes and cracks and/or slanting
- 1 Some visible signs of wear and/or few cracks
- 2 Floor finish appropriate and well maintained
- 9 Not applicable

D. Ease of maintenance of floors

- 0 Low soil resistance; requires constant maintenance
- 1 Some soil resistance; requires some maintenance
- 2 High soil resistance; requires little maintenance
- 9 Not applicable

AIR CIRCULATION AND HEATING AND ARTIFICIAL LIGHTA. Air circulation

- 0 No ventilation
- 1 Natural air movement (cross ventilation) or some mechanical air movement
- 2 Air-cooled
- 9 Not applicable

B. Heating

- 0 No facilities for heating
- 1 Facilities present to heat eating area
- 2 Central heating in eating area
- 9 Not applicable

C. Artificial light

- 0 No artificial light
- 1 Present but insufficient
- 2 Present and sufficient
- 9 Not applicable

WINDOWSA. Condition

- 0 Missing where intended to be or not functioning as intended
- 1 Need maintenance but function
- 2 Function as intended
- 9 Not applicable

B. Natural light

- 0 No natural light; no windows
- 1 Window area less than 10% of floor area
- 2 Window area 10% or more of floor area
- 9 Not applicable

C. View

- 0 Distracting view
- 1 Dull or unpleasant view
- 2 Pleasing view
- 9 Not applicable

DOORSA. Condition

- 0 Missing where intended to be or not functioning as intended
- 1 Need maintenance but partially function
- 2 Function as intended
- 9 Not applicable

B. Placement of doors

- 0 Interfere seriously with arrangement of furniture, service of food, or flow of traffic
- 1 Minor interference with arrangement of furniture, service of food, or flow of traffic
- 2 Facilitates arrangement of furniture, service of food, or flow of traffic
- 9 Not applicable

TABLESA. Condition

- 0 No table or in need of extensive repairs
- 1 One or two repairable defects
- 2 No defects; in good condition
- 9 Not applicable

B. Ease of maintenance

- 0 No finish or poor finish; requires constant maintenance
- 1 Satisfactory finish; requires much maintenance
- 2 Good finish; easily maintained
- 9 Not applicable

CHAIRSA. Condition

- 0 No chairs or unusable
- 1 Defects but still usable
- 2 No defects; in good condition
- 9 Not applicable

B. Ease of maintenance

- 0 No finish or poor finish; requires constant care
- 1 Satisfactory finish; requires much maintenance
- 2 Good finish; easily maintained
- 9 Not applicable

STORAGEA. Condition

- 0 No storage or needs extensive repairs
- 1 One or two repairable defects
- 2 No defects; in good condition
- 9 Not applicable

B. Size

- 0 No storage
- 1 Some storage
- 2 Generous storage
- 9 Not applicable

ORIENTATION OF EATING AREA

A. Placement

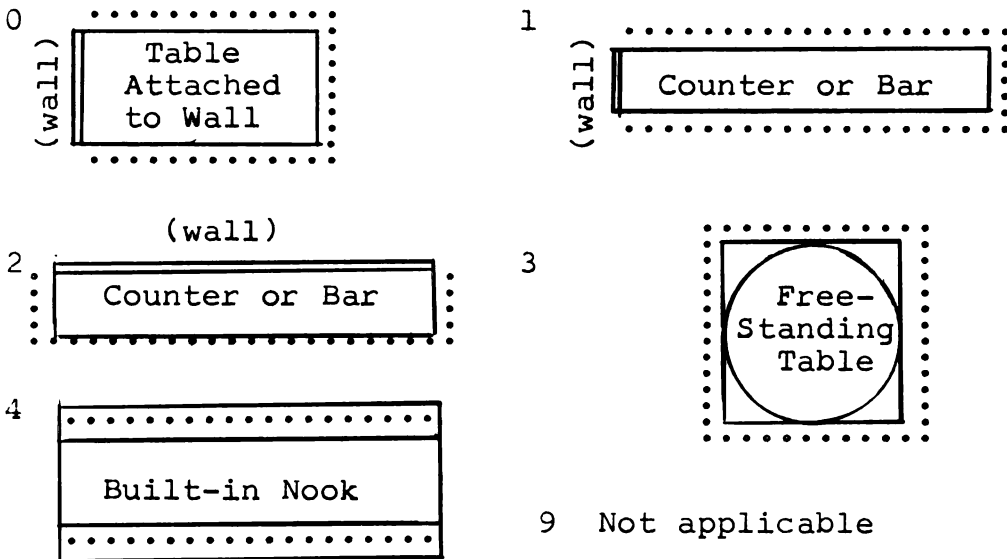
- 0 Impossible to highly difficult to gain access to kitchen
- 1 Requires special effort to gain access to kitchen
- 2 Convenient--requires no effort to gain access to kitchen
- 9 Not applicable

B. Traffic patterns in relation to kitchen

- 0 Long distance and obstructed
- 1 Middle distance and minor obstructions
- 2 Little or no distance and unobstructed
- 9 Not applicable

SEATING ARRANGEMENT FOR MOST MEALS

A. Type of seating arrangement ... = Possible seating space



B. Convenience of seating arrangement

- 0 Inconvenient for conversation and access
- 1 Inconvenient for conversation
- 1 Inconvenient for access
- 2 Convenient for conversation and access
- 9 Not applicable

C. Number of individuals at table: \_\_\_\_\_

- 9 Not applicable

D. Space at the table

- 0 Does not accommodate all family members
- 1 Accommodates all family members by crowding
- 2 Accommodates all family members comfortably
- 9 Not applicable

PRIVACY OF EATING AREA

- 0 No privacy--normal noises of street, children, neighbors heard; others can see in
- 1 Some privacy--occasional minor noises of street, children, neighbors; others can sometimes see in
- 2 Privacy--no noises of street, children, neighbors heard; others are not likely to see in
- 9 Not applicable

## HOUSING FURNISHINGS

	HAVE & USE  0	HAVE & DON'T USE  1	DON'T HAVE ENOUGH --WANT MORE  2	DON'T HAVE BUT WANT  3	DON'T HAVE BUT DON'T WANT  4
<b>ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH EATING</b>					
<b>Dishes:</b>					
Cups					
Saucers					
Plates					
<b>Flatware:</b>					
Forks					
Knives					
Spoons					
<b>Glasses:</b>					
Juice					
Water, Milk					
<b>Tables:</b>					
Dining					
Kitchen					
Card					
Built-in nook					
Serving cart					
TV tables					
<b>Chairs:</b>					
Dining					
Kitchen					
Folding					
High chair					

## HOUSING FURNISHINGS

	HAVE & USE  0	HAVE & DON'T USE  1	DON'T HAVE ENOUGH --WANT MORE  2	DON'T HAVE BUT WANT  3	DON'T HAVE BUT DON'T WANT  4
<b>ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SERVING</b>					
<b>Serving dishes:</b>					
Salt and peppers					
Cream pitchers					
Sugar bowls					
Butter dishes					
Pitchers					
Teapots					
Serving trays					
Casseroles					
Hot tray					
<b>Table linens:</b>					
Paper napkins					
Cloth napkins					
Placemats					
Tablecloths					
<b>ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH STORAGE</b>					
Breadboxes					
Cake covers					
Canisters					



## HOUSING FURNISHINGS

	HAVE & USE	HAVE & DON'T USE	DON'T HAVE ENOUGH --WANT MORE	DON'T HAVE BUT WANT	DON'T HAVE BUT DON'T WANT
	0	1	2	3	4
ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PREPARATION					
Small electric cooking equipment:					
Hot plate					
Broiler					
Deep fat fryer					
Electric frying pan					
Roaster oven					
Rotisserie					
Toaster					
Waffle iron and/or sandwich grill					
Small electric food preparation equipment:					
Electric tea kettle					
Blender					
Electric knife					
Mixer					
Electric can opener					
Electric coffee pot					
Non-electric cooking equipment:					
Pots, pans & griddles					
Baking pans & tins					
Cooking spoons, knives, spatulas, etc.					
Mixing bowls					
Measuring cups & spoons					
Non-electric coffee pot					
Tea kettle					

## HOUSING FURNISHINGS

	HAVE & USE  0	HAVE & DON'T USE  1	DON'T HAVE ENOUGH --WANT MORE  2	DON'T HAVE BUT WANT  3	DON'T HAVE BUT DON'T WANT  4
ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH CLEANING					
Dish cloths and sponges					
Dish towels					
Brooms					
Wet mops					
Dry mops					
Vacuum cleaner					
Carpet sweeper					
Garbage pail					
Wastebasket					
Disposal					
ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH ENTERTAINMENT					
Radio					
Record player					
Television					
ACCESSORY FURNISHINGS					
Clock					
Fan (of any kind)					
Step stool					

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