THE RELATIONSHIP OF ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS TO LEVELS OF SPOUSAL SUPPORT RECEIVED BY ADULT WOMEN STUDENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP OF ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS TO LEVELS OF SPOUSAL SUPPORT RECEIVED BY ADULT WOMEN STUDENTS

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Over the past twenty years the number of adult women college students has increased dramatically. It is estimated that this trend will continue through the 1990's. Spousal support has been shown to be extremely important to adult women who persevere in college. However, little is known about the factors that influence spousal support receipt.

The purposes of this study were to determine if (a) relationships exist between wives' and husbands' attitudes and behaviors and spousal support receipt; (b) spousal support receipt differs among four support types (i.e., emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support); and (c) women more frequently cite husband-emanating rather than wife-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness.

Presurvey postcards inquiring about marital status were mailed to 318 adult women students from the Colleges of Business and Nursing at Michigan State University. A 64-item questionnaire, developed by the investigator, subsequently was mailed to the 113

women who responded that they were married and currently living with their husbands. One hundred and five women (93%) completed the questionnaires.

Data were analyzed using t-tests, Pearson's correlations, stepwise multiple regression, and chi-square analysis.

The following were the major findings: (a) spousal support receipt differed among the four support types with women receiving informational support less frequently; (b) positive correlations existed between spousal support receipt and wives' attitudes and behaviors and husbands' attitudes and behaviors; (c) the combination of husbands' behaviors and wives' behaviors was found to be the most efficient predictor of spousal support receipt; (d) wives most frequently cited husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness; (e) respondents indicated that emotional spousal support was the most important support type; and (f) married, adult women students continue to adhere to sex-role stereotypes. Women in this study reported receiving spousal support much more frequently than reported in previous studies. The most often cited reason for husband supportiveness was his belief in the financial advantage to be gained when the wife received her degree.

It is recommended that professional support staff help to enhance spousal support receipt of adult women students by conducting workshops and seminars in assertiveness training, communication skills building, and conflict management.

This dissertation is dedicated to

My Mother and Father and Sisters and Brothers

Who always have given me unconditional love and support

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As I've written herein, it is difficult juggling all the roles of the adult woman student. I've been fortunate to have many friends who have done big things but also little things that allowed me the flexibility to pursue my doctoral degree. I especially want to thank Evie Contompasis and Patricia Barrett, my neighbors, and Linda Bursley, my child caregiver. Their concern for me and availability whenever I needed have been very much appreciated.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I. Background

Over the last twenty years the number of adults (25 years of age and older) who have enrolled in higher education has steadily increased. Data published by the National Center for Educational Statistics (U.S. Department of Education, 1986) estimate that 5,428,000 adult students were enrolled in postsecondary education courses in 1986 as compared with 3,945,000 adults in 1976. In 1983 40 percent of college enrollees were 25 years of age or older. Whereas the number of 18-24 year old college students is projected to decline throughout the 1990's, the number of students 25 years of age and older is expected to continue to increase.

This trend is made particularly evident by the data accumulated on women enrolled in college. Enrollment of women students between the ages of 25 and 34 increased almost fourfold between the 1960's and 1970's from 171,000 in 1960 to 627,000 in 1972 (Women's Bureau, 1974). In 1983 there were estimated to be 2,765,000 adult women students in the United States and they comprised 55 percent of the adult student population. The enrollment of adult women students in 1993 is expected to be approximately 3,135,000 and it is anticipated that women will continue to make up the majority of adult students through 1993 (U.S. Department of Education, 1986).

There are many reasons for the increase in the adult student population. Lengthened life spans have increased the likelihood that individuals will consider changes in their careers during the course of their employment (Wells, 1974). Continuous demands for new information and on-the-job skills have required additional learning if older employees expect to remain functionally competitive with recent college graduates (Penn and Weaver, 1979). Economic factors have influenced adults to seriously consider the benefits of a college education. This is particularly true of women who have found it necessary to enter the workforce to improve their families' financial situation (Wells, 1971). Increased divorced rates also have forced many women into the workforce which, in turn, has induced women to consider a college education as a means of achieving job advancement and higher wages (Scott, 1980). Changing attitudes regarding women's roles and societal acceptance of women's personal needs for fulfillment apart from the family have also resulted in larger numbers of women considering postsecondary education (Letchworth, 1970; Scott, 1980). Increased mechanization of household tasks and decreased numbers of children in families have resulted in more free time for women who have heretofore spent the majority of their life spans taking care of homes and children (Lichtenstein and Block, 1963). Faced with declining enrollments within the traditional aged student population, colleges have been actively recruiting adult students, and it would appear from the figures cited earlier that their recruitment efforts have been successful.

The increase in enrollment of adult women students is reflected in the increased interest paid them by administrators of higher education. Many colleges and universities have established special centers for women students or have developed programs concerned with the particular problems and interests of this student subpopulation. For example, in 1980 the number of continuing education courses, services, and programs specifically implemented for women students in the United States was estimated to have exceeded 500 (Scott, 1980).

Researchers interested in higher education have begun to pay particular attention to the woman student. However, much of the information gathered and the knowledge acquired about women students concern their motivations for enrolling and their academic goals, the institutional barriers to their success, and descriptions of programs and policies that help or hinder them. Only recently have studies begun to focus on the psychological and social ramifications of women's college attendance. Knowledge about the adult woman student is limited, however, since the majority of the research on psychological issues confronting women students has been conducted on traditional college-aged (18-24 years) women students.

II. Statement of the Problem

A. The Adult Student

When an adult enrolls in college, he/she must deal with the problem of multiple commitments resulting from the diverse roles that adults maintain. Adult students tend to be married, parents,

and employed (Baillie, 1976; Scott, 1980; Gilbert and Holahan, 1982). As spouse, mother or father, and/or employee, an adult student faces daily challenges in managing conflicting priorities and needs. Adding the role of student to an already complex life-style necessitates change on the part of the student and of his/her family as well. The press of educationally related tasks may intrude upon established family routines. Role changes within the home can occur and consequently may upset the family structure when accepted expectations of family responsibilities held by the student, spouse, and children are challenged.

B. The Problems Encountered by Adult Women Students

The conflicts faced by adult students related to their roles as both student and family member are especially difficult for adult women students. In American society women are expected to place their families above all other considerations, including their own personal needs and even employment demands (Hare-Mustin and Broderick, 1979). Whereas the student role for males may be seen to coincide with their role as worker, the student role for women is regarded by many as frivolous, self-centered, and threatening to the status quo (Letchworth, 1970; Brandenburg, 1974; Gilbert and Holahan, 1982). Consequently, it is widely recognized that female students face difficulties not faced by male students because of differing priorities, expectations, and responsibilities (Hughes, 1983).

Since a woman's educational performance does not appear to be limited by her academic ability (Markus, 1973; Scott, 1976 and

1980; Spreadbury, 1983), it would appear likely that factors other than academic ability are related to the problems women encounter in higher education. Much has been written on the barriers to reentry and on the problems encountered upon reentry; indeed, these are the topics most often cited in the literature pertaining to adult women students.

Generally, the problems women encounter are grouped into three rubrics: institutional, situational, and dispositional (Edstrom, 1972). Institutional barriers include those resulting from the bureaucratic policies and procedures of higher education institutions such as problems resulting from class schedules and financial aid limitations. Situational barriers arise from: (a) current life situations such as one's family responsibilities; (b) insufficient support from family and friends; and (c) time demands. Dispositional barriers, on the other hand, reside within the student and often mimic attitudes about learning and self-perceptions. Dispositional barriers include lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem. Results from surveys and other research studies often cite situational barriers as the most frequent and severe of the problems encountered by adult women students (Espersson, 1975; Wertheimer and Nelson, 1977; Dwinell, 1980; Richter and Witten, 1984).

C. Spousal Support

The literature clearly indicates that various forms of family support, especially from one's spouse, are important to adult learners as they attempt to meet the problems noted previously

(Brandenburg, 1974; Roach, 1977; Berkove, 1978; Hooper, 1979; Tittle and Decker, 1980). For women, in particular, whose student status may be viewed by family members, friends, and society as a challenge to traditional role assignments, the support of their children and husbands toward their student role has been singled out by many as the most crucial indicator of continued enrollment (Markus, 1973; Van Meter, 1976; Berkove, 1978; Hooper, 1979; Rice, 1982; Bernard, 1984). On the other hand, seemingly contradictory findings have been reported by some researchers who have found that women continue to persevere in their academic pursuits despite variable support from husbands (Brandenburg, 1974; Berkove, 1978; Huston-Hobert and Strange, 1986). Furthermore, there is data which indicate that some women purposefully shun support from their husbands or admit to feelings of guilt if they receive a great deal of support (Berkove, 1978). However, the cost to women of non-support can be high in terms of role overload (Hooper, 1979; Sales, Shore and Bolitho, 1980), stress (Berkove, 1978; Lance, Lourie and Mayo, 1979), marital problems (Roach, 1976; Ryan, 1979; Cooper, Chassin and Zeiss, 1985), and depression (Roehl and Okun, 1984).

Findings from many studies convincingly indicate that male students receive more support, both functionally and emotionally, from their spouses than do their female counterparts (Markus, 1973; Westin, 1975; DeGroot, 1980; Huston-Hobert and Strange, 1986). Little appears to have been written, however, on the reasons for this disparity. Consequently, questions remain regarding the factors that might have an effect on the level of spousal support

received by adult women students.

Studies that have been conducted on adult women students seem to indicate that women often have feelings of worthlessness, selfishness, and guilt about their student role. These findings, then, may make it difficult for women to request or accept spousal support. Furthermore, women frequently add roles such as employee or student to their role as wife/mother without relinquishing prior responsibilities in an effort to be all things to all people. Is it possible that these and other factors that emanate from wives might mitigate against women seeking or appreciating support from their husbands for their academic pursuits?

Yet, research also suggests that husbands may not be particularly responsive to their wives' desire to enroll in college because they may feel threatened by their wives' independence or because they may adhere to traditional sex role stereotyping (Roach, 1976; Ballmer and Cozby, 1981; Spreadbury, 1983). A husband's attitudes may hinder a wife's ability to exploit her educational, career, and personal potential. Also, as a consequence of these attitudes, husbands may fail to change their expectations of their wives' responsibilities in and around the home. They may distance themselves from their wives' college involvement, thereby depriving their wives of spousal support. Thus, attitudes and behaviors that emanate from husbands also may affect the amount of spousal support adult women students receive.

One might postulate that both wife-emanating and husband-emanating factors, individually and combined, affect the level of spousal support received. However, since prior research has not

attempted to explain the reasons why adult women students receive less support from their husbands than adult male students receive from their wives nor has delineated the factors that relate to spousal support, what is currently known about spousal support is not sufficient to purposefully assist adult women students in expanding the amount of spousal support they could receive.

III. Significance of the Study

The admonition that professional support staff be responsive to the needs of adult students is widespread in the professional literature (Brandenburg, 1974; Penn and Weaver, 1979; Lance, Lourie and Mayo, 1979; Hughes, 1983; Huston-Hobert and Strange, 1986). Professional support staff are better able to help students when they are knowledgeable about the student populations they serve. Colleges can ill-afford to neglect the needs of adult students if they wish to attract and then retain this student group, particularly as this group becomes a larger student force in future decades.

As increasing numbers of women enter college and attention to college enrollment shifts from the traditional-aged student to the adult student--the majority of whom it is projected will be female--a better understanding of the adult woman student would appear to be increasingly important for administrators, faculty, and staff in higher education. It behooves these individuals to obtain information on the extramural dynamics that may affect a woman's academic career in order that college personnel may provide the

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appropriate resources, programs, and support necessary to facilitate an adult woman student's matriculation and retention.

The literature is replete with studies indicating that spousal support is an important determinant of success in many areas, including higher education. On the other hand, data from numerous studies are quite conclusive that women do not receive as much spousal support as do their male counterparts. To date there have been no studies to explain why this difference occurs. Such an investigation would appear to be a logical adjunct to previous studies that have failed to consider the factors which may relate to the amount of support received.

Information obtained from this study may be helpful in a number of ways. It may:

1. Assist counselors in helping women to understand more fully the attitudes and behaviors that can affect the amount of spousal support they receive.
2. Stimulate professional support staff to evaluate current programs and resources as well as to plan for future programs and resources that would be maximally beneficial to married women students and their families.
3. Facilitate initiatives to aide women in engendering and increasing spousal support, coping with non-support, and developing alternative support strategies.
4. Enable administrators and staff to more fully understand one of the factors (spousal support) that has been reported to influence retention/attrition of married, adult women students.

IV. Purpose of the Study

In embellishing upon what is already known about spousal support of adult women students, this investigation attempted to determine (a) if a woman's attitudes and behaviors were related to the level of spousal support she received, herein defined as wife-emanating factors and (b) if her husband's attitudes and behaviors were related to the level of spousal support received, herein defined as husband-emanating factors.

In order to sustain the major purpose of this investigation, the following information was gathered:

1. A description of the attitudes of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits.
2. A delineation of the support-seeking behaviors of adult women students as these related to their college pursuits.
3. As perceived by adult women students, a description of their husbands' attitudes and past behaviors as these related to spousal support and their wives' college pursuits.
4. A determination as to what women believed are the reasons why their husbands are, or are not, supportive of their college pursuits.

Though support has been defined in a number of ways in previous studies, this investigation utilized House's typology of support (1981); that is, emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support, to ascertain if the information obtained from this investigation differed among these four support types.

A. Questions for Investigation

1. Do women report differences in receipt of support among the four support types as characterized by House (1981)?
2. What are the attitudes of adult women students regarding spousal support of their college pursuits?
   - Is there a relationship between these attitudes and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
3. What are the support-seeking behaviors of adult women students regarding their college pursuits?
   - Is there a relationship between these behaviors and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
4. What are the attitudes of adult women students' husbands regarding their wives' college pursuits and spousal support?
   - Is there a relationship between these attitudes and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
5. What have been the past behaviors of adult women students' husbands regarding spousal support?
   - Is there a relationship between these behaviors and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
6. What are the reasons adult women students cite for their husbands' support or lack of support?

- Are these reasons primarily wife-emanating, husband-emanating, both wife- and husband-emanating, or neither wife- nor husband-emanating?

B. Hypotheses

1. There will be no differences in spousal support levels as reported by adult women students among the four support types.
2. There will be no relationship between the attitudes of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits and the levels of support they receive.
3. There will be no relationship between behaviors of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits and the levels of support they receive.
4. There will be no relationship between the attitudes of adult women students' husbands toward spousal support and the level of spousal support adult women students receive.
5. There will be no relationship between the behaviors of adult women students' husbands toward spousal support and the level of spousal support adult women students receive.
6. There will be no difference in the proportions of women students who cite husband-emanating reasons in comparison to wife-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness.

V. Methodology

In seeking to characterize and analyze the attitudes and behaviors of adult women students and their husbands toward spousal support, this investigation could be categorized as both a descriptive and analytical study. Additionally, the data from the study were statistically qualified in order to determine if particular factors related to the amount and types of spousal support received. Studies which attempt to find correlations between a complex behavior pattern and variables thought to be related to that behavior are defined by Borg and Gall (1983) as relationship studies.

> Relationship studies are concerned primarily with gaining a better understanding of complex behavior patterns...by studying the relationships between these patterns and variables to which they are hypothesized to be causally related... This research design is especially useful for exploratory studies in areas where little or no previous research has been done (p. 576).

As previously discussed, little has been reported on the subject of spousal support of adult women students. Since this investigation studied correlations between attitudes/behaviors and spousal support in an effort to determine if wives' attitudes and behaviors and/or husbands' attitudes and behaviors related to the level of spousal support women received, this investigation can

most appropriately be categorized as a relationship study.

A. Subject Selection

Married women, aged 25 years or older, and currently enrolled at Michigan State University within the Colleges of Business and Nursing were surveyed. These two colleges were chosen for this study since they had small enrollments of adult women students; thus, surveying the colleges' adult women student populations was not unreasonably expensive or time consuming.

A listing of all women, aged 25 years or older, who were enrolled in the Colleges of Business and Nursing was obtained from the Office of the Registrar at Michigan State University and submitted to the Assistant Provost for Academic Services. The Registrar's list was kept by the Assistant Provost for Academic Services to protect the privacy of students who did not wish to become involved in this study.

Since the marital status of the students included in the Registrar's list was not known at this juncture of the study, presurvey postcards were mailed to each of the students by the Assistant Provost for Academic Services. The presurvey postcard briefly outlined the purpose of the study and the potential benefits to students of the data that was to be collected. It also asked students to provide the investigator with information regarding their marital status so that only those who responded that they were married and currently living with their husbands would be asked to participate in the study. It was hoped the presurvey mailing would interest students in the investigation so that they would

respond to the marital status inquiry and also would be more likely to complete the survey instrument if it were mailed to them.

Students were asked to return the presurvey postcards within one week. As soon as a postcard was received that indicated a student was married and currently living with her husband, the Assistant Provost for Academic Services released the student name and address to the investigator since implied consent to participate in the study had been obtained. Subsequently, the investigator mailed a survey packet to that individual through the U.S. Postal Service.

B. Instrumentation

The survey instrument was developed by the investigator based upon a thorough review of the literature. It was composed of four major sections.

The first section elicited information from the respondents on various demographic variables such as age, number of children living at home, employment status, and student status. Similar information regarding the respondents' husbands also was gathered.

The second section of the survey elicited information pertaining to spousal support of the subject's college pursuits based upon House's typology of support (1981). Subjects were asked to characterize the frequency with which they received emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support from their husbands.

In the third section of the survey, subjects were asked questions about their attitudes and behaviors toward spousal

support of their college pursuits. They also were asked questions about their perceptions of their husbands' attitudes and behaviors as these related to spousal support and to their wives' college pursuits.

The last section asked subjects to respond to a question that listed general factors, reported from previously published studies, that might have influenced the amount of spousal support they received. Women were asked to identify the type of spousal support most important to them. Lastly, subjects were asked to cite the reasons why they believed their husbands were, or were not, supportive of their college pursuits. Whereas the majority of the survey instrument required subjects to answer questions using Likert scales, the last two questions of the survey requested open-ended responses.

C. Data Collection Procedures

The survey instrument was initially reviewed by two professionals in the fields of women's studies and support psychology at Michigan State University. Subsequently, the survey was pilot tested on a representative sample of adult, married women students at Michigan State University enrolled in colleges other than those included in this investigation. The pilot test helped determine if the survey was understandable and if the questions elicited the information intended by the investigator. Ambiguous and unclear items were revised before the survey instrument was mailed to the subject population.

All women students who had been identified by the Office of the Registrar at Michigan State University as having birthdates on or before September 19, 1963 and who had indicated from the presurvey postcard that they were married and currently living with their husbands were mailed a survey packet. The packet included:

1. A cover letter containing the endorsement of the study by the Michigan State University Office of Human Relations, Division of Women's Programs;
2. The survey instrument;
3. A self-addressed, prepaid postcard on which a subject indicated her participation in the study; and
4. A self-addressed, prepaid envelope in which to return the survey instrument.

Subjects were asked to return the surveys within one week. After two weeks a second mailing of the survey packet was made to those women who had not yet responded. Non-respondents were identified by matching the returned postcards to the married students' names that had been provided by the Assistant Provost for Academic Services. The cover letter that accompanied the second mailing was altered slightly in an attempt to increase the response rate from the second mailing. Respondents were asked to return the second mailing within one week.

Anonymity was assured since there was no coding of the survey instruments and no respondent identifiers on the instruments. Respondents were identified only through receipt of the

participation postcards which were returned separately from the survey instruments.

D. Scoring the Data

The majority of the survey instrument questions were formatted in such a way as to require multiple-choice Likert scale responses. Responses to items from the second and third sections of the survey instrument were weighted and summed so that scores could be obtained that pertained to: (a) the four types of spousal support that were received; (b) the total spousal support received; (c) the wife attitudes about spousal support; (d) the wife support-seeking behaviors; (e) the husband attitudes about spousal support; and (f) the husband behaviors regarding spousal support.

Responses to the two open-ended questions in Section Four were coded by the investigator as either "W" (wife-emanating), "H" (husband-emanating), "B" (both), or "N" (neither).

All information obtained from the surveys was entered into the Michigan State University's Computer Laboratory Data Base so that data analysis could be accomplished.

E. Analysis of the Data

In attempting to characterize the factors that related to spousal support receipt, the data from the study were reported in such a manner as to provide a normative description of how the total sample distributed itself on the response alternatives to the survey questions. Data obtained from the sociodemographic and educational variables in the first portion of the survey were

calculated using frequency tables. Counts, proportions, modal categories, and means were determined.

The second section of the survey relating to the frequency with which spousal support was received likewise was analyzed through use of frequency tables. In addition, each item's response was weighted to compute a support type receipt score (0-4 points). The four support type receipt scores subsequently were summed to compute a total support receipt score (0-16 points). T-tests were performed to ascertain if the differences in the mean scores of the four support types were statistically significant.

Information that was obtained from the third section of the survey was categorized using frequency tables. Additionally, responses in this section were scored on a very favorable to very unfavorable weighted continuum. For example, in response to the statement, "I have every right to receive emotional support for my college pursuits from my husband," a response of strongly agree (1) was scored as very favorable (+2 points), agree (2) was scored as favorable (+1 points), neither agree nor disagree (3) scored as neutral (0 points), disagree (4) scored as unfavorable (-1 points), and strongly disagree (5) scored as very unfavorable (-2 points). Thus, scores were derived for each respondent pertaining to her attitudes and behaviors regarding each of the four support types. The scores from the four support types were summed to obtain respondent attitude scores and respondent behavior scores. Husband attitude scores and husband behavior scores were derived from the wives' responses on items pertaining to his attitudes and

behaviors. Means were computed for each of the scores described above.

Various statistical analyses were utilized to measure the relationship between: (a) wife attitudes and receipt of support; (b) wife behaviors and receipt of support; (c) husband attitudes and receipt of support; and (d) husband behaviors and receipt of support. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed for each of the sets of variables described in the previous sentence. T-tests were employed to ascertain the significance of the correlations. Finally, stepwise multiple regression was performed to determine the relationship of all four predictor variables (wife attitudes, wife behaviors, husband attitudes, and husband behaviors) to total support receipt. The t-test was used to determine the significance of the stepwise regression relationships.

Chi-square analysis was used to test the statistical significance of the proportion of respondents who cited husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' support or lack of support in comparison to those who cited wife-emanating reasons.

VI. Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms have been defined:

Adult Student - any woman, 25 years of age or older, enrolled in a University-sponsored course at Michigan State University during Winter and Spring Terms 1989, and enrolled in either the

College of Business or the College of Nursing.

Spousal Support - efforts by the husband to provide emotional sustenance, esteem-building, information feedback, and tangible assistance to the adult women student.

Emotional Support - the giving of trust, empathy, and love and the conveying of a general sense of caring (House, 1981).

Instrumental Support - the giving of tangible assistance such as helping with household tasks, picking up books from the library, etc. (House, 1981).

Informational Support - the offering of advice and counsel (House, 1981).

Appraisal Support - the giving of evaluative information and/or feedback (House, 1981).

Support-Seeking Behaviors - efforts by the adult women student to interact with her husband in an attempt to elicit emotional, instrumental, informational, and/or appraisal support toward her college pursuits.

Wife-Emanating Factors - attitudes and behaviors which originate from the adult woman student and which may affect the level of spousal support she receives.

Husband-Emanating Factors - attitudes and behaviors which originate from the husband of the adult woman student and which may affect the level of spousal support she receives.

Attitude - a relatively stable collection of beliefs and feelings about a person or thing (Benjamin, Hopkins and Nation, 1987).

VII. Limitations of the Study

A. Subject Selection

Only married students currently residing with their husbands were studied in order to minimize the potential for skewing the data which was reported. Michigan State University, however, does not record the marital status of its students. An obvious challenge to the investigator was to obtain subjects who fit the study criteria without expending an unreasonable amount of effort and money on inappropriate subjects. In order to decrease the pool of students from which potential subjects could be obtained, students from two colleges within the University were surveyed. Although these colleges likewise do not track marital status, their adult student enrollments were projected to be small enough to warrant indiscriminate mailing of a presurvey postcard to their adult women students in an attempt to elicit a sufficient number of suitable subjects. Obviously, the size of the population from which appropriate subjects were drawn was not known a priori; therefore, whether a sufficient number of appropriate students responded was impossible to predict.

B. The Problems Associated with Wives' Family Sociology

Safilios-Rothschild (1969) criticized studies of family functioning based upon information provided by wives only. She referred to this phenomenon as "Wives' Family Sociology," Similar concerns that surveying only one member of a couple may produce biased results have been noted (Preston et al, 1952; Hastorf and

Bender, 1952; Laws, 1971). It has been cautioned that, when describing her husband, a wife may lack realism because of her vested interest in the relationship or she may also try to respond to questions as though she were the husband. Additionally, the highly interactive nature of the marital relationship may make it difficult for the wife to be truly objective in her reporting of events. Consequently, a limitation of this study was a possible response bias from the wives' viewpoint and the resulting questionable accuracy of a single reporter in a marital relationship. Results pertaining to spousal support must be seen as reflecting the subjective perceptions of the wives only which may, or may not, suffer from the potential biases noted herein.

C. Limitations of a Relationship Study

The correlations obtained in a relationship study cannot be inferred to establish cause-and-effect relationships between the variables correlated (Borg and Gall, 1983; Glass and Hopkins, 1984). Thus, given data that purports a statistically significant relationship between variables, an investigator can conclude only that a relationship does exist between the variables; the investigator cannot infer that one variable causes another variable to occur.

VIII. Generalizability

Since the students included in this study were selected from two colleges within a single institution, generalizations of the findings may not be applicable to adult women students enrolled in

other colleges at Michigan State University or at other universities. Surveyed women students were age 25 years or older and had been married and living with their husbands at the time of this survey. Therefore, results would not apply to (a) unmarried adult women students, (b) adult married women students not living with their spouses, or (c) to married women students less than 25 years of age.

IX. Overview

In Chapter One an introduction to the investigation was provided including a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and an overview of the subsequent chapters. Chapter Two contains a comprehensive review of the literature pertinent to the subject of this investigation. In Chapter Three the overall design and methodology of the study is outlined. Results of the study and analysis of the data are presented in Chapter Four. Lastly, Chapter Five concludes with a discussion of the findings of the study, the implications of the findings, conclusions for practitioners and researchers, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

I. Introduction

The burgeoning numbers of adult women students entering institutions of higher education during the last three decades has resulted in increased interest in the experiences of these women from both educational and personal perspectives. Prior to the mid-1970's the majority of research conducted on women centered on demographic surveys or discussions of the institutional barriers that hindered women during their college careers (DeLisle, 1965; Astin, Suniewick and Dweck, 1971; Westervelt, 1974). These barriers included transportation problems, lack of child care, lack of evening and weekend classes, little institutional encouragement, and lack of financial aid. A few investigators during this time period concerned themselves with the personal problems encountered by adult women students (DeLisle, 1961; Berry and Epstein, 1963; Hembrough, 1966; Astin, 1969; Letchworth, 1970). In these studies women most frequently cited stress, guilt, concern over their intellectual abilities, and family conflicts as major problems to overcome when returning to college.

Since the purpose of this study was to contribute new information and understanding to the body of knowledge regarding spousal support of adult women students, this literature review encompasses the three major areas in the literature from which this research study emanated: (a) the personal problems encountered by adult women students; (b) social support in general;

and (c) spousal support in particular. Each of the three major areas concludes with a summary of the pertinent literature. An overall summary is included at the end of this chapter.

II. Personal Problems Encountered by Adult Women Students

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, those investigators who have studied the problems of women students generally have focused on institutional barriers that hinder women students or personal problems which adult women face as they attempt a postsecondary education. It has been recognized that the personal problems women encounter are more likely to impede their success in college (Markus, 1973; Westin, 1975). This section of the review of the literature delineates four of the most commonly reported personal concerns of this college subgroup - role overload, role strain, lack of self-esteem, and guilt.

A. Role Overload

A number of authors have dealt with the subject of the multiplicity of roles that adult women students find difficult to accommodate in their everyday lives. Since they tend to be married and/or mothers, adult women students are faced with incredible time demands and multiple role responsibilities. In studies of women students representing different populations, Letchworth (1970), Cook (1974), and Astin (1976) noted that women reported conflicts between family needs and academic responsibilities as a major problem in their college careers. Women tend to add, instead

of combine, the role of student to the roles they already maintain such as mother and wife, yet they expect to perform all roles equally well (Bernard, 1975). The accumulation of roles and their requisite responsibilities as well as the pressure emanating from the personal compulsion to excel in all roles, very often results in role overload. In turn, this overload may manifest itself in physical as well as psychological dysfunction.

Berkove (1978) found that women students generally continue to take full responsibility for household tasks and in some cases may purposefully refrain from asking for assistance from other members of the family.

> Whether it was due to long established habit or ingrained pressure to meet traditional expectations, these women heaped burden upon burden on themselves - perhaps unnecessarily - in an effort to maintain their standing as "Super Mom" and "Super Wife" (and now, "Super Student"), in some cases even at the expense of their health (p. 99).

Berkove also found that the dropouts in her study were in poorer health and more tired than the successful students since they often worked at least part-time in addition to caring for families and taking classes.

Role overload may produce psychological stress. One of the most detailed studies of women students was conducted by Katz (1976) using both interviews and questionnaires. His study of 212 returning women students (three-fourths of whom were married)

from different areas across the United States, included the finding that 70% of them identified time demands as a source of pressure.

> Many of these women were trying to do everything at once and became anxious if they could not. When asked what aspect of their school work created special anxieties, by far the most often mentioned problem was conflicting demands on time (p. 98-99).

Stress has been identified by researchers as a specific factor affecting women dropouts. Berkove (1978) concluded from her data that "...one area differentiating successful students from dropouts...is the amount of stress they experienced, with dropouts clearly feeling the greatest stress" (p. 100).

Just as women who work outside the home will experience greater problems with regard to role overload, women with children living at home also appear to report more difficulty in this area. Sales, Shore and Bolitho (1980) found that adult women students with children under the age of 6 expected more difficulty in fulfilling their many roles. They were concerned primarily with the negative reactions of their children, lack of child care help, and maintaining household tasks. Whereas older women in this study reported more concern over being able to manage their student role, the younger women who had children living at home expressed greatest concern about being able to handle family responsibilities.

Adelstein, Sedlacek and Martinez (1983) found that age of children was a key variable distinguishing the needs of adult women students. Women with school-age children were primarily

concerned with the effects of their student role on their children, time constraints, and their perceived inability to physically be able to handle these multiple roles.

Markus (1973) noted that for most women the return to school does not radically change the pattern of their daily responsibilities. Instead, women simply integrate college activities into the existing family lifestyle. However, Markus also reported that the more children a women had, the more likely she would report a change in family life as a result of her attending college in order to accommodate her role overload. More often the changes reflected a concern with managing the extra responsibilities college entailed and with the guilt women felt over not being able to do all that was expected of them. Women with children reported a "more stressful life" since their return to college.

B. Role Strain

Women suffer from the strain caused when they believe their new role as student might require attitudes and behaviors that conflict with traditional familial and societal views of parental and/or spouse roles that the women also personally believe (Gilbert and Holahan, 1982. This role strain may result in feelings of guilt and psychological stress. On the other hand, women may also find themselves subjected to hostility and resentment from husbands, family, and friends especially if these individuals perceive the women's return to school in terms of a challenge to established male/female roles (Brandenburg, 1974). Under these circumstances, women students may be deprived of the help and

encouragement which might facilitate their student status.

Suchinsky (1981) defined the problems faced by women students as "developmentally based" and "ostensibly environmentally derived." He believed the woman student to be an adaptable autonomous adult, attempting to adjust to the environment in productive and satisfying ways. He postulated that adult students continue to grow throughout the college experience. He categorized the adjustments that a woman makes to the demands and pressures of college as an internal issue.

Additionally, Suchinsky believed that the woman student faces many challenges to her student status from external forces such as from hostile professors and demanding families.

> By and large the response of her family will tend to be inhibitory, either subtly or overtly. This will not infrequently occur despite overt expressions of support for her endeavor, and there will generally be stresses which will range from mild to severe (p. 31).

Often the family defines its members' roles based upon the mutual expectations members hold of one another. In terms of balance theory wherein a family is considered "in balance" when family members' attitudes about something are symmetrical, Roach (1976) reported that as a woman gives more attention and time to school-related tasks, family members become increasingly uncomfortable. This is particularly evident as discrepancies in role expectations widen. Husbands and children were reported to decrease the support they had previously given.

One frequently cited study of married college women (Van Meter, 1976) scrutinized the problem of role strain. Although not generalizable to all women students, Van Meter's sampling of women in a single department of a large midwestern university over the course of 10 years does offer insight into the role strain stressors of married women. Of particular interest is the identification of resources which could aid women in dealing with these stressors. Van Meter found that a family's physical and financial support were beneficial but the most significant factor in dealing with role strain was the emotional support a woman received from her husband and family.

Age of the woman appears to be significantly related to problems encountered by women as they consider entering school and, once enrolled, as they attempt to remain in school. In a study of Master of Social Work women students with children in a city university setting, it was found that older women experienced more difficulty with negative attitudes from friends about their return to school (Sales, Shore and Bolitho, 1980). It was postulated that this finding might have reflected age cohort differences in values and attitudes since older groups often adhere to more traditional role beliefs.

Markus (1973) compared 126 women aged 40 and older to 30 women between the ages of 20 and 29 who contacted a Continuing Education of Women Center at a large university. Her research indicated that although older women experienced more problems concerning role definition than the younger group, they also

reported the most positive overall evaluation of the college experience.

In a study to better understand the functioning of families wherein mothers have returned to school, Hooper (1970) divided her sample of 24 women into 3 coping style groups: agreement, egalitarian, and disagreement groups. One's inclusion into the groups was based upon responses to a family supportiveness role-taking inventory. Women in the agreement group, characterized by role division according to sex agreement, combined student and family roles. These women perceived that their new role of student had a negative impact on their families even when family members reported little difference in family functioning since the mother/wife enrolled in college. Women in this group reported they would drop out of college for family-related reasons much less crisis-related than those noted in the other two groups (for example, "...if my children decide they want to come home for lunch" [p.151]). Women in the egalitarian group, characterized by egalitarian role division, reported family members who responded to their needs and interests by accommodating to their student role. These women admitted they would drop out of school only in the case of a family crisis (that is, "...only if someone were very ill and needed constant care and even then I wouldn't stay out" [p. 151]). In the disagreement group, characterized by role division through sex disagreement, "...women seemed to use the student role as a lever to force change in family role taking and decision making" (p. 151). Hooper concluded that it was the woman's relationship with her family, the family's style of living, and the woman's feelings of

guilt--which were associated to a great extent with these first two factors--that helped or hindered the woman's student role.

C. Self-Esteem

One of the major psychological barriers facing non-traditional women college students is their lack of self-esteem. Markus (1973), Brandenburg (1974), Astin (1976), Katz (1976), and Berkove (1978) have reported that adult women frequently admit to feelings of inadequacy, lack of self-confidence, and low self-esteem. Scott (1980) has noted, based on her review of literature, that many returning women students suffer from feelings of shame that they are basically inept and stupid. They feel relatively assured they will not succeed and this leads to fear of failure and test anxiety.

Markus (1973) found that 57% of the women she studied had second thoughts about returning to school, basically surrounding doubts about their academic abilities. Women who measured higher in a self-esteem measure tended to have few reports of second thoughts. Older women almost always reported doubts about their ability.

Lance, Lourie and Mayo's (1979) research of almost 600 adult returning students noted that their fears regarding their intelligence and academic abilities were often cited as major concerns. Two of the difficulties most often expressed by women were fear of dulled memory and fear of failing.

Beyond the issue of a woman's perception of her capability is the very basic issue of self-worth. Women may often feel unworthy of attempting an academic program or aspiring to a career outside

the home. Years of societal conditioning and personal denial have hindered women in seeking personal fulfillment in non-traditional contexts.

> A woman must overcome conditioning from childhood before she decides that she is *important enough* [italics added] to ask the family to rearrange its schedule to accommodate her need for further education (Wertheimer and Nelson, 1977, p. 65).

It is interesting to note that women have continued to indicate concerns about their academic ability when the research is clear that adult women students perform very well in college (Markus, 1973; Scott, 1976 and 1980; Spreadbury, 1983). On the other hand, when they have begun to meet the challenges of college and feel successful, women report greater self-respect, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment (Markus, 1973). Enjoyment of school, as well as drop-out rate, were found by Markus to be related to spouse and family encouragement. The more encouragement a woman received, the more likely she would report positive experiences from college and enjoyment of school. Likewise, the more encouragement a woman received, the less likely she would drop-out of college.

D. Guilt

Many women experience feelings of guilt associated with their becoming students. Women have been reported as feeling guilty for using family money to pursue personal goals (Lance,

Lourie and Mayo, 1979). Women who have viewed their educational and career aspirations as conflicting with sex-role stereotypes, often feel guilty for pursuing interests outside the home (Sales, Shore and Bolitho, 1980). Van Meter (1976) found in studying role strain among married college women that the higher the degree of role strain, the greater likelihood a woman would express guilt about pursuing her education.

As previously mentioned, Hooper (1979) divided her subjects into coping style groups. She reported that women's guilt regarding their student role was found to be related to group membership. Women in the disagreement group (tasks divided among family members along traditional lines according to sex and age but where there was a good deal of disagreement about task performance) were found to be more guilty than women in the egalitarian group (tasks divided among family members on a rotating basis without regard to sex roles) as were women in the agreement group (tasks divided among family members along traditional lines according to sex and age with all members in agreement over roles). These findings suggest that family support may lessen the anxiety a woman may feel about de-emphasizing the wife/mother role.

Women students who are mothers appear to suffer a great deal of guilt regarding their role as student. Mothers tend to berate themselves for not being able to spend the same amount of time with their children compared with pre-enrollment levels (Markus, 1973; Katz, 1976; Berkove, 1978). Parelman (1974) found that women who had not previously worked outside the home or gone to college suffered more guilt than those who had ventured out of the

home previously. Additionally, first-time venturers generally were more accommodating to the demands of their families.

Adelstein, Sedlacek and Martinez (1983) randomly sampled 288 returning women students at a large university and found that many expressed guilt over their student roles. Women with school-age children felt guilty about the effects of their student role on their children. Women with preschool children expressed guilt at not being able to spend more time with them and not being able to cope better with child care demands. Other women, however, also expressed guilt, particularly if they scored low on a self-concept analysis. These women felt guilty about returning to school and the burden that decision caused on others. In this study, as in others (Sales, Shore and Bolitho, 1980), age of children seemed to be a key variable associated with the problems of adult women students.

In summary, research has shown that adult women are faced with multiple problems such as role overload, stress, low levels of confidence and self-esteem, feelings of guilt, and problems of role strain. Some of these problems appear to emanate from women and some emanate from husbands and/or others. How then is a mature woman student able to overcome these barriers and succeed? A number of authors have suggested that the emotional and physical support a woman receives from others will have a significant effect on whether she chooses to enter college and, once enrolled, on her ability to transcend the problems she faces as a student. The following section will delineate more fully the concept of social support and, in particular, the effect of spousal support, specifically as both relate to women college students.

III. Social Support

During recent years there has been a great deal of interest shown by researchers in the area of social support as a general psychological concept. Although social support has been defined and operationalized in different ways, numerous authors have hypothesized that it functions as a protective mechanism against both psychological and physical health threats. Researchers have found a relationship between social support and physical health (Haynes, Feinleib and Kannel, 1980; Israel, 1982) and between social support and mental health (Brown and Harris, 1978; Lin, Woelfel and Light, 1985). Social support in an extremely general sense refers to functions performed by others, leading an individual to believe he/she is cared for and loved, esteemed and valued, and belongs to a network of communication and mutual obligation (Cobb, 1976). Thoits (1986) suggested that social support might be usefully reconceptualized as coping assistance since it helps:

> ...the person to change the situation, to change the meaning of the situation, to change his/her emotional reaction to the situation, or to change all three. Both coping and social support thereby eliminate or alter problematic demands, or they control the feelings of anxiety or depression usually engendered by those demands (p. 417).

Investigations of social support have been hampered by varied operational definitions and differing conceptualizations of

typology, dispositional factors, evaluation and description methods, and source considerations (Tardy, 1985). Consequently, research results have tended to disagree on the manner in which social support operates, be it through a buffering or main effect process (Gottlieb, 1981; Mitchell, Billings and Moos, 1982; Sandler and Berrera, 1984; Cohen and Wills, 1985). Nonetheless, investigation of social support continues based upon suppositions inherent in systems theory and coping assistance theory (Thoits, 1986).

Social support is discussed in this chapter under general rubrics that relate to topics already discussed about adult women students or as they may have an impact upon the area of spousal support as defined in this study. The rubrics discussed in this section of the review are: (a) types of social support, (b) social support reporting, (c) support behaviors, (d) self-esteem bolstering, and (e) gender diffences.

A. Types of Social Support

Theorists do not agree on the particular functions manifested by social support but it is thought that social support provides emotional sustenance, empathy and expressions of sharedness, esteem-building, nurturance, encouragement, provision of information and feedback, and tangible assistance (Cassell, 1976; Cobb, 1976; Weiss, 1976; Cohen and McKay, 1984).

House (1981) provided a conceptualization of social support which has been found to be very useful in developing social support measures. He distinguished among four types of social support; emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal. Emotional

support refers to the giving of trust, empathy, and love and to the conveying of a general sense of caring. Instrumental support refers to helping behaviors such as giving assistance or loaning money. Informational support is defined as the offering of advice and counsel and appraisal support refers to evaluative feedback such as "You're doing great!"

Each of these types of support can be paired with the problems associated with adult women students and may be useful as a possible mechanism for reducing or altering those problems or for controlling the anxiety manifested by these problems. For example, based on House's definitions, emotional support would appear to be congruent with role definition and guilt, instrumental support with role overload and stress, informational support with role definition and self-esteem, and appraisal support with self-esteem and guilt.

B. Social Support Reporting

The most frequently measured aspect of social support has been an individual's subjective judgments regarding the adequacy or quality of support. Vaux and Harrison (1985) believe social support to be a metaconstruct encompassing several theoretically valid components which include support network resources, supportive interactions, and perceptions/beliefs that one is supported. They noted that researchers have failed to recognize and accept the distinctions between resources, interactions, and feelings as theoretically important and hence have confused them empirically. Their research of 98 mature women students from a large midwestern university used measures of both perception of and satisfaction

with support and found that support resources and perceptions are very complex. The importance of the spouse as a provider of support was clearly reflected in their research and it was found that the spouse contributed to almost all identified modes of support.

Oritt, Paul and Behrman (1985) proposed a preliminary model of perceived social support wherein:

> Recollection of past supportive interactions and outcomes provides data used by the individual to appraise the current support network providing the foundation for current perceptions of social support. In turn, current perceptions of social support influence the degree to which support-seeking behaviors are initiated by the individual (p. 567).

They postulated that if an individual believed that interaction with the support network would likely reduce stress, the individual would engage in support-seeking behaviors. One might conclude, then, that if a woman believes her husband has been supportive in the past and if she perceives that his support would help reduce her problems, she would initiate support-seeking behaviors.

Coyne and DeLongis (1986) warned that perceptions of support are not determined in a vacuum but are colored by the dynamics of people's lives. They suggested that inquiry into the demands, aspirations and constraints of people's transactions, and interpersonal dynamics are necessary to fully appreciate how supportive provisions are mobilized and used. Certainly for the

married woman, the most interpersonal dynamic involves her relationship with her husband. Given Coyne and DeLongis' argument, one might expect that a woman's interpersonal relationship with her husband would help determine the degree to which supportive behavior is initiated and utilized.

C. Support Behaviors

Little research appears to have been conducted on the actual behaviors that are perceived by individuals to be supportive. Procidano and Heller (1983), Swindle (1983), and Heller and Lakey (1985) studied college students to determine if perceived social support was associated with supportive interactions. All three studies measured the length of time students talked with individuals identified as friends, family, or strangers about problems they were encountering. Results indicated that students who ranked high in perceived support tended to talk more about personal problems with family and friends and talked longer with those individuals with whom they had close personal ties.

Cutrona (1986) attempted to gain greater insight into the interpersonal behaviors that constitute social support. Her study of college undergraduates, though based on a small, unrepresentative sample, included: (a) completion of a perceived social support scale; (b) recording in daily event records in which students recorded any stressful events they encountered; (c) completion of a brief measure of depressive mood on a daily basis; and (d) completion of a social contact record which listed every social interaction that lasted 10 minutes or longer. Social interactions

were divided into help-oriented encounters (for example, offered advice, shared point of view) or non-help-orientated encounters (for example, went to a party together, engaged in casual conversation). Help-oriented behavior was selected to reflect the four social support functions most often cited; that is, emotional sustenance, self-esteem bolstering, information/feedback, and tangible assistance. Cutrona found that people who reported higher levels of perceived social support received helping behaviors such as "listened to confidences", "offered advice", "expressed caring or concern", from others at a higher rate than those low in perceived support. Frequency of tangible assistance was the only variable not associated with perceived support and Cutrona postulated that this might have been due to recall errors (that is, acts of assistance may only be recalled when they immediately follow negative events) or to perceptions that the assistance was interfering or extraneous.

These studies indicate that an individual's perception of social support influences support behaviors. A person who believes he is supported tends more often to initiate support-seeking behaviors as well as to receive supportive behavior from others more frequently.

D. Self-Esteem Bolstering

Cutrona (1986) reported a relationship between social support and self-esteem.

> Many stressful events pose a threat to self-esteem. People who are given positive feedback about important aspects of themselves (e.g. their competence, importance to others, ability to cope) are less likely to experience diminished self-esteem following stressful events and, as a result, may suffer fewer symptoms of depression. Individuals who are able to maintain a high level of self-esteem under adverse circumstances are probably given positive feedback about their value and importance both in the presence and the absence of stress, thus giving them a firm basis for their positive self evaluations (p. 207).

Swann and Predmore (1985) studied how intimates help their partners deal with stress and how intimates' perceptions of their partners affect the partner's self-esteem. This multi-step investigation first measured the subject's social self-esteem and then the intimate's perception of the subject on a modified version of the same instrument. The congruence, or lack thereof, between the scores of the subjects and intimates was assessed. Subjects were all given discrepant feedback about their personalities and were placed in rooms with either an intimate or a stranger. Conversations between subjects and the intimates or strangers were recorded to ascertain whether interacting with either a

congruent intimate, an incongruent intimate, or a stranger influenced the extent to which subjects changed their self-ratings on the self-esteem inventory. Results of the investigation indicated that less self-rating change occurred when subjects interacted with a congruent intimate. Interacting with an incongruent intimate did not improve the subject's ability to dismiss self-discrepant feedback. The subject's level of self-esteem did not diminish when his/her intimate refuted the discrepant feedback but did change in the direction of the discrepant feedback when the intimate supported the discrepant feedback. Thus, this investigation pointed to the role of support by intimates in changing one's level of self-esteem.

> Our findings suggest that self-concept stability emanates from forces outside the person, from continuing in the manner in which people's social relationships are organized. Pivotal in such organizational schemes are people's friends and intimates. If chosen carefully, these individuals will serve as accomplices who reinforce their partner's self-conceptions, thereby rendering the conceptions impervious to attack (p. 1616).

The literature appears to suggest that social support, in bolstering self-esteem, may actually be more important for health maintenance than as a coping mechanism (Thoits, 1985; Heller, Swindle and Dusenbury, 1986).

> We believe that the actions of others that bolster an individual's self-esteem, morale, and sense of well being can occur independently of the individual's attempts to cope with stressful life circumstances. Support processes have an impact not only because of what we do but also because of who we are and the role relationships developed with significant others (Heller, Swindle and Dusenbury, 1986, p. 468).

> Evaluations of one's overall worth, lovability, importance, and competence depends at least in part, upon the perceived appraisals of others with whom one regularly interacts (Thoits, 1985, p. 58).

Significant others can help individuals cope with problems either by helping them overcome the source of the problem or by allowing the individual to express and legitimize the negative impact of the problem (Thoits, 1985).

E. Gender Differences

Gender differences in social support abound in the literature. Women seem to experience greater overall support than do men because they seem to have larger and more varied support networks (Hirsch, 1979; Bell, 1981; Vaux, 1985). Additionally, it has been implied that sex roles may affect social interactions. For example, women are afforded a greater opportunity than men to seek support from others (Bem, 1974; Bell, 1981). This can be attributed to the fact that social expectations would mitigate against men seeking support in many circumstances since it is believed they should be

able to meet new experiences with confidence. Additionally, whereas males may consider it unmasculine to admit to needs for assistance, women have been encouraged by society to appear to be fragile and helpless (Lance, Lourie and Mayo, 1979). Women, as well, are generally more willing to provide assistance. Perhaps, this is a result of conditioning that encourages females as nurturers.

Yet, though women appear superior in both providing and receiving support (Vaux, 1985), women report more distress than men and are less satisfied with the levels of support they receive (Hirsch, 1979). Research is rather conclusive with regard to the availability of husband support yet inconclusive regarding the satisfaction with husband support.

For women in particular, resistance to stress is more closely related to greater amounts of family support than it is for men (Schmidt, Conn, Greene and Mesirown, 1982; Holahan and Moos, 1985). Lowenthall and Haven (1968) found that wives were mentioned more often by husbands to be their primary confidants whereas husbands were mentioned least often by wives to be their primary confidants. Yet women reported having more intimate, confiding relationships than did men. These findings suggest that women receive support from those outside their marriages or, at least, do not receive their primary support from their husbands. This supposition has been validated by many others (Vanfossen, 1981; Kohen, 1983; Depner and Ingersoll-Dayton, 1985). On the other hand, Brown and Harris (1978) found that a confiding relationship with a parent, sister, or friend did not compensate for

a woman's lack of a confiding relationship with her spouse in terms of vulnerability to depression.

The findings of two studies revealed that, although females reported higher levels of support than did males, the support was not sufficient to alleviate problems. Burke and Weir (1978) studied social support, life events stress, and well-being among high school students but did not study the association between these variables. Therefore, while they found that despite higher levels of support, adolescent girls noted more distress, there was no report to indicate why. Likewise, Cauce, Felner and Primavera (1982), in their study of high school adolescents, found that females reported higher levels of informal support. The level of informal support was not associated with higher levels of well-being and adjustment, however. Vaux (1985) suggested possible explanations as to why women continue to be vulnerable to problems despite support.

> Support received by women is of poorer quality than that received by men; men have lower expectations for support; women experience additional stressors or vulnerabilities that counteract their support advantage; gender differences in reported distress are an artifact of male underreporting and are unrelated to objective support (p. 106).

In summary, although the concept of social support has been studied by many researchers over the past 15 years, there does not seem to be consensus about how it is defined, conceptualized, or measured. Nonetheless, studies have shown that individuals who

are encouraged and listened to, who are comforted, and who are shown empathy and caring, are bolstered in their self-esteem and are better able to resist stressors. Additionally, the giving of aid and assistance negates some of the burdens imposed by stress-filled events. Offering advice and providing counsel can help individuals cope with problems. Social support is postulated to protect both physical and mental health although mechanisms by which it works are not clear.

Subjective appraisals of support correlate in a positive fashion with an individual's ability to handle stress. Those individuals who perceive that they are supported tend to be more communicative, are better able to dismiss threats to their self-confidence, and actually seem to inspire greater levels of support from others.

Research seems to indicate that women receive more overall support than do men. It appears, however, that the support women receive is not sufficient to alleviate problems and to enhance their well-being. Whether this is related to the type of support they are receiving, to the support provider(s), or to other factors is not known.

Social support aides in self-esteem bolstering, enhances coping assistance mechanisms, and lessens the effects of stress. Adult women students have been reported to have difficulty with low self-esteem, role overload, stress, and guilt. It would appear, therefore, that an investigation of social support for adult women students would be particularly germane to issues that have been noted previously regarding supportive functioning and the problems

of adult women students.

Some researchers postulate that the most important source of social support appears to come from those with whom we are most intimate. For the married women, this would most likely be her husband. The next section delineates the literature dealing with spousal support.

IV. Spousal Support

In American society a woman's identity is often dependent upon her relationships to others; that is, as someone's daughter, wife, or mother. Only recently have women thought of themselves as persons in their own right and have begun to participate in activities to enhance their self-actualization. It would appear logical that in the marital relationship, a woman would look to her husband as a source of support. It also would appear reasonable to assume that spousal support would be an important asset in a married woman's quest for higher education.

As previously mentioned, various authors have postulated that the most crucial support resource for married women is their husband (Van Meter, 1976; Vaux and Harrison, 1985). Some authors cite family issues as a major factor in determining a woman's success in college (Hooper, 1979; Gilbert, 1982). In a study of women graduate students, Feldman (1974) noted that women who attempted to combine spouse and student roles were less successful than those women whose primary emphasis was on the student role. Feldman further observed that marriage did not complement

graduate school success for women as it did for men. Westin (1975) found in studying women from many institutions that it was extremely difficult for a woman to return to college if her husband was opposed to her decision. The results of Markus' study (1973) indicated that a husband's advice and opinions were critical in a woman's decision to return to school and, thereafter, in remaining in school.

A. Attitudinal and Emotional Support

Many of the early studies of women who returned to higher education affirmed the importance of the husband's encouragement and positive attitude. As has been noted, adult women students suffer considerable stress because of role overload and role strain. Van Meter (1973) observed that, while setting priorities can alleviate some of the difficulties women encounter, the agreement of the husband to the priorities the woman has set is a very important factor in determining the degree of role strain she will experience. Berkove's study (1978) makes this very clear when she reported that the importance of a husband's emotional and attitudinal support of his wife's college plans was noted by 53% of the women questioned by Burton (1968), 80% of the undergraduate women studied by DeLisle (1965), 58% of the women respondents in the Hembrough study (1966), and 54% of the graduate school women surveyed by Withycombe-Brocato (1969).

Spreadbury (1983) also reported that one of the most important factors in determining whether a woman enrolls in college and then continues her studies is her husband's attitude

toward her education. She reported that 50% of the wives in her study noted their husbands reacted positively to news that they were going back to school and that 50% were encouraging to their wives during their college careers. Wives with young children, in particular, reported that their husbands were proud and supportive. Often, however, husbands feel ambivalent toward their wives' student role. Ballmer and Lee (1971) reported that although husbands admired their wives more as individuals after their return to college, they also reported dissatisfaction with the amount of time their wives spent with them, the deterioration of their sex lives, and their wives' emerging autonomy. Ballmer and Cozby (1974) also reported ambivalent feelings on the part of the husbands in their study.

Women students tend to equate their personal satisfaction with their husband's approval of their behaviors. Sales, Shore and Bolitho (1980) observed that the more a husband supported the wife's decision to return to school, the greater the woman's overall satisfaction with her student role. Markus (1973), too, found that adult women required a great deal of support from their interpersonal environment when attempting a life change, even a change that was self-initiated and was prompted by internal needs and motives such as obtaining a college education. Her research demonstrated that enjoyment of college was positively related to encouragement received from family and close friends.

Berkove (1978) did not believe her research was able to support the premise that husband support is important to a wife's success in college except in a very limited way. Yet, she did report

that three areas of husband support; that is, attitudinal, emotional, and financial support, were related to dropout rates. Women who reported their husbands as having the most conservative views regarding women's roles and abilities were more likely to drop out. Likewise, women who indicated that persons other than their husbands provided them with the most significant emotional support, also were more likely to be dropouts. Although 54% of her respondents indicated that their husbands were very supportive emotionally, it is interesting to note than only about half of the respondents named their husbands as the individual from whom they received the most significant emotional support. This finding was even more pronounced with dropouts, naming their husbands only 30% of the time despite indicating that their husbands were emotionally supportive. Lastly, women whose husbands were unwilling to help finance their college education were more likely to be dropouts. Berkove noted, however, that her small sample of 33 dropouts (9% of her respondents) made it unwise to generalize to any degree.

Huston-Hobert and Strange (1986) also studied the degree of emotional support perceived by spouses who returned to school. Their comparison of male and female returnees found that men reported a greater degree of emotional support from their spouses than did women students. Women reported receiving a greater degree of emotional support from friends and classmates than did male students. "When asked to identify the greatest source of emotional support, the majority of men and women chose their spouse. A significantly greater proportion of men (83%) than

women (56%), however, made this choice" (p. 391).

B. Functional and Financial Support

Parelman's study (1974) was one of the first to concern itself with the functional and financial support accorded college women by their husbands. She interviewed 10 women in a pilot study and found that women who were involved in marriages with non-traditional role assignments enjoyed more family support of their college status. She also found that the more a husband agreed with his wife's decision to return to school, the more help with household tasks she received.

Markus (1973) noted that 47% of surveyed women students reported no change in the distribution of household chores since their return to college. She further observed that even though another 45% of respondents reported that the family shared the household chores, it was because they always had done so; therefore, there was no true redistribution of functional effort based on the woman's return to school. When change did occur, it was more apt to be in the families of older women or when there were two or more children.

Berkove (1978) studied 361 women aged 26 and older who were married at the time they returned to school and had a least one child still living at home. Her subjects all attended one of three four-year, degree-granting institutions in a large metropolitan area in the Midwest. While her results clearly showed husband support played an important part in women's lives, the area of functional support had the least impact on returning students.

An exception to this were women with children under the age of six who Berkove postulated were able to remain in college specifically because of the spousal help they received with household tasks. Berkove explained that the reason women did not seem to be adversely affected by lack of functional support was because they did not appear to expect it. Interestingly, Berkove's research also showed that women whose husbands took on more responsibilities or changed their expectations of their wives' responsibilities felt the most guilt about not being able to fulfill all the responsibilities that had previously been expected of them. Additionally, though these women indicated that their husbands gave emotional approval and financial support for their return to school, it was under the explicit or implicit assumption that school responsibilities would not cause major changes in the established family routine; that is, the traditional division of household duties would remain the same. The women accepted these assumptions by trying to organize their student lives in such a way as not to inconvenience their families.

In their study of both male and female adult students, Huston-Hobert and Strange (1986) asked respondents whether: (a) they assumed greater responsibility for household tasks; (b) their spouse assumed greater responsibility; or (c) they shared responsibility since their return to school. Results indicated significant sex differences for each of 12 household tasks. Women students reported assuming greater responsibility for 7 of the 12 household tasks while male students reported assuming greater responsibility for four tasks. One task (contribution to family income) was reported by male students as being equally divided among the 3

responses and by female students as being assumed to a greater degree by their husbands. While the conclusion seems valid that wives generally appear to be more supportive of their husbands' return to college than do husbands of their wives' return, methodological problems make it difficult to evaluate spousal support in a direct manner. Nonetheless, as Huston-Hobert and Strange noted:

> Whereas attitudinal and emotional endorsement of role change may not require a great investment of time and energy, returning students' successful resolution of their complex and demanding multiple commitments may come down to the proverbial question of "Who takes out the garbage?" (p. 393)

In summary, spousal support of a woman's college career is extremely important if a woman is to succeed. Though women students continue to be responsible for the majority of household and family duties and receive little functional help from their spouses, this does not appear to be a detriment to their academic success. In fact, for some women, it is important that they continue to provide the same degree of responsibility for household and family functions so that their personal needs are not seen as disruptive and selfish. On the other hand, a husband's attitude toward his wife's educational aspirations and his emotional support appear to be especially important even though women frequently cite people other than their spouses as providing the greatest source of emotional support.

V. Summary

It would appear that adult women are faced with many problems not faced by adult men when they enroll in college. Personal problems encountered include role overload, stress, role definition, lack of self-esteem, and guilt. Various forms of social support have a direct relationship on some of these problems. Support from a husband, particularly emotional and attitudinal support, has been found to be a crucial factor in influencing a woman's decision to enroll in college and, once enrolled, in her academic perseverance. Husband support has been negatively related to dropping out of school and positively related to academic satisfaction. Yet, even with little husband support, especially of a functional or financial nature, many women enter college and succeed. In fact, some women do not expect, request, or seem to want husband support.

Information that appears to be lacking in the literature regarding spousal support relates to the reasons why women receive less spousal support than their male counterparts. Heretofore, little has been reported on the factors that relate to the level of support received from spouses. A description of the attitudes and behaviors of adult women students and of their husbands as these might relate to the frequency with which adult women students receive spousal support would appear to be worthy of investigation and is the purpose of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I. Design of the Study

A. Purposes

The purposes of this investigation were to determine if spousal support of adult women students differed among the four support types as characterized by House (1981) and if the attitudes and behaviors of married, adult women students and their husbands related to the level of spousal support they received.

A subordinate purpose of this investigation was to obtain information that heretofore had not been gathered pertaining to spousal support variables and married adult women students. Specifically, this investigation:

1. Described the attitudes of married, adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits.
2. Described the attitudes of the husbands of adult women students toward spousal support and their wives' college pursuits.
3. Delineated the support-seeking behaviors of adult student wives and the behaviors of their husbands as these related to the spousal support of the wives' college pursuits.
4. Characterized the reasons cited by married, adult women students for their husbands' support or lack of support.

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In this investigation the concept of spousal support was refined through the use of House's (1981) typology of social support since his definitions of support appeared to parallel the problems ascribed to adult women students in previous research. House defined four types of social support--emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal.

B. Research Questions

The purposes of this investigation were realized when the following questions were answered:

1. Do women report differences in receipt of spousal support among the four support types as characterized by House (1981)?
2. What are the attitudes of adult women students regarding spousal support of their college pursuits?
   a. Is there a relationship between these attitudes and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
3. What are the support-seeking behaviors of adult women students regarding spousal support of their college pursuits?
   a. Is there a relationship between these behaviors and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
4. What are the attitudes of adult women students' husbands regarding their wives' college pursuits and spousal support?

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a. Is there a relationship between these attitudes and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?

5. What have been the past behaviors of adult women students' husbands regarding spousal support?
   a. Is there a relationship between these behaviors and the levels of spousal support that adult women students receive?
6. What are the reasons adult women students cite for their husbands' support or lack of support?
   a. Are these primarily wife-emanating, primarily husband-emanating, a combination of wife- and husband-emanating, or neither wife- nor husband-emanating reasons?

C. Research Design

Since this investigation attempted to determine if there were correlational relationships between attitudes and behaviors of husbands and wives and the types and levels of spousal support received by married, adult women students, a relationship research design was employed.

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II. Subjects

A. Subject Criteria

Subjects in this study fit the following criteria:

1. Women aged 25 years or older;
2. Married and currently residing with their husbands;
3. Enrolled at Michigan State University during Winter and Spring Terms 1989; and
4. Enrolled in the College of Business or College of Nursing.

Only married, adult women students currently living with their husbands were surveyed in order to negate the possibility of skewing the data in favor of negligible spousal support levels, particularly in the area of instrumental support. Additionally, only adult women students from two colleges within Michigan State University were surveyed because of the problem of identifying student marital status through the records of the institution. Since marital status cannot be identified through Michigan State University's student data base, time and financial constraints necessitated identification of smaller subgroups within the University to contact regarding marital status. Initial contact with administrators from the Colleges of Business and Nursing indicated that their estimated adult women student populations would be manageable given the investigator's resources. The problem of identifying appropriate subjects for this study is discussed in greater detail in the following section.

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B. Subject Identification and Contact

A computerized listing of all women students whose birth-dates occurred on or before September 19, 1963 (this would assure that subjects were 25 years of age at the beginning of the Michigan State University 1988-89 academic year) and who were enrolled in the Colleges of Business or Nursing at Michigan State University during Winter and Spring Terms 1989 was obtained from the Office of the Registrar. Three hundred eighteen women students were identified in this manner. The Registrar's list subsequently was submitted to the Assistant Provost for Academic Services to assure student confidentiality until the time that women responded to a presurvey postcard (see below). Since Michigan State University does not compile data on the marital status of its students, it was not possible to distinguish a priori the married from the unmarried students on the above-mentioned registration list. A method needed to be devised wherein subjects suitable for this study could be identified.

The investigator provided the Assistant Provost for Academic Services with presurvey postcards (Appendix A) which were mailed to the 318 women students identified by the Registrar. This mailing served three purposes. First, the postcard asked students to provide the investigator with information regarding their marital status. Secondly, the postcard briefly outlined the purpose of the study and the potential benefits to students of the data that was collected in an effort to alert students to the investigation being conducted. It was hoped the presurvey mailing would interest students in the investigation so that they would respond to the

marital status inquiry and also would be more likely to complete the survey instrument if it were mailed to them. Thirdly, response to the presurvey postcard also served as implicit consent to be involved in the study. When a presurvey postcard was returned, the Assistant Provost for Academic Services released the student name and address to the investigator.

Of the 318 presurvey postcards mailed, 177 were completed and returned. This represented a response rate of 56%. Of these, 36 respondents were single (20%), 2 were separated from their husbands (1%), 14 were divorced (8%), and 113 were married and currently living with their husbands (64%). Twelve postcards were returned as undeliverable (7%).

The 113 women who noted on the presurvey postcards that they were married and currently living with their husbands were mailed a survey packet by the investigator. A second list of these married students was kept by the investigator to assist in identifying non-respondents so that they might receive a second mailing.

To further safeguard that data were not collected on individuals who did not fit the subject criteria, the first two questions of the survey asked the respondent's marital status and age. Respondents who indicated that they were not married and currently living with their husbands or who were less than 25 years of age were asked to return the surveys with the remainder of the survey items unanswered. Furthermore, responses to the first two survey items were reviewed by the investigator before surveys were submitted to the MSU Computer Laboratory for data entry.

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III. The Survey Instrument

After a thorough review of the literature the survey instrument was developed, incorporating questions to elicit both objective and subjective information. The survey was reviewed by two professionals at Michigan State University--one an expert in the field of women's studies and one an expert in the field of support psychology--to determine if the survey items were appropriate for the purposes of this study. Changes were made to the survey in response to their recommendations. Subsequently, the survey was given to five married, adult women students who were enrolled in colleges other than those included in this investigation. The pilot test helped determine if the survey instrument was understandable and if the questions elicited the information intended by the investigator. Ambiguous and unclear items were revised before the survey instrument was mailed to the subject population (Appendix C).

The first section of the survey requested information relative to the respondent's sociodemographic status such as age, number and age of children living at home, and employment status. Socio-demographic information about the respondent's husband was requested as well. This section of the survey also asked the respondent about her college status; that is, whether she was a full- or part-time student, how long she had been a student, and the type of program in which she was enrolled. Similar information was requested about the respondent's husband. Lastly, this section of the survey ascertained the length of time the respondent and her

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husband had been married.

The second section of the survey commenced with a brief description of the spousal support types (emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal) that the survey attempted to measure. Examples of the four types of spousal support were given to further identify the four support types and to make the distinctions among them clearer. Thereafter, each subject was presented with a series of incomplete statements which she was asked to complete. In so doing, she categorized the frequency with which she received spousal support. For example, each respondent was asked to complete the following statement: "I receive emotional support for my college pursuits from my husband" by circling always (1), most of the time (2), an equal amount of the time (3), some of the time (4), or never (5).

The third section of the instrument contained statements by which a respondent was to describe her attitudes regarding spousal support for her college pursuits. The attitudes that were surveyed in this section of the questionnaire were based upon frequently cited research which has reported that women students feel ambivalent about their college status because it conflicts with personal, familial, and societal views of a woman's role. Since researchers have noted that: (a) women report feelings of guilt at having altered family member role responsibilities or lessened their efforts with husbands and children as a result of their attending college (Markus, 1973; Katz, 1976; Berkove, 1978); (b) some women consider their attendance in college to be acts of selfishness (Lance, Lourie and Mayo, 1979; Sales, Shore and Bolitho, 1980);

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(c) many women admit to feelings of inadequacy relative to their perceptions of the academic and social expectations of the college experience (Brandenburg, 1974; Scott, 1980); and (d) some women espouse beliefs about women's roles that may conflict with their decision to attend college (Berkove, 1978; Gilbert and Holahan, 1982); questions relating to these issues were included in the survey instrument.

Each respondent was asked to comment on her support-seeking behaviors to ascertain if these behaviors related to the level of spousal support she received.

Also in Section Three of the survey were statements dealing with each woman's perceptions of her husband's attitudes and behaviors regarding spousal support and her college pursuits. Researchers have indicated that husbands also feel ambivalent about their wives' college attendance. They have reported that while some men may express pride in their wives' college enrollment, husbands also complain about changes in family functioning and their marital relationship as a result of their wives' student role (Brandenburg, 1974; Roach, 1976). Furthermore, some husbands are reported as having feelings of jealousy and inadequacy when their wives become college students (Balmer and Lee, 1971). Consequently, questions relating to these issues were included in Section Three of the survey.

Responses to the items in Section Three included multiple-choice options such as strongly agree (1), agree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5).

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The fourth section of the survey began with general statements wherein women were to comment on the various factors that they believed influenced the level of spousal support they received. Responses were formatted in a manner identical to the Likert-scale used in Section Three. The next question asked respondents to indicate the one support type most important to them. The final two questions in the fourth section of the survey solicited unstructured responses to two questions: "If you believe that you are supported by your husband in your college pursuits, what reason(s), if any, can you give for why he is supportive?" and "If you believe your husband is not supportive of your college pursuits, what reason(s), if any, can you give for why he is not supportive?" These open-ended questions were included in the survey because multiple-choice or close-ended responses in a survey may not include all the possible explanations for a given phenomenon. Also, open-ended questions give respondents an opportunity to answer in a less structured manner and may, in fact, add to the body of knowledge by providing information not previously reported in the literature.

IV. Data Collection Procedures

Adult women students enrolled in the Colleges of Business and Nursing were mailed a presurvey postcard which briefly described the investigation and indicated the potential benefits to students of the data that was collected. The presurvey postcard also asked students for their marital status. Those who responded

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that they were married and currently living with their husbands subsequently were mailed a survey packet which contained the following items:

1. A cover letter containing the endorsement of the study by the Michigan State University Office of Human Relations, Division of Women's Programs. The cover letter more fully explained the reason for the study and requested the assistance of the prospective subjects (Appendix B).
2. A survey instrument which was color coded to the respondent's major academic unit; that is, College of Business surveys were printed on blue paper and College of Nursing surveys were printed on green paper.
3. A stamped, pre-addressed postcard on which a subject indicated her participation in the study. Subjects were instructed to return these postcards separately from the survey instrument (Appendix D). On this postcard, subjects also were able to request the results of the study.
4. A stamped, pre-addressed envelope in which to return the survey instrument.

Anonymity was assured since there was no coding of the survey instruments and no respondent identifiers on the instruments. Respondents were known only through receipt of the participation postcards which were returned separately from the survey instruments. Subjects were asked to return the surveys within one week. After two weeks a second mailing of the survey

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packet was made to those women who had not yet responded. Non-respondents were identified by matching the returned participation postcards to a list of the presurvey respondents who had indicated that they were married.

The second mailing to those who had not yet responded to the survey also consisted of the survey instrument, the participation postcard, and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope for the completed survey. The cover letter accompanying this mailing differed slightly from the original cover letter (Appendix E). At the top of the cover letter, written by hand in right green ink, was the message, "Please participate. We need your input!". This was written in an attempt to increase participation. Subjects were requested to return the second mailing within one week.

V. Description of Support Variables

House's typology of support (1981) was used in defining husband support. As has been noted previously, his typology appeared to be closely related to the problems that confront adult women students as suggested in the literature on both social support and adult students. Four areas of spousal support were studied: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal. All variables were reported from the wife's (respondent's) point of view.

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A. Receipt of Spousal Support

Adult women students were asked if they believed they received each of the four types of support from their husbands toward their college pursuits (Table 1). Answers to each statement ranged from always (1) to never (5) on a five-point Likert scale.

Table 1

Summary of Spousal Support Types

Spousal Support Types	Question Item Number
Emotional Support Received	18
Instrumental Support Received	19
Informational Support Received	20
Appraisal Support Received	21
Most Important Support Type	62

B. Wives' Attitudes

Respondents were provided with a number of statements that related to the attitudes they might espouse and which might relate to their wanting, seeking, or appreciating spousal support (Table 2). Each survey item contained sub-statements pertaining to the four support types to allow the respondent to discriminate her responses. These items were answered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

Table 2

Summary of Wives' Attitudinal Variables

Wives' Attitudinal Variables	Question Item Number
Right to receive support	22 a, b, c, d*
Negative feelings when receiving support	24 a, b, c, d
Husband's feelings paramount	25 a, b, c, d
Expectation of support	26 a, b, c, d
Guilt upon receipt of support	27 a, b, c, d
Academic success dependent on support	28 a, b, c, d
Support doesn't matter	30 a, b, c, d
Feelings of inadequate wife/mother performance	31 a, b, c, d
Wanting support	32 a, b, c, d
Burdening husband	34 a, b, c, d
Support demands negatively affecting marriage	36 a, b, c, d
Support levels not dependent on wife's control	42 a, b, c, d
Doesn't like asking for support	43 a, b, c, d

*item subsets denote support types; a = emotional, b = instrumental, c = informational, d = appraisal support

C. Wives' Behaviors

Respondents were provided with a number of statements about their support-seeking behaviors which might relate to the level of support they received from their husbands (Table 3). Like the items measuring wife attitudes, the wife behavior items contained sub-statements pertaining to the four support types. These items were answered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

Table 3

Summary of Wives' Behavior Variables

Wives' Behavior Variables	Question Item Number
Requests support from husband	23 a, b, c, d*
Prods husband	29 a, b, c, d
Gets support when she asks for it	33 a, b, c, d
Discussed importance of support with husband	35 a, b, c, d
Looks to others for support	37 a, b, c, d
No increase in support even when wife asks	38 a, b, c, d
Would not express needs if they conflict with husband's needs	39 a, b, c, d
Initiates support	40 a, b, c, d
Discusses with husband if not satisfied with support	41 a, b, c, d

*item subsets denote support types; a = emotional, b = instrumental, c = informational, d = appraisal support

D. Husbands' Attitudes

Respondents were asked about their husbands' attitudes as these might relate to spousal support and to their wives' college pursuits (Table 4). Husband attitudes were reported as their wives perceived them. These items did not include support type sub-statements. Responses to statements about husband attitudes ranged from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

Table 4

Summary of Husbands' Attitudinal Variables

Husbands' Attitudinal Variables	Question Item Number
Enthusiastic about wife's college attendance	44
Ambivalent about college unless it inconveniences him	48
Is proud of wife's achievements	50
Begrudgingly gives support	51
Believes wife's college pursuits are not very important	52
Wife should be able to fulfill all roles as she did before entering college	53
Concerned that college will negatively affect their marriage	54
Does not like it when college activities interfere with their home life	56
Has to be constantly reminded of support needs	58

E. Husbands' Behaviors

A husband's past support behaviors that might relate to the level of spousal support the wife reported were included in statements to which wives were to respond (Table 5). There items did not include support type sub-statements. Responses to the statements ranged from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

Table 5

Summary of Husbands' Behavioral Variables

Husbands' Behavioral Variables	Question Item Number
Finds it difficult to be supportive	45
Encourages wife in her interests	46
Has been supportive in the past	47
Gives support only when asked	49
Receptive to support requests in the past	55
May say he will be supportive, but does not act in a supportive manner	57
Generally initiates the support that is received	59
Support level wanes with time	60

F. Reasons for Spousal Support or Lack of Spousal Support

The respondents' beliefs about the factors which might have influenced the level of spousal support they received were elicited in a statement that utilized a five-point Likert scale (Table 6). Responses ranged from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

Table 6

Summary of Factors Affecting Spousal Support

Factors	Question Item Number
Wives' attitudes and behaviors	61a
Husbands' attitudes and behaviors	61b
Marital relationship	61c
Societal views	61d
Other	61e

Women's beliefs about the reasons why their husbands were or were not supportive of their college pursuits were elicited from open-ended questions at the conclusion of the survey (Table 7). Responses to the last two questions were divided into four causative categories: (a) because of factors emanating from the wife; (b) because of factors emanating from the husband; (c) because of factors emanating from the wife and husband; and (d) because of factors not emanating either from the wife or the husband.

Table 7

Summary of Reasons Women Cite for Spousal Support or Lack of Spousal Support

Reasons	Question Item Number
Support	63
Wife-Emanating	
Husband-Emanating	
Both	
Neither	
Lack of support	64
Wife-Emanating	
Husband-Emanating	
Both	
Neither	

VI. Scoring the Data

Responses to the items eliciting sociodemographic information were scored in order to obtain simple counts that were later statistically quantified.

Responses to the items in the second section of the survey also were counted for statistical analysis. Additionally, responses were weighted in order to calculate a support type receipt score and a total support receipt score for each respondent (Lemon, 1973). For example, a response of never (5) was given a weighted score of "0", a response of some of the time (4) was given a weighted score of "1", a response of an equal amount of the time (3) was given a weighted score of "2", a response of most of the time (4) was given a weighted score of "3", and a response of always (5) was given a weighted score of "4". Thus, a Support Type Receipt Score was determined on a scale of 0-4 points and a Total Support Receipt Score was obtained on a scale of 0-16 points.

Items 22 through 43 in the third section of the survey instrument were counted as noted above. These items also were weighted on a very favorable to very unfavorable (+2 to -2) or very unfavorable to very favorable (-2 to +2) continuum, depending on the wording of the statement (Appendix G). For example, in response to the statement, "I have every right to receive emotional support for my college pursuits from my husband," a response of strongly agree (1) was scored as a very favorable response and was weighted as +2 points. The remaining possible responses were scored thusly: agree (2) was scored as favorable and weighted as

+1, neither agree nor disagree (3) was scored as neutral and weighted as 0 points, disagree (4) was scored as unfavorable and weighted as -1 points, and strongly disagree (5) was scored as very unfavorable and was weighted as -2 points. The scores on all attitude items were aggregated to obtain a wife's attitude score for each of the four spousal support types as well as for spousal support in general. The scores on all behavior items similarly were summed to obtain a wife's behavior score for each of the four support types as well as for spousal support in general.

Responses to items 44 through 60 in the third section of the survey instrument were scored similarly to the wife attitude and behavior items as noted above (Appendix G). These items, however, measured the husbands' attitudes and behaviors toward spousal support. They were not delineated by support type. The attitude item scores were summed to obtain a husband's attitude score and the behavior item scores were summed to obtain a husband's behavior score.

Items 63 and 64 in the last section asked for open-ended responses. The responses were scored by the investigator as representing either: (a) wife-emanating reasons; (b) husband-emanating reasons; (c) both wife- and husband-emanating reasons; or (d) neither wife- nor husband-emanating reasons for spousal supportiveness or non-supportiveness.

VII. Analysis of the Data

In order to characterize the factors that might be related to spousal support, the data from the study were reported in such a manner as to provide a normative description of how the total sample distributed itself on the response alternatives to the survey questions. Data obtained from the sociodemographic and educational variables in the first portion of the survey were calculated using frequency tables. Counts, proportions, modal categories, and means were determined.

The second section of the survey relating to the frequency with which spousal support was received by adult women students also was analyzed through use of frequency tables. In addition, however, each item's response was weighted. Responses were tabulated in order to compute a Support Type Receipt Score (0-4 points) and a Total Support Receipt Score (0-16 points). Means, variances, and standard deviations were obtained on this data. T-tests were performed to ascertain if the differences among the means of the support types were statistically significant.

The third section of the survey was reported using frequency tables. Additionally, responses in this section were scored on a weighted continuum which previously has been described in Section VI of this chapter. Thus a summative score was derived for each respondent pertaining to her attitudes and behaviors toward each of the four support types as well as toward spousal support in general. A summative score was derived for each respondent's husband pertaining to his attitudes and behaviors. Means, variances,

and standard deviations were computed from these summative scores.

Various statistical techniques were utilized to measure the relationship between: (a) wife attitudes and receipt of support; (b) wife behaviors and receipt of support; (c) husband attitudes and receipt of support; and (d) husband behaviors and receipt of support. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed for each of the sets of variables described in the previous sentence. T-tests were employed in order to ascertain the significance of the correlations. Finally, stepwise multiple regression was performed to determine the relationship of all four variables to total support receipt.

Frequency tables were employed to identify the reasons women cited for their husbands' support or lack of support for their college pursuits. Chi-square analysis was used to determine if the proportion of respondents who cited husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness was significantly higher than the proportion who cited wife-emanating reasons.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

One hundred and five women responded to the survey; sixty from the College of Business and forty-five from the College of Nursing. This represented a response rate of 93% from the 113 surveys that were mailed.

The first two items in the survey asked for the respondent's age and marital status to guarantee that each respondent fit the requirements of this study; i.e. that she be at least 25 years of age and that she be married and living with her husband. All respondents who returned the surveys fit the study's criteria; consequently, none of the completed surveys were disqualified from data analysis. It should be noted, however, that some respondents chose not to answer certain items in the survey. Therefore, the analysis of data that is presented in this chapter is reflective of differences in the number of responses for each survey item.

I. Description of Respondents

The majority of the women who participated in this study were under the age of 45. Most of the respondents had fewer than three children living at home, the majority of whom were under the age of 13. The respondents generally had been enrolled full-time at Michigan State University for a number of terms; almost 62% had been enrolled seven terms or more. Equal numbers of respondents were pursuing either bachelor's or graduate degrees. Almost three-

quarters of the respondents also worked outside their homes, with more than half of them working at least 31 hours per week.

The majority of the respondents' husbands also were younger than 44 years of age. Slightly over 87% had attained some type of postsecondary education degree. A small percentage of husbands were currently enrolled in college with the majority of them enrolled in graduate degree programs. Unlike their wives, however, the majority of husbands who were currently attending college were enrolled on a part-time basis. Almost all the husbands worked outside the home and, of these, the majority worked more than 40 hours per week.

Over 68% of the respondents had been married for 5 years of more. (See Appendix F for a complete reporting of the demographic data.)

A comparison of the demographic characteristics of this group of respondents to subjects of previous research on adult women students did not reveal significant differences. Previous research had described women who were approximately 40 years of age with well-educated husbands. They generally had an average of 3 children with the majority being of school age (Markus, 1973; Brandenburg, 1974; Scott, 1976; Berkove, 1978; Sales, Shore and Bolitho, 1980).

Unlike earlier studies, however, a much larger percentage of the respondents in this study was employed outside the home. Since much of the previous research on adult women students was written over 10 years ago, it is not surprising that the percentage of working women would have increased.

Analysis of variance was performed to determine if certain demographic characteristics affected: (a) the level of spousal support received; (b) the wife's support attitudes; (c) the wife's support behaviors; (d) the husband's support attitudes; and (e) the husband's support behaviors. The demographic variables that were analyzed included the number of children living at home, the wife's age, the husband's age, and the length of their marriage. No relationships were found between these demographic variables and the level of spousal support the respondents received, the wives' attitude scores, the husbands' attitude scores, and the husbands' behavior scores. However, analysis of variance revealed that length of marriage affected the wives' behavior scores ($F(4,99) = 2.83$) and that husband's age affected the wives' behavior scores ($F(3,100) = 4.34$). The data revealed that the wives' behavior scores were inversely related to length of marriage and to the husband's age.

II. Qualitative Analysis

The last two items in the survey asked respondents to answer open-ended questions wherein respondents were to give reasons why they believed their husbands to be either supportive or non-supportive. To enable the reader to understand the nature of the information obtained from these items and the manner in which the responses were coded by the investigator, exemplary passages from some of the responses have been excerpted in this section.

A. Wife-Emanating Factors Affecting Spousal Support

Responses which indicated that spousal support originated from attitudes or behaviors on the wife's (respondent's) part were interpreted by the investigator as being wife-emanating. The following passage provides an example of a response that was coded in this manner. In this example, the wife described her husband as being supportive but only if she initiated the supportive interactions.

> My husband will always help out if asked but sometimes I just wish I wouldn't have to ask! My husband gives informational and appraisal support but only if the conversation is initiated by me.

B. Husband-Emanating Factors Affecting Spousal Support

Responses which seemed to indicate that spousal supportiveness or non-supportiveness originated from the husband were interpreted by the investigator as being husband-emanating. The following passage was written by a respondent who believed her husband to be supportive. In this example, the respondent felt her husband's supportiveness was due to his personality and his feelings for his wife.

> My husband has a naturally supportive personality. He has always been supportive of me in whatever I have wanted to do. I wish I could say that he learned this from his parents, but the truth is that they are not always supportive of him (or me)... Maybe my husband just loves me.

Another respondent wrote that her husband not only had a supportive personality but felt that he "owed" his wife a college education.

> We married when I was 18; he was 26 and already finished with college. I was also 4 months pregnant when we married. When I first mentioned starting MSU, he was more than supportive. Maybe he feels a sense of guilt as he's told me he feels he owes this to me (though I don't believe he does). His personality type is such that he gives support freely and doesn't hold stereotypic notions about what men and women should do.

In the following example of husband-emanating reasons for a husband's supportiveness, the respondent noted that her husband knew what it took to complete college.

> He has already been through the "grind" and realizes what it takes to make it through...There are many times I feel the pressure may be too much, but he always comes through with a word of encouragement, a back rub, or suggests an outside activity to take my mind off the intensity. I think he wishes he had had more support while he was in school (before I knew him) and, because he loves me, he wants to make my time at school as easy as possible.

The last example of husband-emanating factors was written by a respondent who believed her husband was not supportive. In this case, her husband had been supportive in the past but was now very negative about his wife's pursuit of a third degree.

> My husband supported my first degree because he felt it important that I be able to take care of myself if anything happened to him. He was somewhat supportive of my second degree - only because he felt at some point my career opportunities would be limited without it. He is very negative about my plans to pursue a Masters and Ph.D. He does not feel these degrees are necessary. He resents the time away from him, the kids, and the house and the cost. Most importantly, he is somewhat insecure and hurt by my ambition. He once asked me, "Why isn't being my wife enough for you?"

C. Both Wife-Emanating and Husband-Emanating Factors Affecting Spousal Supportiveness

Some respondents noted both wife-emanating and husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness. The following passage, written by a respondent who believed her husband to be supportive, exemplified the interaction between the wife and husband in defining their goals and then working together to meet those goals.

> Our college and career plans were important to each of us before we decided to get married. We had extensive discussions on the compromises we had to make as changes occurred in our marriage. Although we now have common goals as a couple, we are still individuals with various interests which differ - these do not have to be abandoned... We each have respect for the other's capabilities and in this manner my husband gives me full support (all types) for my college pursuits - as I do for him.

The next example typified a couple who saw the benefits to be gained by the wife's education and who worked in harmony to enable the wife to finish her degree.

> My husband and I never considered college until after our daughter was born. We wanted something better for her than we had had. The only way was to go to school and get an education.

hus

tryi

wif

> My degree in business is much more marketable than my husband's (art)... We look at this as if we're in it together (which we are). When I graduate and get a good job (higher than minimum wage), we all will benefit and we'll be giving our daughter a chance at a future. Together we can do anything.

The last example was written by a respondent who felt her husband was not supportive. It exemplified a husband who was trying to change the way he has viewed women in the past and a wife who had persisted in being her own person.

> Society accepts the wife helping her husband with his college pursuits but it has never been expected by society for the husband to assist his wife. I find (my husband's non-supportiveness) comes from the family and community socialization my husband experienced. Although we both came from similar families and the same small town, my persistence in being my own person and accomplishing my own agenda of goals has changed many of my husband's attitudes and beliefs. He has learned to have much more respect for the career woman and the married woman attending college.

III. Empirical Analysis

This study was concerned with six investigational questions: (a) Do women report differences in receipt of support among the four support types as characterized by House (1981)?; (b) Is there a relationship between the attitudes of adult women students and the amount of spousal support they receive?; (c) Is there a relationship between the behaviors of adult women students and the amount of spousal support they receive?; (d) Is there a relationship between the attitudes of adult women students' husbands and the amount of spousal support the women receive?; (e) Is there a relationship between the behaviors of adult women students' husbands and the amount of spousal support the women receive?; and (f) What are the reasons adult women students cite for their husbands' support or lack of support?

To answer these questions, six research hypotheses were written. T-tests, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients, stepwise multiple regression analysis, and chi-square analysis were used to test the hypotheses. The level of significance used throughout the statistical analyses was set at $p = .05$.

A. Support Types

Of primary interest in this study was the amount of support toward their college pursuits that the subjects reported receiving from their spouses. In this study, spousal support receipt was delineated using House's (1981) typology. The support types were

defined thusly:

1. Emotional support - the giving of trust, empathy, and love and the conveying of a general sense of caring,
2. Instrumental support - the giving of tangible assistance.
3. Informational support - the offering of advice and counsel.
4. Appraisal support - the giving of evaluative information and/or feedback.

Respondents were asked to report the frequency with which they received the four types of spousal support. The responses were weighted so that a receipt score could be calculated for each spousal support type (herein referred to as the Support Type Receipt Score). Since many of the hypotheses to be tested required analysis of the total spousal support received by adult women students, the four Spousal Support Receipt Scores were summed to obtain a Total Support Receipt Score (herein referred to as the TSRS) which could range from a score of 0 to 16.

Hypothesis 1

There will be no differences in spousal support levels as reported by adult women students among the four support types.

As revealed in Table 8, the mean receipt scores of three of the four support types were quite similar. To ascertain if the

differences in the means of all four support types were statistically significant, however, t-tests were performed.

Table 8

Comparison of Support Type Receipt Scores

(n = 105)

	Support Type							
	Emotional		Instrumental		Informational		Appraisal	
Response	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never	3	2.9	2	1.9	6	5.7	2	1.9
Some of Time	9	8.6	7	6.7	19	18.1	10	9.5
Equal Amount of Time	5	4.8	9	8.6	16	15.2	12	11.4
Most of Time	39	37.1	37	35.2	32	30.5	28	26.7
Always	49	46.7	50	47.6	32	30.5	53	50.5
Mean	3.162		3.200		2.619		3.143	
s.d.	1.048		0.984		1.251		1.078	

No significant differences were found between: (a) emotional and instrumental support type receipt scores ($t(104) = -.40$, $p = .688$); (b) emotional and appraisal support type receipt scores ($t(104) = .29$, $p = .770$); and (c) instrumental and appraisal support type receipt scores ($t(104) = .54$, $p = .592$). As might be expected, given the much lower mean for informational support, there were significant differences found between: (a) emotional and informational support type receipt scores ($t(104) = 5.62$, $p = ,000$); (b) instrumental and informational support type receipt scores

(t (104) = 5.29, p = .000); and (c) informational and appraisal support type receipt scores (t (104) = -5.08, p = .000).

Thus, hypothesis 1 was not supported by the results and the hypothesis was rejected. The frequency with which the subjects of this study received spousal support differed among the four support types with respondents receiving informational support less frequently.

B. Attitudes and Behaviors Toward Spousal Support

One of the major purposes of this study was to determine if there were relationships between wives' attitudes, wives' behaviors, husbands' attitudes, and husbands' behaviors and the level of spousal support received by adult women students toward their college pursuits. Thirteen items were included in the survey to elicit information on the wives' attitudes toward spousal support (Appendix C, items 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 42, and 53). Nine items were developed to elicit information about wives' support-seeking behaviors (items 23, 29, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41). Husbands' attitudes about spousal support and their wives' college pursuits were measured from wives' responses on nine items in the survey (44, 45, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, and 56). The wives' perceptions of their husbands' past supportive behaviors were measured from responses on eight items (46, 47, 49, 55, 57, 58, 59, and 60). Husband attitudes and behaviors were not discriminated by support type whereas each of the wife attitude and behavior survey items contained sub-statements relating to each of the four support types.

As described in Chapter III, each of these survey items was weighted on a +2 to -2 or -2 to +2 continuum, depending on the wording of the item. Thus, wives' attitude scores could range from -104 to +104, wives' behavior scores could range from -72 to +72, husbands' attitude scores from -18 to +18, and husbands' behavior scores from -16 to +16.

Pearson correlation coefficients were obtained to measure the magnitude and the direction of the relationships between each of the four variables (wives' attitudes, wives' behaviors, husbands' attitudes, and husbands' behaviors - the independent variables) and the Total Support Receipt Score (the dependent variable). As depicted in Table 9, analysis of the data revealed that there was: (a) a moderate, positive relationship between the wives' attitude scores and the total support receipt scores ($r = .497$); (b) a moderate, positive relationship between the wives' behavior scores and the total support receipt scores ($r = .507$); (c) a strong, positive relationship between the husbands' attitude scores and the total support receipt scores ($r = .730$); and (d) a strong, positive relationship between the husbands' behavior scores and the total support receipt scores ($r = .748$).

Table 9

Correlations Between Attitudes and Behaviors and Total Support Receipt Scores

(n = 105)

Variables	Mean	s.d.	r	r^2
Wife Attitudes	46.29	22.23	.497*	.246
Wife Behaviors	21.41	14.39	.507*	.257
Husband Attitudes	8.36	6.97	.730*	.532
Husband Behaviors	6.98	6.26	.748*	.559
TSRS	12.12	3.64		

*p = .000

Hypothesis 2

There will be no relationship between the attitudes of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits and the level of support they receive.

The statistical significance of the correlation coefficient between wife attitudes and total support receipt (.497) was determined by using a t-test so that a decision to either accept or reject the null hypothesis could be made. The analysis revealed that the correlation was statistically significant ($t(103) = 5.806$, $p = .000$). Thus, the null hypothesis was not supported by the data and was rejected. In this study, the frequency with which the respondents receive spousal support was related to the respondents' attitudes about spousal support. As respondents' attitude scores increased so, too, did their total support receipt scores.

Hypothesis 3

There will be no relationship between the behaviors of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits and the level of support they receive.

A t-test to ascertain the statistical significance of the correlation between wife behaviors and total support receipt (.507) indicated that the relationship was significant ($t(103) = 5.968$, $p = .000$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not supported by the data and was rejected. In this study, the level of spousal support received by the respondents was related to the respondents' support-seeking behaviors. As respondents' behavior scores increased so, too, did their total support receipt scores.

Hypothesis 4

There will be no relationship between the attitudes of adult women students' husbands toward spousal support and the level of spousal support adult women students receive.

The correlation between husband attitudes and total support receipt (.730) was found to be statistically significant ($t(103) = 10.83$, $p = .000$) and the hypothesis was rejected. The level of spousal support received by the respondents was related to their husbands' attitudes about spousal support and the wives' college pursuits. As husbands' attitude scores increased so, too, did their wives' total support receipt scores.

Hypothesis 5

There will be no relationship between the behaviors of adult women students' husbands toward spousal support and the level of spousal support adult women students receive.

The t-test revealed that the correlation between husbands' behaviors and their wives' total support receipt scores (.748) was statistically significant ($t(103) = 11.42$, $p = .000$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not supported by the data and was rejected. In this study, the frequency with which the respondents receive spousal support was related to their husbands' past supportive behaviors. As the husband behavior scores increased so, too, did their wives' total support receipt scores.

C. Intercorrelation Among Attitudes and Behaviors and Spousal Support Receipt

The objective of correlation analysis is to determine the extent to which variation in one variable is linked to variation in another variable. The correlation ratio (r^2) represents the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictor variable(s) and, as such, is considered to be a more reliable statistic in denoting correlation than the simple correlation coefficient (Glass and Hopkins, 1984; Polkosnik and Wisenbaker, 1986). In analyzing the data from Table 9, it was evident that there was some redundancy in variance among the four variables in predicting the Total Support Receipt Score since the individual correlation ratios summed to 1.60 (1.0 being a perfect

correlation ratio). Therefore, correlation coefficients were computed to determine if the four variables were interrelated (Table 10).

Table 10

Intercorrelations Among Attitudes and Behaviors of Wives and Husbands and Total Support Receipt

Variable	1	2	3	4	Mean	s.d.
1. Wife Attitude	-	.514*	.566*	.495*	46.29	22.23
2. Wife Behavior		-	.446*	.380*	21.41	14.39
3. Husband Attitude			-	.827*	8.36	6.97
4. Husband Behavior				-	6.98	6.26

*p = .000

As revealed in Table 10, the four variables were interrelated and all were statistically significant. Husband attitudes and husband behaviors intercorrelated most highly (.827) and wife behaviors and husband behaviors showed the smallest intercorrelation. This data indicate that the interaction of husbands' behaviors and attitudes accounts for little unique information from which to predict total support receipt. The interaction of husbands' behaviors and wives' behaviors, though related, accounts for less redundancy of information among the four variables.

Given this information, stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship of all four variables to spousal support receipt. The stepwise approach was chosen because it is a more stable regression equation and it is able to

reduce a number of variables to produce the simplest description of the relationship (Thorndike, 1978). In this study, forward stepwise inclusion was employed, meaning that the variable that explained the greatest amount of variance in the total support receipt scores was entered first, the variable that explained the greatest amount of variance in conjunction with the first was entered second, and so on until all four variables were entered into the equation (Table 11). Explained in another way, the variable that explained the greatest amount of variance unexplained by the variables already in the equation entered the equation at each successive step.

Table 11

Stepwise Multiple Regression of Wives' and Husbands' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Total Support Receipt

(n = 105)

Variables in Regression Equation	Inclusion Order	R Step	R^2 Step	Beta[a]	T[a]	p[a]
Husband Behaviors	1	.748	.559	.446	4.16*	.000
Wife Behaviors	2	.785	.617	.213	2.96*	.004
Husband Attitudes	3	.798	.637	.253	2.22*	.029
Wife Attitudes	4	.798	.637	.023	.29	.769

[a] T values, standardized regression coefficients, and p values in the final equation, after all variables have been entered.

*p < .05

The primary variable in the equation was the husband's behavior score which yielded a correlation coefficient of .748. At that point in the regression analysis, approximately 56% of the variability in the total support receipt scores could be explained by husbands' behavior scores alone. The second variable to be added into the regression equation (wife behaviors) increased the correlation coefficient to .785. At that point, approximately 62% of the variability in the total support receipt scores could be explained by the husbands' behavior scores and wives' behavior scores operating jointly. The inclusion of the third variable (husband attitudes) increased the coefficient slightly (.798). Approximately 64% of the variability in the total support receipt scores could be explained by the combination of the three variables. The inclusion of the fourth variable (wife attitude score) did not increase the correlation coefficient or the correlation ratio ($r = .798$, $r^2 = .64$) although the combination of all four variables was found to be related to spousal support receipt ($F(1, 103) = 43.96$, $p = .000$).

One of the uses of a regression equation is in predicting a dependent variable from independent variables. From the data in Table 11, it is revealed that all four variables in this study, in combination, can be used to predict total support receipt. The T-values help to ascertain the simplest equation that can be used for predictive purposes. Thus, the T-values reflect the statistical significance of the inclusion of each variable in the final equation. The inclusion of wife support-seeking behaviors to the regression equation was statistically significant as was the inclusion of husband attitudes. The inclusion of wife attitudes was not

significant. On the other hand, the inclusion of husband attitudes was barely significant at the .05 level and would not have been significant at a lower alpha. For all practical purposes, its inclusion did not enhance the regression model and could probably be deleted as it adds little to the prediction model. Stated another way, if using the stepwise regression equation for predictive purposes, one can do as well with steps 1 and 2 as with the additions of predictors three and four.

The data reveal that husbands' behavior scores, in combination with wives' behavior scores, provide the most efficient information from which to predict spousal support receipt.

D. Wife-Emanating vs Husband-Emanating Factors Affecting Spousal Support

The last two items of the survey (#63 and 64) were open-ended questions which asked women to indicate the reasons why they thought their husbands were or were not supportive. The responses were reviewed by the investigator and coded as either: a) wife-emanating; B) husband-emanating; c) both wife-emanating and husband-emanating; or d) neither wife- nor husband-emanating. (Refer to the Section II of this Chapter for examples of these factors.)

Hypothesis 6

There will be no differences in the proportion of adult women students who cite husband-emanating reasons in comparison to wife-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness.

Respondents were asked to provide reasons why they believed their husbands were supportive or were not supportive. Table 12 includes frequency data from these two survey items.

Table 12

Frequency of Wife-Emanating vs Husband-Emanating Reasons for Support or Non-Support

	Support		Non-Support		Total	
Reasons for Support	#	%	#	%	#	%
Husband-Emanating	41	45.6	9	64.3	50	48.5
Wife-Emanating	6	6.7	0	0.0	6	5.8
Both	41	45.6	4	28.6	45	43.7
Neither	2	2.2	1	7.1	3	2.9
n	90		14		103	

x^2 (df = 1, n = 56) = 34.05, p < .05

Chi-square analysis was performed to test the hypothesis that the proportion of respondents who cited husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness would not be greater than the proportion citing wife-emanating reasons. The analysis revealed that the proportions differed

significantly from one another (X^2 (1, 56) = 34.05, $p < .05$). Thus, the null hypothesis was not supported by the data and was rejected. Women more often cited husband-emanating reasons than wife-emanating reasons for their husbands' support or lack of support.

IV. Descriptive Analysis

Apart from testing the hypotheses as described in Section III of this chapter, another purpose of this study was to obtain information on adult women students that would enable university administrators, counselors, and student affairs professionals to better understand this important college subgroup.

As is evident from the survey instrument (Appendix C), information was solicited regarding: (a) receipt of the four support types; (b) wives' attitudes and behaviors regarding spousal support; (c) husbands' attitudes and behaviors regarding spousal support; and (d) wives' opinions regarding the most important support type, the factors which influence spousal support, and the reasons why their husbands are or are not supportive. Some of this information has been described and analyzed in Sections II and III of this chapter. In this section, information has been included to provide a thorough description of the subjects of this study. When most appropriate, frequency tables have been depicted. (A complete presentation of response data can be found in Appendix H.)

A. Wives' Attitudes Toward Spousal Support

As noted in Section III of this chapter, there were thirteen items in the survey from which information about the respondents' support attitudes was elicited. These were items 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 42, and 43 (Appendix H).

Table 13 presents a comparison of the respondents' attitudes toward the four types of spousal support. The wives' attitude scores for each of the four support types could range from -26 to +26, based upon the 5-point scoring continuum which was described in Section III of this chapter. Scores of -26 to -14 were interpreted as very unfavorable, scores of -13 to -1 were interpreted as unfavorable, a score of 0 was viewed as neutral, scores of +1 to +13 were interpreted as favorable, and scores of +14 to +26 were interpreted as very favorable.

The results indicate that respondents had most favorable attitudes toward emotional support and least favorable attitudes toward instrumental support.

Table 13

Frequency of Wives' Attitude Scores by Support Type

(n = 105)

	Support Type							
	E		Ins		Inf		A	
Score	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
-26 to -14	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
-13 to - 1	2	2.0	11	10.6	6	5.8	3	3.0
0	1	1.0	2	1.9	2	1.9	2	1.9
+ 1 to +13	48	45.9	53	50.8	53	50.7	55	52.5
+14 to +26	54	51.6	39	37.2	44	41.9	45	43.0
Mean	13.23		9.95		11.14		11.96	

1. Wife Attitude Items

a. Right to Support: Possibly one of the more crucial indicators of a woman's attitude toward spousal support might be her assertion that she has a right to receive such support (item 22). In this study, the respondents did believe they had this right. The respondents most strongly agreed that they had every right to receive emotional support and were least adamant about their right to receive informational support.

b. Wives' Feelings of Guilt: A review of the literature had indicated that women often feel guilty when they receive support from their husbands when they go to college (Van Meter, 1976; Adelstein, Sedlacek and Martinez, 1983). It is possible, therefore, that guilt might affect a woman's attitude about spousal support. Three items were included in the survey to ascertain the

respondents' feelings when they received spousal support.

When participants were asked if they had any negative feelings when they received spousal support (item 24), the majority of respondents indicated that they did not, particularly when they received emotional support.

While the women in this study reported that they did not feel guilty when their husbands gave them emotional, informational, and appraisal support, almost one-quarter of the respondents reported that they felt guilty when they received instrumental support (item 27). Similarly, 23% of the respondents reported that they felt they were not performing their many role responsibilities when they received instrumental support (item 31).

c. Wife/Husband Interactions: One item (#25) was written to ascertain if wives' spousal support attitudes might be linked to their concerns about their husbands' feelings. Thirty-six to forty-one percent of the respondent indicated that their husbands' feelings were more important than their own support needs.

When women were asked if they liked having to ask for spousal support (item 43), the majority said they did not regarding emotional and, particularly, instrumental support. Regarding informational and appraisal support, a large number of respondents did not have an opinion.

Approximately 36% of the respondents felt that they were burdening their husbands when their husbands gave them instrumental support. In comparison, only 7% responded similarly regarding informational support.

On the other hand, women generally did not believe that their support demands could negatively affect their marriages (item 36), although the responses indicated some concern that emotional and instrumental support requests could pose a threat to the respondents' marital relationships.

d. Wives' Expectations of Support: In prior studies, data had confirmed that social support is often positively related to expectations of receipt; those who expect to receive support more often receive support (Procidano and Heller, 1983; Swindle, 1983; Heller and Lakey, 1985; Cutrona, 1986). One item (#26) was included in the survey to ascertain the respondent's expectations of spousal support.

Respondents reported that they were more likely to expect emotional support and least likely to expect informational and appraisal support. This data appear to support the perception/ receipt postulation since the respondents in this study reported that they most often received emotional and, to a lesser degree, instrumental support and least often received informational support (see Table 8).

e. The Importance of and Need for Support: It seemed probable to the investigator that if spousal support was not important to or wanted by the women who were surveyed, their spousal support attitudes would be less favorable. Therefore, women were asked if spousal support was important to them (item 30) and if they wanted support from their husbands (item 32). Clearly, for this survey group, their husbands' support was very important to them and very much wanted. Respondents felt less

strongly about informational and appraisal support than about emotional and instrumental support, however.

When women were asked if their success in college might in any way be related to the spousal support they receive, they clearly indicated that it would (item 28). This finding was true across all support types although women most strongly felt that their college success would be related to their emotional and instrumental support receipt.

f. Locus of Control: More often than for any other item in this survey, respondents marked the neutral position when asked if they felt the level of spousal support they received was dependent on factors beyond their control (item 42). Women were much more ambivalent about this survey item than about any other item.

B. Wives' Behaviors Toward Spousal Support

Nine items were included in the survey to elicit information about wives' support-seeking behaviors toward the four support types (items 23, 29, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41 in Appendix H). Table 14 presents a comparison of the respondents' support-seeking behaviors as these related to the four spousal support types. The wives' behavior scores for each of the support types could range from -18 to +18. Scores of -18 to -10 were regarded by the investigator as very unfavorable, scores of -9 to -1 were regarded as unfavorable, a score of 0 was viewed as neutral, scores of +1 to +9 were interpreted as favorable, and scores of +10 to+18 were regarded as very favorable.

The results indicate that respondents had most favorable behaviors regarding instrumental support and least favorable behaviors regarding informational support.

Table 14

Frequency of Wives' Behavior Scores by Support Type

(n = 105)

	Support Type							
	E		Ins		Inf		A	
Score	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
-18 to -10	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
- 9 to - 1	10	9.6	3	2.9	12	11.6	12	11.6
0	4	3.8	0	0.0	5	4.8	2	1.9
+ 1 to + 9	74	70.6	76	72.4	76	72.4	77	73.3
+10 to +18	17	16.3	26	24.8	12	11.5	14	13.5
Mean	5.42		6.44		4.67		4.89	

1. Wife Behavior Items

a. Assertiveness: The majority of respondents appeared to be assertive about their spousal support needs for all support types, although they were most assertive in asking for instrumental support and least assertive in asking for appraisal support (item 23). Concomitantly, the majority of respondents reported that they did receive support, particularly instrumental support, from their husbands when they asked for it (item 33). The respondents also indicated that they received more support, of all types, when they specifically asked for it (item 38). Respondents disagreed with the

statement that they would not express their support needs to their husbands if there were a conflict between their husbands' and their own support needs (item 39). However, there was not as strongly favorable a response on this item compared with the other behavior items in the survey.

b. Perseverance: When women were asked if they persevered in their requests for support (item 29), the majority responded that they did not. However, the number of women who neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement was quite high.

Although the item was written to ascertain perseverance, women may have felt the wording implied negativism toward their husbands. Also, as one respondent commented, "I do not need to prod my husband as he gives support without asking." Although the pilot test did not discern problems with this survey item, this item may have been poorly worded and the responses on this item, therefore, may not be indicative of either favorable or unfavorable support-seeking behavior.

c. Wife/Husband Communication: In general, respondents reported that they discussed their support needs with their husbands (item 35), although the lower means calculated for informational and appraisal support would indicate that women were either not as forthright about their informational and appraisal support needs or that these two types of support were not as important to them as emotional and instrumental support

Over 82% of the respondents reported that they would discuss with their husbands their dissatisfaction with the level of emotional and instrumental support they might be receiving (item

41). Respondents were less favorably disposed to discussing dissatisfaction regarding informational and appraisal support levels.

d. Initiation of Support: Item 40 was written to determine if women initiated the support they received. Responses varied by support type. The majority of respondents indicated that they initiated informational support. The responses were almost equally split between the respondents who initiated and those who did not initiate instrumental and appraisal support. Regarding emotional support, the majority of respondents reported that they were not the initiators. In fact, there were twice as many respondents who did not initiate emotional support as those who did initiate emotional support.

e. Other Support Resources: Other researchers have reported that women have larger and more varied support networks (Bell, 1981; Vaux, 1985) than do men and that married women frequently obtain support from sources other than their husbands (Lowenthall and Haven, 1968; Kohen, 1983; Kepner and Ingersoll-Dayton, 1985). The data from item 37 support the latter view. Except in the area of instrumental support, a large number of respondents indicated that they did not look to their husbands for their support needs (26.9% for emotional support, 35.8% for informational support, and 28.8% for appraisal support). The finding regarding instrumental support would be expected as there are few resources other than their husbands to whom married women might be expected to turn for help with household tasks, children, and college finances.

C. Husband Attitudes Toward Spousal Support

Nine statements were included in the survey to obtain information about the wives' perceptions of their husbands' support attitudes (items 44, 45, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, and 56 in Appendix H). Unlike the wives' support attitude items, the husband items were not differentiated by support type.

Table 15 presents information about the husbands' attitude scores. The husband attitude scores ranged from a -18 to +18. Thus, scores of -18 to -9 were interpreted as very unfavorable, -10 to -1 as unfavorable, 0 as neutral, +1 to +9 as favorable, and +10 to +18 as very favorable. The results indicate that the majority of husbands had attitude scores in the very favorable range.

Table 15

Frequency of Husbands' Attitude Scores

(n = 105)

Score	#	%
-18 to -10	1	1.0
- 9 to - 1	14	13.5
0	3	2.9
+ 1 to + 9	29	27.8
+10 to +18	58	55.5
Mean	6.97	

1. Husband Attitude Items

Over three-quarters of the respondents indicated that their husbands were enthusiastic about their college pursuits (item 44) and over 91% of the respondents reported that their husbands were proud of their wives' personal achievements (item 50).

The majority of respondents (75.2%) perceived that their husbands did not find it difficult to be supportive (item 45). However, 34.1% of the respondents believed that their husbands were not as favorably inclined toward their wives' college pursuits when those pursuits inconvenienced the husbands (item 48). Respondents were almost equally divided between those who reported that their husbands did not like when their wives' college activities interfered with their home lives (40.4%) and husbands who were perceived by their wives to be indifferent to the conflict between home and school (36.2%) (item 456). This data were similar to the data obtained on item 48.

It appeared from the data that the wives did not believe their husbands begrudgingly gave them support (item 51). A large percentage of respondents (92%) believed that their husbands understood the importance of college to their wives (item 52). While the majority of wives (60%) felt that their husbands did not expect their wives' functioning in all roles to remain the same after entering college (item 53), there was a large number of respondents who believed that their husbands' expectations of their functioning was the same compared with precollege expectations (20%), and also a large number who were unable to agree or disagree with the survey item (14.3%).

The wives perceived that their husbands were not concerned that the wives' college pursuits would negatively affect their marriages (item 54). This response closely approximately the percentage of wives who did not think their going to college would negatively affect their marriages (77.2%) (item 36).

D. Husband Support Behaviors

This survey included eight items which were written to obtain information on the wives' perceptions of their husbands' past support behaviors (Appendix H, items 47, 49, 55, 57, 58, 59, and 60). The husband behavior scores could range from -16 to +16. The husband support behavior items were not differentiated by support type.

Table 16 contains the data from these eight behavior items. Scores of -16 to -9 were interpreted as very unfavorable, -8 to -1 as unfavorable, 0 as neutral, +1 to +8 as favorable, and +9 to +16 as very favorable. The data reveal that the majority of husbands scored in the very favorable range.

Table 16

Frequency of Husbands' Behavior Scores

(n = 105)

Score	#	%
-16 to - 9	2	2.0
- 8 to - 1	16	15.4
0	0	0.0
+ 1 to + 8	38	36.3
+ 9 to +16	49	46.7
Mean	6.98	

1. Husbands' Behavior Items

Over 85% of the respondents perceived that their husbands had been encouraging (item 46), supportive in the past (item 47), and receptive to past support requests the wife had made (item 55). When asked if their husbands initiated the spousal support the wives received (item 59), the majority of respondents reported that their husbands did not initiate support (48,1%) although approximately 29% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Almost 80% of the respondents indicated that their husbands did not need them to ask for support in order for their husbands to provide it (item 49). Slightly more than 70% of the respondents did not perceive a difference between their husbands' rhetoric and behavior when it concerned spousal support although over one-fifth of the respondents believed that their husbands had not always substantiated their supportive words with action (item 57).

Similarly, the majority of respondents did not feel that their husbands had to be reminded that their wives needed their support (item 58). When asked if their husbands had become less supportive the longer the wives had been involved in an activity (item 60), the majority of respondents answered that their husbands' support did not wane with time. However, a large number of respondents were unable to agree or disagree with the statement.

E. Women's Perception of Spousal Support Influences

Women were asked to respond to the statement, "I believe that the level of spousal support I receive, even if I receive no support, is a reflection of: (a) my attitudes and behaviors; (b) my husband's attitudes and behaviors; (c) the nature of our marital relationship; (d) societal views about male/female roles and behavior; and (e) other factors (Appendix C).

As revealed in Table 17, almost 78% of the respondents believed that their attitude and behavior influenced the amount of spousal support they received. A larger percentage (97.1%) believed that their husbands' attitude and behavior influenced their spousal support receipt. Almost 89% felt that the nature of their marital relationship influenced their spousal support receipt. The majority of respondents did not believe that societal views influenced the amount of spousal support they received.

Table 17

Frequency of Wives' Responses Regarding Spousal Support Influences

	Wife's Attitude/ Behavior		Husband's Attitude/ Behavior		Marital Relationship		Societal Views		Other Factors	
Responses	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
S. Agree	23	22.1	43	43.3	40	38.1	8	7.8	14	50.0
Agree	58	55.8	56	53.8	53	50.5	26	25.2	8	28.6
Neither	8	7.7	2	1.9	8	7.6	26	25.2	5	17.9
Disagree	6	5.8	1	1.0	1	1.0	34	33.0	0	0.0
S. Disagree	9	8.7	0	0.0	3	2.9	9	8.7	1	3.6
n	104		104		105		103		28	

Only twenty-eight participants (26.7%) responded to the statement subset that other factors influenced the amount of spousal support they received so that results must be interpreted with caution. Of those who responded, however, 79% agreed that other factors played a role in the level of spousal support they received. When asked to identify these factors, they mentioned the following:

1) Since my husband is also in school, we're both in the same boat.
2) He (my husband) wants to retire and I want to work.
3) How our parents interacted and provided support.
4) Other demands/pressures on my husband at certain times.
5) My husband's feelings of neglect due to my time studying.
6) Our faith in God; my husband is to respect me and I am to respect him.
7) His career demands as a Professor at MSU.
8) Communication - the essence of a good marriage.

9) My husband's health - he is not able to be as supportive as he would like.
10) Events and circumstances outside the marriage.
11) Time constraints - not enough time for husband to help due to fatigue from overwork.
12) His job - it takes all of his energy.
13) How hard my husband has to work to bring home enough income to survive on while I am in school.
14) The pride that my husband has in seeing me accomplish my goals.
15) Husband's family values education.

F. Most Important Support Type

Survey item 62 asked women to choose the one type of spousal support, from the four support types described in the study, that was most important to them. Clearly, the women in this study believed that emotional support was most important to them (Table 18). Over 81% of the respondents answered in this manner. The next most frequently chosen support type was instrumental support with 17.5% of the respondents indicating that it was the most important support type. Only one respondent chose appraisal support and no respondent chose informational support as the most important support type.

Table 18

Frequency of Responses to Most Important Support Type

(n = 103)

Support Type	#	%
Emotional	84	81.6
Instrumental	18	17.5
Informational	0	0.0
Appraisal	1	1.0

G. Wife-Emanating vs Husband-Emanating Factors that Influence Spousal Support

The last two items of the survey (Appendix C items 63 and 64) were open-ended questions which asked women to indicate the reasons why they thought their husbands were or were not supportive. Section II of this chapter provided a qualitative analysis of the responses to these two items. In Section III of this chapter, responses were empirically analyzed for hypothesis testing. Table 19 includes descriptive information as to the manner in-which the subjects responded to item 63; that is, why their husbands were supportive. The data reveal that wives most often cited that their husbands believed some benefit (generally financial) would be gained through their wives' postsecondary education.

Table 19

Frequency of Most Often Cited Reasons for Husbands' Supportiveness

Reason	Frequency
Husband believes wife's education/degree will improve their lives (e.g. enhance earning potential, improve wife's job opportunities)	22
Husband values education	15
Wife has told husband how much college means to her	13
Husband has supportive personality (e.g. is naturally sensitive, caring, sharing, etc.)	13
Both husband and wife share in the attainment of each other's goals	12
Husband loves wife	9
Husband and wife communicate openly and work together	8
Husband and wife have a very strong relationship	6
Husband will feel less pressure when his wife can contribute to financial security of family	5
Both husband and wife have supported each other in the past	5
Husband is proud of wife's accomplishments	4
Husband is not threatened by wife's success	4
Husband and wife agreed before marriage that wife would be able to attend college	4
Husband wants wife to be happy	3
Husband does not hold stereotypic views of male/female roles	3
Husband believes wife's pursuit of college to be good role modeling for their children	3
Husband wants wife to achieve whatever she desires	3
Husband has received his degree and knows what it takes to get through college	3
Husband and wife are in this together	3

Table 20 delineates the comments most often cited by wives who answered item 64; that is, why their husbands were not supportive. There was no one reason that was clearly cited most often; rather, wives most often mentioned five reasons.

Table 20

Frequency of Most Often Cited Reasons for Husbands' Non-Supportiveness

Reason	Frequency
Husband does not see value in wife's degree	4
Husband fear wife's education (e.g. wife will have more education than husband, wife's college experiences will separate her from husband)	4
Husband is product of old stereotypes and views	4
Husband feels wife should be able to function as she did before college and wife does not wish to add to tension in relationship by demanding more support	3
Husband's own job is very demanding, giving him little time/energy to be supportive	3

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Summary

A. Introduction

This chapter contains a summary of the statement of the problem; the purposes of this study; the research methodology; and a discussion of the major findings including the hypotheses and conclusions; implications; and recommendations for further research.

B. Statement of the Problem

Over the past twenty years the number of adult women students who have enrolled in postsecondary education has increased dramatically. All projections through the 1990's indicate that women will continue to make up the majority of adult college students.

Conflicts caused by the multiplicity of roles held by adult women students as well as problems inherent in the dispositional barriers to which women are subject, often hinder adult women students from achieving their full educational potential. Various forms of family support, particularly from one's spouse, have been shown to be extremely important indicators of continued enrollment for adult women students. However, prior research has documented that women receive less support, both functionally and emotionally, from their spouses than do their male counterparts.

Little has been written on the reasons for the disparity of spousal support receipt between men and women. Even less information is available regarding the factors that might have an effect upon the level of spousal support received by adult women students. What is currently known about spousal support is not sufficient to purposefully assist university administrators, counselors, and student affairs professionals in helping adult women students expand the amount of spousal support they receive.

C. Purpose of the Study

The major purposes of the study were (a) to determine if there are relationships between wives' attitudes, wives' behaviors, husbands' attitudes, and husbands' behaviors and the level of spousal support received by adult women students; (b) to ascertain if spousal support receipt differs among the four support types as characterized by House (1981); and (c) to determine if women students more often cite husband-emanating or wife-emanating reasons for their husbands' support or lack of support.

D. Research Methodology

Three hundred eighteen women students were identified by the Office of the Registrar at Michigan State University as fitting the criteria of being (a) 25 years of age or older and (b) enrolled in programs under the auspices of the College of Business or the College of Nursing. The marital status of these women was unknown. Presurvey postcards were mailed to the 318 women, explaining in brief the purpose of the study and requesting

information about their marital status. One hundred seventy-seven women (56%) responded to the presurvey postcard. Of these, 113 women (64%) indicated that they were married and currently living with their husbands. Subsequently, survey packets were mailed to these 113 women. One hundred and five women (93%) completed the survey.

The survey instrument was developed and pretested by the investigator and was comprised of four sections. Section One requested demographic information about the adult student wives and about their husbands. Section Two defined and gave examples of spousal support utilizing House's (1981) typology; i.e., emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. In this section respondents were asked to describe the frequency with which they received spousal support for their college pursuits. Section Three consisted of statements which were written to elicit information on the wives' and husbands' attitudes and behaviors regarding spousal support. In Section Four, women were asked to choose the most important spousal support type and to list reasons why they believed their husbands to be or not to be supportive.

The data were entered into Michigan State University's Computer Laboratory data base and analyzed using SPSS-X, version 3.1. Demographic data from Section One including wife's age, number and age of children living at home, college status, employment status, and length of marriage as well as husband's age, college status, and employment status were quantified to provide descriptive information on the respondents. These data also were statistically analyzed to determine if any relationships existed

between them and the support variables. The level of significance in all the statistical analyses was $p = .05$.

The data from Section Two were analyzed using t-tests to determine if there were significant differences in receipt among the four types of spousal support. Data from Section Three were analyzed to determine relationships, if any, between each of four variables (wife attitudes, wife behaviors, husband attitudes, and husband behaviors) and the level of spousal support receipt reported by the respondents. Pearson's product-moment correlations and t-tests were used to determine if significant relationships existed. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed to measure the relationship between all four of the variables and the respondents' support receipt.

The data from Section Four were examined quantitatively and qualitatively. Exemplary themes from participants' responses to the last two questions of the survey, which were written in an open-ended format, were presented to illustrate the factors which women believed influenced their husbands' supportive or non-supportive behavior. Chi-square analysis was used to test the statistical significance of the proportion of respondents who cited husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' support or lack of support in comparison to those who cited wife-emanating reasons.

II. Limitations of the Study

A. Subject Identification and Selection

Subjects in this study needed to fulfill four criteria; namely, that they be: (a) women, (b) aged 25 years or older; (c) students at Michigan State University, and (d) married and currently living with their husbands. There were no problems in identifying women who fit the first three criteria. However, Michigan State University does not request marital status information of its students; therefore, selection of women who were married and currently living with their spouses was not possible through the University's centralized data base system. The method by which the marital status of the subjects became known was described earlier in this chapter.

Initial lack of knowledge about the marital status of the students presented a number of problems. The use of the presurvey postcard to ascertain marital status was of tremendous help in identifying subjects; however, now knowing the initial population from which respondents were identified resulted in it being impossible to know if surveys were mailed to enough married, adult women students to be considered a representative sample. Additionally, it is possible that the unresponsive 44% of the initial population pool who received the presurvey postcards contained a large number of married women and that their responses to the survey, if garnered, would have changed the results of the study.

On the other hand, it is possible that since the presurvey postcard made explicit that the study was concerned with married,

adult women students, those who were not married did not feel compelled to respond to the presurvey postcard and thus, the number of women who responded represented a sufficient percentage of students who fit the study's subject criteria.

The ability to *a priori* identify individuals with certain demographic characteristics has been made more difficult in the last few decades as institutions have obtained less and less personal information about their students. While this trend is understandable and probably necessary to protect students' rights to privacy, it does make selection of students for research purposes based upon certain personal criteria difficult.

B. Design and Methodology

1. Possible Wives' Response Bias

Safilios-Rothschild (1969) and others have criticized studies of family functioning based upon information provided by wives only. She referred to this phenomenon as "Wives' Family Sociology" and cautioned that, when describing her husband, a wife may lack realism because of her vested interest in the relationship. Consequently, a limitation of this study may have been the questionable accuracy of the survey information based upon the perceptions of a single reporter (wife) in the marital relationship whose responses might have been biased. This limitation may help to explain concerns that were raised when the survey items were statistically analyzed to determine their reliability in terms of content validity.

Item analysis of the survey items purporting to measure wives' support-seeking behaviors revealed that items 29 ("I

continually prod my husband toward giving me _____ support for my college pursuits.") and 40 ("The _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits is most often initiated by me.") were not reliable measures. No other items in the survey were found to be unreliable. In attempting to understand why these items were unreliable, the investigator considered that the wording of the items might be perceived by wives as disparaging of their marital relationship. Although there may be other explanations for the item analysis results, they have eluded the investigator.

2. Interaction of Support and Life Events

In a similar vein, Thoits (1982) warned that the interaction effects between support and life events might not be genuine because of the confounding relationship among conflict, support, and life events. Monroe, et al (1986) suggested that when studying the mechanisms by which support operates, it would be preferable to use a "clean" sample, "uncontaminated by processes that are likely to confound or mask the effects of primary interest" (p. 425). Although it was explicitly stated in the survey that women were to consider spousal support only in the context of their academic pursuits, it may have been impossible for women to differentiate such support in the totality of their everyday lives. And, as has been stated previously, the nature of the marital relationship might arguably belie any attempt to keep the survey's sample "clean".

3. Limitations of a Relationship Study

Another weakness of the study's methodology concerns the limitations inherent in a relationship study. While correlation coefficients are indicative of the degree of a relationship between variables, correlation coefficients cannot be used to determine cause-and-effect relationships. Though the relationships studied in this investigation were found to be statistically significant, it cannot be inferred that causal relationships exist between the variables that have been studied and the spousal support received by adult women students.

III. Generalizability

Problems inherent in the subject selection procedure used in this study have already been discussed and have implications concerning the generalizability of the results of this study. Since the subjects of this study were selected from only two colleges within Michigan State University, generalizations of the findings are applicable only to adult women students enrolled in these two colleges within Michigan State University. Since the representativeness of the subject selection may be suspect, one might even argue that the results might not be generalizable to the two colleges. Yet one cannot conclude one way or the other that the respondents were representative of the population except to have continued to mail presurvey postcards until all 318 adult women responded. Since time and financial constraints precluded multiple mailings at the initial juncture of the study, it is impossible to

estimate the representativeness of the study participants. It must be pointed out as well that the results of the study are not generalizable to married women students less than 25 years of age or to institutions other than Michigan State University.

IV. Major Findings and Conclusions

Based upon the hypotheses that were tested in this study, six conclusions were drawn from the data. These conclusions, as well as the major findings of the study, are included in this section of the chapter under the topic areas pertaining to them.

A. Spousal Support Receipt Levels

There were two sections in the survey (Appendix C, items 18-21 and items 63 and 64) which required respondents to state if their husbands were or were not supportive of their college pursuits. In choosing to answer item 63 ("If you believe you generally are supported by your husband in your college pursuits, what reason(s), if any, can you give for why he is supportive?"), 86% of the respondents indicated that their husbands were generally supportive of their college pursuits. However, on items 18 through 21, wherein respondents were asked to describe the frequency with which they received support, 100% of the respondents characterized their husbands as supportive at least some of the time. The majority of respondents described their husbands as supportive at least most of the time.

The high percentage of women in this study who reported that their husbands were supportive, whether one considers the 86% figure or the 100% figure, is in marked contrast to percentages reported by Berkove (1978) - 54%, Spreadbury (1983) - 50%, and Huston-Hobert and Strange (1986) - 56%. A major finding of this study was that, unlike women who had been studied previously, the women of this study were more frequently supported by their husbands in their college pursuits. Possible explanations for this finding are delineated later in the chapter (see "Implications" section).

B. Receipt Levels by Support Type

Written in the non-directional form, hypothesis 1 stated: There will be no difference in spousal support levels as reported by adult women students among the four support types; i.e. emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. T-test analyses revealed that there were no significant differences between: (a) emotional and instrumental support receipt, (b) emotional and appraisal support receipt, and (c) instrumental and appraisal support receipt. However, there were significant differences found between: (a) emotional and informational support receipt, (b) instrumental and informational support receipt, and (c) appraisal and informational support receipt. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported by the results of the study and the hypothesis was rejected. It can be concluded that spousal support receipt varied by type of support.

In this study, women reported receiving instrumental support more often than any other support type. Thereafter, the most frequently received support types were emotional, appraisal, and informational support, respectively. However, even the least frequently received support type - informational - was received at least most of the time by a majority of the respondents.

The results revealed that, in comparison with previously published studies (Berkove, 1978; Spreadbury, 1983; Huston-Hobert and Strange, 1986), women in this study reported receiving emotional and instrumental support much more frequently. Previous studies had not discriminated between informational and appraisal support; therefore, a comparison of this study's results on informational and appraisal support to previous research is not applicable.

C. Support Type Importance

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicated the emotional support from their husbands for their college pursuits was the most important spousal support type. The next most frequently chosen type was instrumental support. These two findings are similar to reports by DeLisle (1965), Hembrough (1966), Burton (1968), Withycombe-Brocato (1969), Berkove (1978), and Spreadbury (1983).

House's (1981) typology of support had been used in this study because it was believed by the investigator that it would juxtapose effectively with the problems that confront adult women students. For example, it was postulated that emotional support, as defined

by House, might assuage the problems of role definition and guilt, instrumental support might lessen the effects of role overload and stress, informational support might counter problems of role definition and self-esteem, and appraisal support might effect change regarding self-esteem and guilt.

Data from the survey indicated that the subjects responded differently to the informational and appraisal support sub-statements than they responded to the emotional and instrumental support sub-statements. Some respondents acknowledged that the informational and appraisal support items did not pertain to them since they preferred to receive these two types of support from University resources.

Based upon the responses from the sub-statement in Section Two of the survey, the choice the respondents made in selecting the most important support type, and the unsolicited comments made by the respondents, it appeared that informational and appraisal support was not considered as important or relevant to the needs of the respondents as emotional and instrumental support. Perhaps, when delineated as distinct support entities, informational and appraisal support did not offer much more to adult women students than what had already been received through spousal emotional and instrumental support. Perhaps, also, as informational and appraisal support were defined in this study, the respondents received these two types of support from sources outside their marriages; i.e. from college instructors, advisors, counselors, etc.

D. Wives' Attitudes Toward Spousal Support

Written in the non-directional form, hypothesis 2 stated: There will be no relationship between the attitudes of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits and the level of support they receive. As noted in Chapter 4, correlational analysis revealed that there was a moderate, positive relationship. Thus, hypothesis 2 was not supported by the data and the hypothesis was rejected. In this study, the greater a respondent's attitude score, the greater her total support receipt score. It can be concluded that wives' attitudes toward spousal support were related to spousal support receipt.

In this study, the majority of respondents were scored as having favorable or very favorable attitudes toward spousal support, although their attitudes differed with respect to support type. Respondents exhibited most favorable attitudes toward emotional support and least favorable attitudes toward instrumental support. The former finding was not surprising in light of the fact that respondents most frequently chose emotional support as the most important of the four support types. The latter finding, however, was interesting since instrumental support was chosen next most frequently. The response data from the item sub-statements in Section Three of the survey afford some possible explanations for this latter finding.

When respondents were asked if they felt they were not performing their wife/mother duties as they should when they received instrumental support from their husbands, a much greater percentage of respondents agreed with the statement in contrast to

a very small percentage regarding emotional support. A large number of the respondents reported that they felt they were burdening their husbands by asking for instrumental support in comparison to the number who felt this way when asking for emotional support.

Though very few women in this study felt they did not have the right to expect instrumental support from their husbands, a large number agreed with the statement that they experienced guilt upon receiving instrumental support. This number of respondents was markedly larger than the number who reported feeling guilty upon receiving the other three types of support combined. Concomitantly, women in this study reported having more negative feelings when they received instrumental support than when they received emotional support. The feelings of guilt experienced by many of the women in this study were similar to those noted by previous researchers (Van Meter, 1976; Gilbert and Holahan, 1982; Adelstein, Sedlacek and Martinez, 1983).

Although the respondents did not believe that their instrumental support demands would negatively affect their marriages, the majority of respondents did not like asking for instrumental support from their husbands. Apparently, however, it was not the attitudes or behaviors of their husbands that made it onerous for the respondents to ask for instrumental support, since the respondents perceived their husbands' spousal support attitudes and behaviors in a very positive manner.

The responses of the women in this study appear to indicate that they adhered to stereotypic views of a woman's role in the

family. This presumption is consistent with results reported by Bernard (1975) and Berkove (1978). Apparently, the problems associated with role definition and guilt continue to plague married, adult women students.

E. Wives' Behaviors Toward Spousal Support

Written in the non-directional form, hypothesis 3 stated: There will be no relationship between the behaviors of adult women students toward spousal support of their college pursuits and the level of support they receive. As revealed in Chapter 4, a statistically significant relationship was found to exist between the respondents' support-seeking behaviors and the frequency with which they received spousal support. Thus, hypothesis 3 was not supported by the data and the hypothesis was rejected. In this study, the greater a respondent's support-seeking behavior score, the greater her total support receipt score. It can be concluded that wives' behaviors were related to spousal support receipt.

In this study, the majority of respondents were scored as having favorable or very favorable support-seeking behaviors, although their behaviors differed with respect to support types. Respondents reported most favorable support-seeking behaviors regarding instrumental support and least favorable support-seeking behaviors regarding informational support, although the differences among the four types was not striking.

Review of the responses from the survey items that purported to measure support-seeking behavior revealed that the respondents were much less likely to hesitate requesting instrumental support

than any other type of support. Respondents also reported that they more frequently prodded their husbands toward giving them instrumental support. The responses to these two survey items seem contradictory to responses given on previous survey items when women reported feeling more guilt and more role strain when receiving instrumental support. Results of the study appear to indicate that women's support-seeking behavior is more often directed toward the support type which may be necessary for them to function on a day-to-day basis, even when such behaviors may be incongruous with their attitudes.

Another interesting finding was that the respondents were most hesitant in asking for emotional support which seems inconsistent with their admission that emotional support was most important to them. Even more puzzling was the large number of women who indicated that they looked to others, rather than their husbands, to give them emotional support. Though this result is consistent with data reported by Lowenthall and Haven (1968), Berkove (1978), and Huston-Hoberg and Strange (1986), one would wonder, given the high levels of emotional spousal support these respondents had reported, why they would need to supplement the emotional support they receive.

It is possible that the husbands generally may have been emotionally supportive but did find it difficult to give emotional support regarding their wives' college pursuits. On the other hand, one might postulate, as has Vaux (1985), that the spousal support received by these women was of poor quality or was insufficient to counteract the negative stressors faced by them. Thus, though the

wives in this study perceived their husbands to be empathetic toward and caring about their wives' college pursuits, like many researchers have reported previously (Balswick and Peek, 1971; L'Abate, 1980; Ganong and Coleman, 1984), their husbands may have found it difficult to be emotionally expressive. The respondents consequently may have felt the need to supplement their emotional support by looking to others. Additionally, their husbands may not have been as freely giving of emotional support when the respondents needed this support the most. This latter presumption appears to be supported by the data obtained on husband attitudes.

F. Husbands' Attitudes Toward Spousal Support

Written in the non-directional form, hypothesis 4 stated: There will be no relationship between the attitudes of adult women students' husbands toward spousal support and the level of spousal support they receive. As described in Chapter 4, correlational analysis revealed that there was a strong, positive relationship. Thus, hypothesis 4 was not supported by the data and the hypothesis was rejected. In this study, the greater a husband's attitude score, the greater the respondent's total support receipt score. It can be concluded that husbands' attitudes about spousal support and their wives' college pursuits were related to their wives' spousal support receipt.

Based upon the perceptions of the respondents, the majority of the husbands' attitude scores were in the very favorable range. As stated previously, however, this information leads to questions about the respondents' own attitudes and behaviors.

While the vast majority of respondents reported that their husbands were proud of their wives' personal achievements, a much lower percentage indicated that their husbands were enthusiastic about their college pursuits. Moreover, a large number of respondents indicated that their husbands found their wives' college pursuits to be problematic when it became an inconvenience to the husband. Almost half of the respondents indicated that their husbands were displeased when college activities interfered with their home lives. These results suggest that the husbands may not have been as tolerant of the respondents' college pursuits as the support receipt scores would indicate. Concomitantly, the results also suggest that the husbands' giving of emotional support may not have coincided with the emotional support needs of the respondents. One may speculate that when family functioning was compromised by the respondents' college pursuits or when the respondents' college pursuits became inconvenient for their husbands, the husbands' supportive behaviors waned. Unfortunately, these may have been the very times when the respondents were most in need of their husbands' support. This might explain, in part, why a large number of respondents reported that they look to others for emotional support. On the other hand, the results are not inconsistent with prior studies which have found that family members have decreased support previously given to wives/mothers when role expectations widen (Roach, 1976).

When respondents were asked if their husbands believed that they should be able to fulfill the responsibilities of the wife/ mother/worker/student/volunteer/etc roles as they did before they

entered college, a large number of respondents did not disagree with the statement. Once again, the respondents' perceptions of their husbands' attitudes were less favorable than the support receipt scores would indicate. When the subjects had been asked to respond to a similar statement earlier in the survey, the responses indicated that they, too, felt they should be able to fulfill all previously performed wife/mother duties. The data suggest that, in addition to the respondents, some of the husbands may have adhered to stereotypic views of the woman's role in the family. As pointed out by Markus (1973) and Berkove (1978) in their studies, some of the respondents might have simply added their role as student to their roles as wife/mother, resulting in minimal inconvenience to their husbands.

G. Husbands' Behaviors Toward Spousal Support

Written in the non-directional form, hypothesis 5 stated: There will be no relationship between the behaviors of adult women students' husbands toward spousal support and the level of spousal support they receive. The results from Chapter 4 revealed that there was a strong, positive relationship. Thus, hypothesis 5 was not supported by the data and was rejected. In this study, the greater a husband's behavior score, the greater a respondent's total support receipt score. It can be concluded that the husbands' past behaviors regarding spousal support were related to their wives' spousal support receipt.

The respondents perceived that their husbands had favorable to very favorable support behaviors with an equal number of

husbands scoring within these two ranges.

While respondents reported that their husbands had been encouraging and supportive in the past, over one-fifth of the respondents indicated that their husbands did not always back up their supportive rhetoric with action. Almost half of the respondents were unable to disagree with the statement that the longer they were involved in an activity, the less supportive their husbands became. On the other hand, it should be noted that almost half of the respondents reported that their husbands generally initiated the spousal support they received. This data mimicked the data from a previous survey item, written from the wives' point of view, which ascertained whether the wives initiated the spousal support they received.

A large number of respondents answered in the neutral category on items in this part of the survey, suggesting that they were not as able to differentiate their husbands' behaviors on the agree/disagree continuum as they had been able to do relative to their husbands' support attitudes.

H. The Interrelationship of Attitudes and Behaviors

Analysis of the four variables investigated in this study revealed that they were interrelated. Husband behaviors and husband attitudes correlated most highly with each other with wife behaviors and husband behaviors being the least correlated with each other. In a sense, the interaction of husbands' behaviors and attitudes accounts for little unique information from which to predict total support receipt. The interaction of husbands'

behaviors and wives' behaviors, though related, accounts for less redundancy of information among the four variables.

Further statistical analysis was performed to analyze the relationship of all four variables to total support receipt. By itself, the husband behavior variable accounted for 56% of the variability in the total support receipt scores. The addition of the wife behaviors accounted for 6% more of the variability in the total support receipt scores. The addition of husband attitudes increased the correlation slightly and accounted for only an additional 2% more of the variability in the total support receipt scores. The inclusion of wife attitudes did not increase either the correlation coefficient or the correlation ratio.

Though the inclusion of husband behaviors, wife behaviors, and husband attitudes was found to enhance the regression equation as a prediction model based upon statistical significance, the practical significance of the combination of these three variables is questionable, particularly as it relates to the inclusion of husband attitudes which had a minimal effect on both the correlation coefficient and the correlation ratio. Given this information and the fact that husband behaviors and husband attitudes were found to be highly intercorrelated, it is proposed that the most utilitarian combination of variables from which to predict total support receipt would include husbands' past supportive behaviors and wives' present support-seeking behaviors.

I. Spousal Support Factors

The responses from the survey participants asking them to comment on certain factors that might influence the level of spousal support they received were somewhat similar to the responses received on the open-ended questions at the conclusion of the study. The respondents most strongly agreed that the most important factor to influence the amount of spousal support they received was their husbands' attitudes and behaviors.

When the respondents were asked to write in their own words the reasons why they believed their husbands to be or not to be supportive, once again they more frequently noted reasons that were attributable to their husbands' attitudes and behaviors. Respondents very infrequently noted reasons attributable to their own attitudes and behaviors.

Written in the non-directional form, hypothesis 6 stated: There will be no difference in the proportions of adult women students who cite husband-emanating reasons in comparison to wife-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness. Chi-square analysis revealed that a significantly larger proportion of respondents cited husband-emanating reasons for their husbands' supportiveness or non-supportiveness. Therefore, hypothesis 6 was not supported by the data and was rejected. It can be concluded that the respondents believed the reasons for their husbands' support or lack of support primarily emanated from their husbands.

V. Implications

A. Sex-Role Attitudes

While the data from this survey suggest that women are receiving greater levels than previously reported of spousal support conducive to their college needs, careful review of the survey responses presents a tempering view. A large number of women, though reporting frequently received spousal support, (a) feel guilty when they receive instrumental support, (b) believe their emotional and instrumental support demands might negatively affect their marriage, (c) feel they are burdening their husbands when they receive instrumental support, and (d) feel that they are not performing their wife/mother duties as they should when they receive instrumental support. Even though these women consider their husbands to be supportive across all four support types at least most of the time, and though they almost unanimously believe emotional support to be the most important of the four support types, a large number do not like to ask for any kind of support, especially emotional and instrumental support. A large percentage look to others to fulfill their emotional support needs.

One might ask, "Are married, adult women students adding more stress to their lives by wanting and needing what they find most difficult to ask for and then feeling guilty for receiving?" As reported by Beutell and Greenhaus (1983), it may be very possible that a wife's sex-role orientation may influence her choice of coping or support-seeking strategies. If one accepts this supposition, then women may be better able to mobilize support from their

husbands if they are more aware of their own sex-role attitudes. It would seem prudent that professional support staff assist married, adult women students in examining their sex-role attitudes and then assist them in developing strategies for overcoming dispositional barriers to support-seeking behaviors.

B. The Marital Relationship

1. Congruency of Goals

The literature has suggested that marital quality is an important determinant of support effects (Coyne and Delongis, 1986; Heller, Swindle and Dusenbury, 1986). In addition, more than one researcher has postulated that spousal support reporting is more an index of a happy marriage than a true measure of a theoretical construct (Gore, 1978; Coyne and DeLongis, 1968). The women who participated in this study appear to have very communicative relationships and strong marriages. Cause/effect relationships are extremely difficult to prove, however, so it would be difficult to know whether they have good marriages because they receive spousal support or they receive spousal support because they have good marriages.

Nonetheless, key themes that appeared in the open-ended questions were communication and congruence of goals. Bowen and Orthner (1983) have written that congruency in sex-role attitudes is related to the level of marital quality perceived in the marriage. Congruency in attitudes has also been reported to influence spousal support (Roach, 1976; Hooper, 1979).

An implication of the findings of this study is that women with strong marriages wherein there is consensus of goals and frequent communication are more likely to receive support more frequently. Though it appears that a woman will receive support if her husband has a supportive personality, it also appears that a husband's belief in the worthiness of the end product (in this case, the college degree) may be good assurance that he will be supportive. If the husband is in agreement that the wife's college pursuits are worthwhile and if the wife communicates her support needs to her husband, then the chances may be greatly increased that the wife will receive spousal support. It is, therefore, recommended that professional support staff with responsibilities for admissions, orientation, and counseling of married, adult women students assist them in assessing the congruence between them and their husbands regarding the wives' college goals. Conflict management workshops which would help couples or individuals to develop effective approaches in dealing with incongruency of goals and role expectations, particularly when spousal support has been lacking, also may be very helpful to married, adult women students.

2. Marital Interactions

One must realize that husband and wife attitudes and behaviors are highly intercorrelated and interact with one another. Although this study has shown that a husband's past supportive behavior, by itself, is strongly related to the amount of spousal support an adult woman student receives, a wife's support-seeking behavior - joined with a husband's past supportive behaviors - may

make the relationship stronger.

Respondents did report that they engaged in support-seeking behaviors and they appear to have benefited from them. They reported discussing the importance of spousal support receipt in the furtherance of their college goals. Women often mentioned that they frequently talked with their husbands about their mutual needs and goals and that they both worked toward fulfilling these. Women also reported that they ask for support from their husbands and when they do, they have been more likely to receive that support - particularly instrumental support.

A married woman's college pursuits require adjustment of the marital dyad. Researchers have postulated that marital adjustment is a process, not a state. According to Spanier (1976), marital adjustment can be conceptualized along four separate dimensions; consensus, satisfaction, cohesion, and affectional expression. Though these dimensions were not tested in this study, the comments received on the open-ended questions indicated that this study's respondents and their husbands matched on many of these dimensions.

Heller, Swindle and Dusenbury (1986) report that the support schema is a highly interactive process. Though a husband's supportive personality and concurrence with a wife's goals may do more toward assuring a woman of support for her college pursuits than anything else, she should recognize that her behaviors can help nurture an already supportive personality and also may foster supportive behavior in a husband who is not so dispositionally inclined. Therefore, it may be helpful for college support staff and

counselors to assist entering married women students in assessing their husbands' prior support behaviors. Likewise, it would be recommended that professional support staff help women in examining how they interact with their husbands in an effort to understand their marital interaction style. Professional support staff can aid women by conducting workshops in assertiveness training and communication skills building. These may be extremely beneficial to women whose marital relationships are lacking in these areas.

VI. Recommendations for Future Research

Questions remain regarding spousal support and additional research seems warranted.

1. The most interesting result of the study was the reported level of spousal support received by the respondents. The levels far exceeded previously published reports. An interesting finding of this study was that the husbands of the respondents were highly supportive in part because of the perceived benefits to be incurred by both husbands and wives when the wives obtained their degrees. Degrees from either the College of Business or the College of Nursing were perceived by the husbands as making our respondents more economically marketable and would thus add to the financial security of the marriage. Rather than fear that their wives' possible financial independence could negatively affect their marriages, husbands appeared to embrace the prospects of increased financial gain. The investigator speculates that responses

from women in academic programs without such a clear financial advantage might be markedly different. Therefore, it is recommended that this study be replicated using subjects from other University units where the benefits of a degree might not be considered quite so lucrative.

2. The implication from the data that all the variables that were studied in this investigation related singly and in combination to spousal support receipt would lead one to question whether a theoretical model might be constructed to identify causal relationships. Further statistical analysis of the data using path analysis might be worthwhile.

3. The practical significance of the stepwise multiple regression analysis revealed that a husband's past supportive behaviors, coupled with a wife's support-seeking behaviors, are the most utilitarian predictors of spousal support receipt. Therefore, it is recommended that a controlled study of women be conducted which would investigate the effects, if any, among: (a) a group of women who had participated in an institutionally sponsored, support-enhancing program, (b) a group of husbands and wives who had received support information only, and (c) a group of husbands and wives who had received no specific information or help regarding spousal support. Such a study would appear to be a logical adjunct to this study.

4. The respondents in this study reported much higher levels of spousal support receipt than women in previous studies. However, problems in subject identification may have influenced the representativeness of the respondents and the generalizability

of the results. Therefore, it is recommended that this study be replicated at other institutions to determine if similar findings to this investigation would prevail. Furthermore, it is strongly suggested that this study be replicated at an institution where marital status of students is known so that the representativeness of the respondents is not suspect.

APPENDIX A

PRESURVEY POSTCARD

Study on Spousal Support
B316 Clinical Center
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1315

The Division of Women's Programs at MSU is sponsoring a study on spousal support of married adult women students. Its purpose is to obtain information on factors that influence the amount of spousal support women students receive. The information will be shared with individuals responsible for adult student orientation and women's counseling.

The first step in the study is to identify adult women students who are married. Since MSU does not compile data on marital status, yet we cannot conduct our study without this information, we are asking you to complete the following statement. Although your participation in the study is voluntary, we do need the following information to continue the study.

I am: (please check the most appropriate response)

☐ Single ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed
☐ Married and currently living with husband.

Thank you for providing this information. Please fold and staple the postcard so our return address and stamp are on the outside.

PLEASE RETURN THIS POSTCARD IMMEDIATELY.

APPENDIX B

FIRST MAILING LETTER

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RELATIONS
WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1046

Dear Student:

Thank you for responding to our inquiry regarding your marital status and for indicating an interest in the investigation we are currently conducting regarding spousal support for married adult women students at Michigan State University. Little is known about the factors that influence the amount of spousal support women receive. The purpose of this investigation is to obtain information on the attitudes and behaviors of adult women students and their hushands as these might affect the amount and types of spousal support these women receive. The information you provide us by participating in this study will be shared with University administrators and staff members as they review the services they offer in orientation, counseling, advising, and student activities programming for married adult women students.

Enclosed is a survey which we would like you to complete and return within 1 week. A stamped, self-addressed envelope also is enclosed for your convenience in returning the survey. You also will find a stamped, self-addressed postcard in this packet. This postcard indicates that you have completed the survey and also allows you an opportunity to request the survey results. When you have completed the survey, please mail us this postcard separately from the survey. In this way we will know that you have completed the survey but we will not be able to identify your individual responses to the survey questions. Therefore, your anonymity will be assured.

Please understand that your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or not to answer certain questions without penalty. On the other hand, we hope that you will appreciate the importance of this study and participate in it. We realize that your time as an adult student is very precious and we have attempted to make the survey as short as possible. We anticipate that it can be completed in approximately one-half hour. The information you provide is vital as we consider the support problems that face married adult women students at Michigan State University.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Maddy Dodson
Specialist
Department of Ob/Gyn
College of Human Medicine

Judy McQueen
Interim Director
Divison of Women's Programs
Office of Human Relations

APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

SURVEY ON SPOUSAL SUPPORT OF ADULT MARRIED WOMEN STUDENTS

The purpose of this survey is to learn more about spousal support of adult women students. Your help in this project is vital. The answers you give to the following questsions will provide us with the information we need to better understand the factors that influence the support given by husbands to married adult women students. Our intent is to share this information with the individuals who are concerned with adult student orientation and women's counseling. Please take the few minutes needed to participate in this study. THANK YOU.

1a. Are you currently married and living with your spouse?
☐YES ☐NO
(If you answered NO, please do NOT complete the remainder of this survey but return it immediately to:
Study on Spousal Support
B316 Clinical Center
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1315

1b. Are you currently at least 25 years of age?
☐YES ☐NO
(If you answered NO, please do NOT complete the remainder of this survey but return it immediately to:
Survey on Spousal Support
B316 Clinical Center
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1315

(If you answered YES to both questions 1a and 1b, please complete the remainder of the survey.

2. What is your age?
☐25-34
☐35-44
☐45-54
☐55-64
☐greater than 64 years of age

3. Do you currently have any children living at home?
☐YES ☐NO
(If you answered NO, please skip question #4 and continue the survey with question #5.

4. How many children do you have living at home and what are their ages?
☐1-2 children living at home; aged _____, _____
☐3-4 children living at home; aged _____, _____, _____, _____
☐more than 4 children living at home; aged _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

5. How many terms have you been enrolled at MSU?
☐1-3 terms
☐4-6 terms
☐7-9 terms
☐more than 9 terms

6. In what type of program are you currently enrolled?
☐degree granting - bachelors
☐degree granting - masters level
☐degree granting - doctoral level
☐continuing education
☐I am not enrolled in a particular program at MSU

7. What is your current enrollment status?
☐full-time student
☐part-time student

8. Are you employed outside your home?
   ☐YES ☐NO
   (If you answered NO, please skip question #9 and continue the survey with question #10.)

9. What is your employment status?
   ☐ 1-10 hours per week
   ☐11-20 hours per week
   ☐21-30 hours per week
   ☐31-40 hours per week
   ☐more than 40 hours per week

10. What is your husband's age?
   ☐less than 25 years old
   ☐25-34
   ☐35-44
   ☐45-54
   ☐55-64
   ☐greater than 64 years of age

11. What is the highest educational level your husband has achieved?
   ☐high school completion/diploma
   ☐some college
   ☐Associates degree
   ☐Bachelors degree
   ☐Masters degree
   ☐Doctoral degree or similar

12. Is your husband currently attending college?
   ☐YES ☐NO
   (If you answered NO, please skip questions #13 and #14 and continue the survey with question #15.)

13. In what type of program is your husband currently enrolled?
   ☐degree granting - bachelors
   ☐degree granting - masters level
   ☐degree granting - doctoral level
   ☐continuing education
   ☐My husband is not enrolled in a particular college program

14. What is your husband's current enrollment status?
   ☐full-time student
   ☐part-time student

15. Is your husband employed outside your home?
   ☐YES ☐NO
   (If you answered NO, please skip question #16 and continue the survey with question #17.)

16. What is your husband's employment status?
   ☐ 1-10 hours per week
   ☐11-20 hours per week
   ☐21-30 hours per week
   ☐31-40 hours per week
   ☐more than 40 hours per week

17. How long have you been married to your husband?
   ☐less than 1 year
   ☐1-4 years
   ☐5-9 years
   ☐10-14 years
   ☐more than 14 years

This survey is concerned with the support you may receive from your husband with respect to your college pursuits. When answering the remainder of this survey, please keep in mind you are to consider spousal support as it relates to YOUR college pursuits only.

For the purposes of this study, spousal support is defined in four different ways:

1. **Emotional Support** - the giving of trust, empathy, and love and the conveying of a general sense of caring. Examples of spousal emotional support might include, but certainly are not limited to:
   a. Husband shows concern for your well-being due to your increased time demands
   b. Husband shows interest in your college activities
   c. Husband expresses his opinion that your college attendance is important and worthwhile.

2. **Instrumental support** - the giving of tangible assistance. Examples of spousal instrumental support might include, but certainly are not limited to:
   a. Husband helps you get college-related tasks accomplished
   b. Husband assists you with non-college related tasks so that you have more time to devote to college work
   c. Husband accepts at least a part of the financial obligation resulting from your college attendance.

3. **Informational Support** - the offering of advice and counsel. Examples of spousal informational support might include, but certainly are not limited to:
   a. Husband gives you advice when you experience problems or difficulties with college
   b. Husband offers suggestions about your college activities
   c. Husband participates in discussions that relate to your college experience.

4. **Appraisal support** - the giving of evaluative information and/or feedback. Examples of spousal appraisal support might include, but certainly are not limited to:
   a. Husband encourages you to persevere in your college pursuits
   b. Husband acknowledges your academic skills and personal competencies
   c. Husband offers constructive comments regarding your college performance.

Again, as you answer the remainder of this survey, please remember that we are examining spousal support only as it relates to YOUR college pursuits.

Please complete statements 18-21 by using the following key and by circling the most appropriate response.

1 = Always 2 = Most of the time 3 = Equal amount of the time 4 = Some of the time 5 = Never

18.	I receive emotional support for my college pursuits from my husband.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I receive instrumental support for my college pursuits from my husband.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I receive informational support for my college pursuits from my husband.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I receive appraisal support for my college pursuits from my husband.	1	2	3	4	5

The survey continues on the following page.

The following statements concern common attitudes women might have and the behaviors women might exhibit relative to spousal support. Since your responses to the statements could vary, depending on the support type, each statement has four subsets - each specific to the four support types described earlier. Please respond to each statement subset. To assist you, the support type definitions are again listed below.

Emotional Support - the giving of trust, empathy, and love and the conveying of a general sense of caring
Instrumental Support - the giving of tangible assistance
Informational Support - the offering of advice and counsel
Appraisal Support - the giving of evaluative information and/or feedback

Please complete statements 22-43 by using the following key and circling the most appropriate response:

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

22. I have every right to receive _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

23. I do not hesitate to request _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

24. I have no negative feelings when I receive _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

25. My husband's feelings are more important to me than my _____ support needs for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

26. I do not expect _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

27. I feel guilty about receiving _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

28. The success I might enjoy in college will have nothing to do with the _____ support I might receive from my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

Emotional Support - the giving of trust, empathy, and love and the conveying of a general sense of caring
Instrumental Support - the giving of tangible assistance
Informational Support - the offering of advice and counsel
Appraisal Support - the giving of evaluative information and/or feedback

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

29. I continually prod my husband toward giving me _____ support for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

30. The _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits does not matter to me.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

31. I feel that I am not performing my wife/mother duties as I should when I receive _____ support from my husband for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

32. I do not want my husband's _____ support for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

33. I get _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband when I ask for it.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

34. I feel I am burdening my husband when he gives me _____ support for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

35. I have discussed with my husband the importance of his _____ support toward my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

Emotional Support - the giving of trust, empathy, and love and the conveying of a general sense of caring
Instrumental Support - the giving of tangible assistance
Informational Support - the offering of advice and counsel
Appraisal Support - the giving of evaluative information and/or feedback

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

36. The _____ support demands I might make of my husband toward my college pursuits could negatively affect our marriage.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

37. I look to others, rather than to my husband, to give me _____ support for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

38. I do not receive more _____ support from my husband for my college pursuits even when I ask for it.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

39. If there was a conflict between my husband's needs and my _____ support needs for my college pursuits, I would not express my needs to my husband.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

40. The _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits is most often initiated by me.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

41. If I were not satisfied with the level of _____ support I was receiving from my husband for my college pursuits, I would discuss this with him.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

42. The level of _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits is dependent on factors beyond my control.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

43. I do not like having to ask for _____ support from my husband for my college pursuits.
    a. Emotional 1 2 3 4 5
    b. Instrumental 1 2 3 4 5
    c. Informational 1 2 3 4 5
    d. Appraisal 1 2 3 4 5

The following statements concern your beliefs about your husband's attitudes and behaviors. Please complete statements 44-60 by using the following key:

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

44.	My husband is enthusiastic about my college pursuits.	1	2	3	4	5
45.	Although my husband realizes I need his support, he finds it difficult to be supportive.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	My husband encourages me in my interests.	1	2	3	4	5
47.	My husband has been supportive of my activities in the past.	1	2	3	4	5
48.	My husband does not mind me going to college unless it inconveniences him.	1	2	3	4	5
49.	My husband gives me support only when I ask for it.	1	2	3	4	5
50.	My husband is proud of my personal achievements.	1	2	3	4	5
51.	My husband begrudgingly gives me support.	1	2	3	4	5
52.	My husband does not believe my college pursuits are very important.	1	2	3	4	5
53.	My husband believes I should be able to fulfill the responsibilities of all my roles (wife/mother/worker/student/volunteer/etc.) as I did before I entered college.	1	2	3	4	5
54.	My husband is concerned that my college pursuits will negatively affect our marriage.	1	2	3	4	5
55.	My husband has been receptive to support requests I have made of him in in the past.	1	2	3	4	5
56.	My husband does not like it when my college activities interfere with our home life.	1	2	3	4	5
57.	My husband may say he will support me in my activities but, when it comes right down to it, he does not behave in a supportive manner.	1	2	3	4	5
58.	My husband has to be constantly reminded that I need his support.	1	2	3	4	5
59.	My husband generally initiates the spousal support I receive.	1	2	3	4	5
60.	The longer I am involved in an activity, the less supportive my husband becomes.	1	2	3	4	5

Please complete each of the subsets of statement #61 by using the following key and circling the most appropriate response.

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

61. I believe that the level of spousal support I receive, even if I receive no support, is a relection of:

a. my attitudes and behaviors	1	2	3	4	5
b. my husband's attitudes and behaviors	1	2	3	4	5
c. the nature of our marital relationship	1	2	3	4	5
d. societal views about male/female roles and behaviors	1	2	3	4	5
e. other factors (please explain briefly) _____	1	2	3	4	5

_____

62. Of the four types of spousal support described in this survey, the one type that is most important to me to receive from my husband is:
    - ☐ a. Emotional support
    - ☐ b. Instrumental support
    - ☐ c. Informational support
    - ☐ d. Appraisal support

Please answer either question #63 or #64 in your own words. Please be as brief as possible. If you need more space, please use the back of this page.

63. If you believe you generally are supported by your husband in your college pursuits, what reason(s), if any, can you give for why he is supportive? (If you would like to answer this question by responding separately for each support type; i.e. emotional, instrumental, informational, or appraisal, please feel free to do so.)

64. If you believe you generally are not supported by your husband in your college pursuits, what reason(s), if any, can you give for why he is not supportive? (If you would like to asnwer this question by responding separately for each support type; i.e. emotional, instrumental, informational, or appraisal, please feel free to do so.)

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it to:

Survey on Spousal Support
B316 Clinical Center
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1315

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPATION POSTCARD

I have completed the survey on spousal support and have mailed it to you in a separate envelope.

I would like a copy of the results of the study upon its completion.

☐ YES ☐ NO

PLEASE MAIL THIS POSTCARD IMMEDIATELY. ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY.

APPENDIX E

SECOND MAILING LETTER

Please participate - input!
We need your

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RELATIONS · WOMEN'S PROGRAMS EAST LANSING · MICHIGAN · 48824

Dear Student:

A couple of weeks ago we mailed you a packet of information pertaining to an investigation we are conducting regarding spousal support for married, adult women students at Michigan State University. To date we have not received a response from you indicating that you have completed the survey and have returned it to us.

We realize that as an adult student you have many commitments and that you may not have had an opportunity to complete the survey. The survey should take you approximately one-half hour to complete. Although your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you may choose not to answer certain questions in in the survey without penalty, we do hope that you will respond to the survey and provide us with the information which is so vital for the study to be successful.

We also are aware of the possibility that your completed survey may have been lost in the mail or that you may not have received the survey from us in the first place. Since we very much need the information you can provide, we have enclosed another survey for you to complete.

When you have completed the survey, please make note of this on the enclosed participation postcard. Please mail the postcard separately from the completed survey. In this way we will know that you did respond to the survey but we will not be able to identify your individual responses to the survey questions. Thus, your anonymity will be assured.

We very much are appreciative of your help. Should you desire the results of this investigation, please note this on the postcard and we will send you the results when the study is completed.

Sincerely,

Maddy Dodson, M.A.
Specialist
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
College of Human Medicine

Judy McQueen
Interim Director
Divisions of Women's Programs
Office of Human Relations

APPENDIX F

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES ON DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

(Numbers in parentheses reflect percentages.)

1a. Are you currently married and living with your spouse?
YES 105 (100) NO 0 (0)

1b. Are you currently at least 25 years of age?
YES 105 (100) NO 0 (0)

2. What is your age?

25-34	56 (53.3)
35-44	37 (35.2)
45-54	11 (10.5)
55-64	1 (1.0)
greater than 64 years of age	0 (0)

3. Do you currently have any children living at home?
YES 59 (56.7) NO 45 (43.3)

4. How many children do you have living at home and what are their ages?

1-2 children living at home	45 (75.0)
3-4 children living at home	14 (23.3)
more than 4 children living at home	1 (1.7)
Ages: 0- 5 years	35
6-12	47
13-18	24
¿ 19	9

5. How many terms have you been enrolled at MSU?

1-3 terms	4 (3.8)
4-6 terms	36 (34.3)
7-9 terms	33 (31.4)
more than 9 terms	32 (30.5)

6. In what type of program are you currently enrolled?

degree granting - bachelors	50 (47.6)
degree granting - masters level	43 (41.0)
degree granting - doctoral level	7 (6.7)
continuing education	0 (0)
I am not enrolled in a particular program at MSU	5 (4.8)

7. What is your current enrollment status?

full-time student	55 (56.1)
part-time student	43 (43.9)

8. Are you employed outside your home?
   YES 73 (71.6) NO 29 (28.4)

9. What is your employment status?

1-10 hours per week	9 (12.3)
11-20 hours per week	18 (24.7)
21-30 hours per week	8 (7.6)
31-40 hours per week	18 (24.7)
more than 40 hours per week	20 (27.4)

10. What is your husband's age?

less than 25 years old	0 (0)
25-34	41 (39.0)
35-44	32 (30.8)
45-54	24 (23.1)
55-64	7 (6.7)
greater than 64 years of age	0 (0)

11. What is the highest educational level your husband has achieved?

high school completión/diploma	2 (1.9)
some college	11 (10.6)
Associates degree	10 (9.6)
Bachelors degree	42 (40.4)
Masters degree	22 (21.2)
Doctoral degree or similar	17 (16.3)

12. Is your husband currently attending college?
   YES 16 (15.4) NO 88 (84.6)

13. In what type of program is your husband currently enrolled?

degree granting - bachelors	2 (11.8)
degree granting - masters level	4 (23.5)
degree granting - doctoral level	6 (35.3)
continuing education	3 (17.6)
My husband is not enrolled in a particular college program	2 (11.8)

14. What is your husband's current enrollment status?

full-time student	7 (43.8)
part-time student	9 (56.3)

15. Is your husband employed outside your home?
   YES 99 (96.1) NO 4 (3.9)
   (If you answered NO, please skip question #16 and continue the survey with question #17.)

16. What is your husband's employment status?

1-10 hours per week	1 (1.0)
11-20 hours per week	3 (3.0)
21-30 hours per week	3 (3.0)
31-40 hours per week	29 (29.3)
more than 40 hours per week	63 (63.6)

17. How long have you been married to your husband?

less than 1 year	2 (1.9)
1-4 years	31 (29.8)
5-9 years	32 (30.8)
10-14 years	9 (8.7)
more than 14 years	30 (28.8)

APPENDIX G

SCORING SCHEMA

SCORING SCHEMA

Wives' Attitudes and Behaviors

Survey Item	Score
22 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
23 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
24 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
25 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
26 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
27 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
28 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
29 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
30 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
31 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
32 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
33 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
34 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
35 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
36 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
37 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
38 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
39 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
40 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
41 a, b, c, d	+2 to -2
42 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2
43 a, b, c, d	-2 to +2

Husbands' Attitudes and Behaviors

Survey Item	Score	Survey Item	Score
44	+2 to -2	53	-2 to +2
45	-2 to +2	54	-2 to +2
46	+2 to -2	55	+2 to -2
47	+2 to -2	56	-2 to +2
48	-2 to +2	57	-2 to +2
49	-2 to +2	58	-2 to +2
50	+2 to -2	59	+2 to -2
51	-2 to +2	60	-2 to +2
52	-2 to +2		

APPENDIX H

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR ITEM RESPONSES

FREQUENCY DATA OF RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS
CONCERNING WIVES' ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS TOWARD SPOUSAL SUPPORT

The following statements concern common attitudes women might have and the behaviors women might exhibit relative to spousal support. Since responses to the statements could vary, depending on the support type, each statement has four subsets - each specific to the four support types described in the study. The following information provides frequency data of the responses from the study.

		Strongly Agree		Agree		NAND		Disagree		Strongly Disagree			
Item	Description	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	n	Mean
22.	I have every right to receive _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.												
	a. Emotional	77	74.0	22	21.2	3	2.9	0	0.0	2	1.9	104	1.35
	b. Instrumental	57	55.3	31	30.1	11	10.7	2	1.9	2	1.9	103	1.65
	c. Informational	40	39.3	39	37.9	18	17.5	4	3.9	2	1.9	103	1.92
	d. Appraisal	50	48.5	37	35.9	13	12.6	1	1.0	2	1.9	103	1.71
23.	I do not hesitate to request _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.												
	a. Emotional	45	44.1	28	17.5	20	19.6	8	7.8	1	1.0	102	1.94
	b. Instrumental	47	45.2	36	34.6	13	12.5	8	7.7	0	0.0	104	1.83
	c. Informational	46	44.7	27	26.2	18	17.5	12	11.7	0	0.0	103	1.96
	d. Appraisal	42	40.8	30	29.1	19	18.4	10	9.7	2	1.9	103	2.03
24.	I have no negative feelings when I receive _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.												
	a. Emotional	68	66.0	26	25.2	6	5.8	3	2.9	0	0.0	103	1.46
	b. Instrumental	47	45.6	35	34.0	11	10.7	9	8.7	1	1.0	103	1.85
	c. Informational	48	46.6	35	34.0	12	11.7	6	5.8	2	1.9	103	1.83
	d. Appraisal	50	468.1	33	31.7	12	11.5	9	8.7	0	0.0	104	1.81
25.	My husband's feelings are more important to me than my ____ support needs for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	12	11.9	25	24.8	35	34.7	24	23.8	5	5.0	101	2.85
	b. Instrumental	17	17.2	22	22.2	33	33.3	24	24.2	3	3.0	99	2.74
	c. Informational	14	14.1	27	27.3	35	35.4	19	19.2	4	4.0	99	2.71
	d. Appraisal	12	12.1	29	29.3	33	33.3	21	21.2	4	4.0	99	2.76
26.	I do not expect _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.												
	a. Emotional	3	2.9	5	4.0	3	2.9	43	42.2	48	47.1	102	4.26
	b. Instrumental	4	3.9	4	3.9	8	7.8	40	39.2	46	45.1	102	4.18
	c. Informational	7	6.8	14	13.6	16	15.5	37	35.9	29	28.2	103	3.65
	d. Appraisal	2	2.0	10	9.8	17	16.7	39	38.2	34	33.3	102	3.91
27.	I feel guilty about receiving _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband.												
	a. Emotional	1	1.0	1	1.0	6	5.9	35	34.3	59	57.8	102	4.47
	b. Instrumental	4	3.9	21	20.4	12	11.7	28	27.2	38	36.9	103	3.73
	c. Informational	1	1.0	0	0.0	12	11.8	35	34.3	54	52.9	102	4.38
	d. Appraisal	1	1.0	1	1.0	10	9.8	38	37.3	52	51.0	102	4.36
28.	The success I might enjoy in college will have nothing to do with the ____ support I might receive from my husband.												
	a. Emotional	6	5.8	6	5.8	4	3.9	37	35.9	50	48.5	103	4.16
	b. Instrumental	3	2.9	4	3.9	10	9.7	38	36.9	48	46.6	103	4.20
	c. Informational	6	5.8	10	9.7	19	18.4	31	30.1	37	35.8	103	3.81
	d. Appraisal	6	5.8	9	8.7	17	16.5	33	32.0	38	36.9	103	3.85

Item	Description	Strongly Agree #	Strongly Agree %	Agree #	Agree %	NAND #	NAND %	Disagree #	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree #	Strongly Disagree %	n	Mean
29.	I continually prod my husband toward giving me ____ support for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	6	5.9	17	16.7	23	22.5	29	28.4	27	26.5	102	3.53
	b. Instrumental	5	4.9	22	21.6	17	16.7	37	36.3	21	20.6	102	3.46
	c. Informational	1	1.0	11	10.8	28	27.5	36	35.3	26	25.5	102	3.74
	d. Appraisal	2	2.0	16	15.7	23	22.5	35	34.3	26	25.5	102	3.66
30.	The _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits does not matter to me.												
	a. Emotional	2	1.9	1	1.0	2	2.9	29	27.9	69	66.3	104	4.56
	b. Instrumental	1	1.0	1	1.0	6	5.8	33	31.7	63	60.6	104	4.50
	c. Informational	2	1.9	7	6.7	11	10.6	30	28.8	54	51.9	104	4.33
	d. Appraisal	1	1.0	4	3.8	11	10.6	30	28.8	58	55.8	104	4.35
31.	I feel that I am not performing my wife/mother duties as I should when I receive _____ support from my husband for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	1	1.0	4	4.0	7	6.9	31	30.7	58	57.4	101	4.40
	b. Instrumental	5	5.0	18	17.8	11	10.9	26	25.7	41	40.6	101	3.79
	c. Informational	2	2.0	1	1.0	13	12.9	30	29.7	55	54.5	101	4.34
	d. Appraisal	1	1.0	0	0.0	13	12.9	32	31.7	55	54.5	101	4.39
32.	I do not want my husband's _____ support for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	2.9	23	22.1	78	75.0	104	4.72
	b. Instrumental	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	27	26.0	75	72.1	104	4.68
	c. Informational	1	1.0	3	2.9	11	10.6	24	23.1	65	62.5	104	4.43
	d. Appraisal	0	0.0	1	1.0	9	8.7	27	26.2	66	64.1	103	4.53
33.	I get _____ support for my college pursuits from my husband when I ask for it.												
	a. Emotional	39	38.2	38	37.3	16	15.7	6	5.9	3	2.9	102	1.98
	b. Instrumental	48	47.1	39	38.2	11	10.8	2	2.0	2	2.0	102	1.74
	c. Informational	39	37.9	42	40.8	16	15.5	5	4.9	1	1.0	103	1.90
	d. Appraisal	42	41.2	37	36.3	18	17.6	4	3.9	1	1.0	101	1.87
34.	I feel I am burdening my husband when he gives me _____ support for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	1	1.0	13	12.6	11	10.7	39	37.9	39	37.9	103	3.99
	b. Instrumental	7	6.8	30	29.1	11	10.7	28	27.2	27	26.2	103	3.37
	c. Informational	1	1.0	6	5.9	15	14.9	43	42.6	36	35.6	101	4.06
	d. Appraisal	1	1.0	7	6.9	15	14.7	41	40.2	38	37.3	102	4.06
35.	I have discussed with my husband the importance of his _____ support toward my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	43	41.3	37	35.6	12	11.5	10	9.6	2	1.9	104	1.95
	b. Instrumental	45	43.3	35	33.7	15	14.8	6	5.8	3	2.9	104	1.91
	c. Informational	30	29.1	29	28.2	23	22.3	18	17.5	3	2.9	103	2.37
	d. Appraisal	29	28.2	35	34.0	21	20.4	15	14.6	3	2.9	103	2.30
36.	The _____ support demands I might make of my husband toward my college pursuits could negatively affect our marriage.												
	a. Emotional	3	2.9	20	19.0	13	12.4	32	30.5	37	35.2	105	3.76
	b. Instrumental	2	1.9	18	17.3	16	15.4	37	35.6	31	29.8	104	3.74
	c. Informational	1	1.0	8	7.6	18	17.1	39	37.1	39	37.1	105	4.02
	d. Appraisal	1	1.0	6	5.7	17	16.2	43	41.0	38	36.2	105	4.06

Item	Description	Strongly Agree #	Strongly Agree %	Agree #	Agree %	NAND #	NAND %	Disagree #	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree #	Strongly Disagree %	n	Mean
37.	I look to others, rather than to my husband, to give me _____ support for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	8	7.7	20	19.2	11	10.6	29	27.9	36	34.6	104	3.63
	b. Instrumental	3	2.9	10	9.6	9	8.7	35	33.7	47	45.2	104	4.09
	c. Informational	7	6.7	30	28.6	19	18.1	23	21.9	26	24.8	105	3.30
	d. Appraisal	7	6.7	23	22.1	21	20.2	25	24.0	28	26.9	104	3.42
38.	I do not receive more _____ support from my husband for my college pursuits even when I ask for it.												
	a. Emotional	3	2.9	12	11.4	7	6.7	39	37.1	44	41.9	105	4.04
	b. Instrumental	2	1.9	9	8.6	11	10.5	40	38.1	43	41.0	105	4.08
	c. Informational	2	1.9	7	6.7	14	13.3	42	40.0	40	38.1	105	4.06
	d. Appraisal	2	1.9	7	6.7	13	12.4	43	41.0	40	38.1	105	4.07
39.	If there was a conflict between my husband's needs and my _____ support needs for my college pursuits, I would not express my needs to my husband.												
	a. Emotional	6	5.8	19	18.4	13	12.6	45	43.7	20	19.4	103	3.52
	b. Instrumental	8	7.7	20	19.2	17	16.3	40	38.5	19	18.3	104	3.40
	c. Informational	4	3.9	20	19.4	18	17.5	46	44.7	15	14.6	103	3.47
	d. Appraisal	6	5.8	18	17.5	21	20.4	40	38.8	18	17.5	103	3.45
40.	The _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits is most often initiated by me.												
	a. Emotional	6	5.8	21	20.4	10	19.4	42	40.8	14	13.6	103	3.36
	b. Instrumental	8	7.8	24	23.5	25	24.5	33	32.4	12	11.8	102	3.17
	c. Informational	7	6.8	34	33.0	24	23.3	25	24.3	13	12.6	103	3.03
	d. Appraisal	7	6.7	32	30.8	25	24.0	27	26.0	13	12.5	104	3.07
41.	If I were not satisfied with the level of _____ support I was receiving from my husband for my college pursuits, I would discuss this with him.												
	a. Emotional	36	34.6	52	50.0	5	4.8	9	8.7	2	1.9	104	1.93
	b. Instrumental	34	33.0	51	49.5	10	9.7	5	4.9	3	2.9	103	1.95
	c. Informational	29	28.2	50	48.5	12	11.7	9	8.7	3	2.9	103	2.10
	d. Appraisal	29	27.9	52	50.0	13	12.5	8	7.7	2	1.9	104	2.06
42.	The level of _____ support I receive from my husband for my college pursuits is dependent on factors beyond my control.												
	a. Emotional	5	4.9	19	18.6	25	24.5	38	37.3	15	14.7	102	3.38
	b. Instrumental	10	9.8	17	16.7	26	25.5	37	36.3	12	11.8	102	3.24
	c. Informational	7	6.9	11	10.8	33	32.4	37	36.3	14	13.7	102	3.39
	d. Appraisal	5	4.9	13	12.7	31	30.4	39	38.2	14	13.7	102	3.43
43.	I do not like having to ask for _____ support from my husband for my college pursuits.												
	a. Emotional	22	21.0	29	27.6	20	19.0	22	21.0	12	11.4	105	2.74
	b. Instrumental	25	24.0	40	38.5	14	13.5	15	14.4	10	9.6	104	2.47
	c. Informational	11	10.6	25	24.0	24	23.1	31	29.8	13	12.5	104	3.10
	d. Appraisal	11	10.6	27	26.0	26	25.0	28	26.9	12	11.5	104	3.03

FREQUENCY DATA OF RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS CONCERNING WIVES' PERCEPTIONS OF HUSBANDS' ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS TOWARD SPOUSAL SUPPORT

The following statements concern wives' perceptions of attitudes and behaviors their husbands might exhibit relative to spousal support and their wives' college pursuits. The following information provides frequency data of the responses from the study.

		Strongly Agree		Agree		NAND		Disagree		Strongly Disagree			
Item	Description	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	n	Mean
44.	My husband is enthusiastic about my college pursuits.	54	51.4	27	25.7	18	17.1	4	3.8	2	1.9	105	1.79
45.	Although my husband realizes I need his support, he finds it difficult to be supportive.	3	2.9	15	14.3	8	7.6	33	31.4	46	43.8	105	3.99
46.	My husband encourages me in my interests.	48	45.7	43	41.0	7	6.7	6	5.7	1	1.0	105	1.75
47.	My husband has been supportive of my activities in the past.	49	46.7	45	42.9	6	5.7	5	4.8	0	0.0	105	1.69
48.	My husband does not mind me going to college unless it inconveniences him.	9	8.7	22	21.4	11	10.7	38	36.9	23	22.3	103	3.43
49.	My husband gives me support only when I ask for it.	1	1.0	11	10.5	10	9.5	55	52.4	28	26.7	105	3.93
50.	My husband is proud of my personal achievements.	73	69.5	23	21.9	7	6.7	1	1.0	1	1.0	105	1.41
51.	My husband <u>begrudgingly</u> gives me support.	1	1.0	12	11.5	5	4.8	28	26.9	58	55.8	104	4.25
52.	My husband does not believe my college pursuits are very important.	1	1.0	4	3.8	3	2.9	33	31.7	63	60.6	104	4.47
53.	My husband believes I should be able to fulfill the responsibilities of all my roles (wife/mother/worker/student/volunteer/etc.) as I did before I entered college.	6	5.7	21	20.0	15	14.3	38	36.2	25	23.8	105	3.52
54.	My husband is concerned that my college pursuits will negatively affect our marriage.	3	2.9	8	7.7	16	15.4	35	33.7	42	40.4	104	4.01
55.	My husband has been receptive to support requests I have made of him in the past.	32	30.8	57	54.8	7	6.7	6	5.8	2	1.9	104	1.93
56.	My husband does not like it when my college activities interfere with our home life.	10	9.5	32	30.5	25	23.8	30	28.6	8	7.6	105	2.94
57.	My husband may say he will support me in my activities but, when it comes right down to it, he does not behave in a supportive manner.	4	3.8	17	16.3	9	8.7	37	35.6	37	35.6	104	3.83
58.	My husband has to be constantly reminded that I need his support.	3	2.9	16	15.2	15	14.3	43	41.0	28	26.7	105	3.73
59.	My husband generally initiates the spousal support I receive.	13	12.5	37	35.6	24	23.1	25	24.0	5	4.8	104	2.73
60.	The longer I am involved in an activity, the less supportive my husband becomes.	3	2.9	12	11.4	28	26.7	42	40.0	20	19.0	105	3.61

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