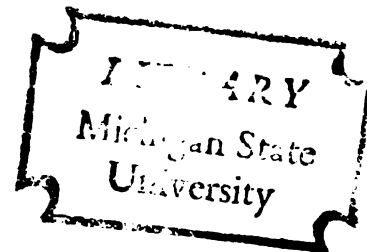


THE EFFECT OF FAMILY STATUS AND FAMILY
LIFE CYCLE STAGES ON HOUSING STANDARD,
PERSONAL EFFICACY AND PLANNING,
ECONOMIZING AND RISK AVOIDANCE
OF FAMILIES WITH LOW-INCOMES
--AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH--

A Dissertation
for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Lula Tassin King
1975



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This is to certify that the

thesis entitled
THE EFFECT OF FAMILY STATUS AND FAMILY LIFE
CYCLE STAGES ON HOUSING STANDARD, PERSONAL
EFFICACY AND PLANNING, ECONOMIZING AND RISK
AVOIDANCE OF FAMILIES WITH LOW-INCOMES--
AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH--
presented by

Lula Tassin King

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Family Ecology

Vera Borosage
Major professor

Date May 1, 1975

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LIFE CYCLE STAGES OF PERSONAL EFFICACY,
ECONOMIZING AND RISK AVOIDANCE
OF FAMILIES WITH LOW INCOME
--AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH--

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the relationships between family stages and the life cycle and the various stages of personal efficacy and planning and the propensity to economize and to avoid risk among families with low income. The theoretical perspective used was the ecological approach. Specifically, the ecological framework was used. The unit of inquiry was the ecosystem of the family. Herein, the family was defined as organism (O) in relation to environment (E) relationship.

The ecosystem model used was a system model consisting of both "O" and "E" components as dependent and independent variables. The dependent measures or outcomes were housing standard, an "E" component and personal efficacy and planning, economizing and risk avoidance were "O" components. The independent variables were family stages

and family life cycle stages; these represented the "O" components. Also serving as independent variables were race, an "O" component, and degree of urbanization, an "E" component. These latter roles are defined as third

variables. THE EFFECT OF FAMILY STATUS AND FAMILY LIFE CYCLE STAGES ON HOUSING STANDARD, PERSONAL EFFICACY AND PLANNING, ECONOMIZING AND RISK AVOIDANCE OF FAMILIES WITH LOW-INCOMES --AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH--

By

Lula Tassin King

The purpose of this investigation was to analyze the relationships between family status and stage of the life cycle and the variety in mode of housing, the level of personal efficacy and planning and the propensities to economize and to avoid risk among families with low-incomes. The theoretical perspective used was the ecological approach. Specifically, the ecological framework forming the unit of inquiry was the ecosystem of the family. Herein, the family was defined as organism (O) in an organism to environment (E) relationship.

The ecosystem model used was a mixed model consisting of both "O" and "E" components as dependent and independent variables. The dependent measures of concern were housing standard, an "E" component and personal efficacy and planning, economizing and risk avoidance were "O" components. The independent variables were family status

and family life cycle stages; these represented the "O" components. Also serving as independent variables were race, an "O" component, and degree of urbanization, an "E" component. These latter two variables are defined as third variables but treated as independent variables because the need to control for their effect was deemed necessary.

Data collected by the University of Michigan for their 1972 analysis of family income provided the data base for this research. A subpopulation was drawn from this population which extracted only low-income Black and White families. The formula used selected only those families whose income was equal to or less than $\$2000 + N(\$1000)$ where N represents the number of persons in the family. A multivariate analysis of variance was used to test for differences between the variable means and, wherever significant main effects were located a univariate analysis of variance was utilized to determine which means contributed to the multivariate main effects. The "F" test of significance was used to test the null hypotheses of "no effect" at a probability level of .05. Scheffe's post hoc analysis was used to determine whether the observed differences between selected means were significant.

The results of the hypotheses tests revealed that the mode of housing and the level of efficacy and planning

were significantly higher for two parent families but that single parent families did significantly more economizing than two parent families. Significant differences were also located between families in their mode of housing, their propensity to economize and to avoid risk across the stages of the life cycle. Except for the contracting stage, the means for families in the middle years indicated that this stage was significantly better off on the variables tested than the other stages.

Black and White families differed significantly in the variety of their mode of housing and on risk avoidance as a function of stage in the family life cycle. White families tended to have significantly more variety in their mode of housing and to take significantly less risk than Black families. Also significant was the main effect associated with degree of urbanization. Families tend to differ significantly in their mode of housing and personal efficacy and planning as a result of the degree of urbanization.

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Family Ecology

6-73217

THE EFFECT OF FAMILY STATUS AND FAMILY
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DEDICATION

To the memory of my father

To the continued good health
of my mother

To the love and inspiration
of my husband

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I would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to Dr. Dennis Keefe, Director of this research, for his step by step guidance and encouragement which enabled me to complete this thesis; to Dr. Vane Borrasage, my committee chairman, for her instructive comments and for keeping me informed of and assisting me in attending the numerous requirements of the program; to the members of my committee, Dr. Richard Hill, for their valuable comments and assistance which increasingly provided new insight into the problem.

DEDICATION

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To the continued good health of my mother
To the love and inspiration of my husband

To the Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan, for permitting me to use their data and for providing assistance, I say thanks.

To Mrs. Mary Andrews and the Office of Research Consultation I express my gratitude for assistance in data processing and statistical analysis.

To Mr. and Mrs. Fred Chege and Maina for their generous hospitality and assistance as I tried to bring this thesis to a conclusion I extend cordial thanks.

To my mother, the remainder of my kin network and to my in-laws for their understanding and encouragement I express sincere appreciation.

Above all, I am forever grateful and indebted to my husband for the sacrifices, the understanding and the inspiration which he provided throughout this difficult

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social and psychological problems will be exacerbated if barriers to the opportunity structure are removed.

A second approach, the psychological approach,^{2,3} explains poverty in terms of pathologies inherent in the individual. The assumption is that there is something inherently wrong with the poor and that their lack of achievement can be attributed to this factor. The psychological approach has tended to ignore environmental factors

¹ Gerald Gurin and Patricia Gurin, "Expectations Theory in the Study of Poverty," Journal of Social Issues, 26, No. 2 (1970), pp. 83-103.

² Ibid.

³ Robert Staples, "The Black Family Revisited: A Review and A Preview," Journal of Social and Behavioral Science, 20, No. 2 (Spring 1974), p. 67.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In recent years a body of research has appeared purporting to explain the nature and cause of poverty within families. One approach, the institutional approach,¹ explains poverty in terms of limited opportunity. This approach focuses on the current environmental realities that the poor must contend with and assumes that motivational and psychological problems will be ameliorated if barriers to the opportunity structure are removed.

A second approach, the psychological approach,^{2,3} explains poverty in terms of pathologies internal to the individual. The assumption is that there is something inherently wrong with the poor and that their lack of achievement can be attributed to this factor. The psychological approach has tended to ignore environmental factors

¹Gerald Gurin and Patricia Gurin, "Expectancy Theory in the Study of Poverty," Journal of Social Issues, 26, No. 2 (1970), pp. 83-103.

²Ibid.

³Robert Staples, "The Black Family Revisited: A Review and A Preview," Journal of Social and Behavioral Science, 20, No. 2 (Spring 1974), p. 67.

and to focus on the basic personality dispositions of the poor. ~~creates motivational constraints is the perpetual inability~~ The circumstances surrounding the life style of the poor cannot be wholly defined in terms of one or the other approach according to Gurin and Gurin.⁴ In their opinion, these two approaches lack an integrating factor, this factor being "expectancy." These authors contend that there is a relationship between motivation and realistically available rewards, and that an expectancy theory would tie motivation directly to the question of situational pay-offs and constraints.

Lending support to Gurin and Gurin's expectancy theory is the view of Cloward and Jones regarding inducement to educational achievement of low-income families. As they describe it, the major inducement is the expectation of future occupational rewards. In this connection and they stated: ~~stimuli and psychological structure or overt~~

If, . . . it is known in advance that these rewards will be largely withheld from certain socio-economic and racial groups, then it is unlikely that high levels of educational achievement can be sustained in such groups. Thus, academic performance may be devalued because the young in such groups see no relationship between it and the realities of their future.⁵

~~the ecology of the family as an ecosystem. Our primary~~

⁴Gurin and Gurin, "Expectancy Theory in the Study of Poverty," pp. 83-103. ~~"The Problem of Lower-Class Cultures," Journal of Social Issues 26, No. 2 (1970): 147.~~

⁵Richard A. Cloward and James A. Jones, "Social Class: Educational Attitudes and Participation," Education in Depressed Areas, ed., A. Harry Passow (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963), p. 192.

Evidence of the dilemma which confronts the poor and creates motivational constraints is the perpetual inability of the poor to break the barrier of poverty encircling them. Expectancy is greatly curtailed if, according to Rainwater,⁶ the lower class world is defined by these two tough facts of life, deprivation and exclusion. As explained by Rainwater, the lower class is deprived because it is excluded from full participation in society and it is excluded because it is deprived of the resources necessary to function within the mainstream institutions of American life.

Allen also perceives an association between poverty and the relationship of behavior to environment. He asserts "... the psychology of poverty deals with the 'interface' between the economic system and the individual; the relationship between a particular array of physical and interpersonal stimuli and psychological structure or overt behavior."⁷

It seems apparent that any approach which is not a holistic approach to the study of poverty is inadequate.

For that reason this study analyzes poverty in terms of the ecology of the family as an ecosystem. Our primary

⁶ Lee Rainwater, "The Problem of Lower-Class Cultures," Journal of Social Issues, 26, No. 2 (1970), p. 147.

⁷ Vernon L. Allen, "Theoretical Issues in Poverty Research," Journal of Social Issues, 26, No. 2 (1970), p. 149.

interest becomes one of examining the relationships and interdependencies between behavior and environment. The ecological approach, then, is assumed here to be the most logical approach since it focuses on the interrelationships and interdependencies between man and his environment.

The inclusion of the environment is crucial in the research of an ecologist. Cain⁸ indicates that the focus of attention on the ecological action system is what makes a researcher an ecologist.

Morrison, in explicating the various environments of man, argues that analysis of the interrelatedness of man and his environment from a systematic holistic perspective requires an analytical framework which:

... allows the conceptualization of the wholeness, the complexity and the interdependency between man and his environments. ... this form of analytic reference frame has become known as an ecological perspective, ecology being a unifying, integrative approach to making intelligible the degree of relationship between a living organism and its environment.⁹

In analyzing the family as an ecosystem, the family is viewed as an organism (0) in an organism to

study¹² indicate that the number of children and uncles

⁸ Stanley A. Cain, "Can Ecology Provide the Basis for Synthesis Among the Social Sciences?" Social Sciences and the Environment, eds. Morris E. Garnsey and James R. Hibbs (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1967), p. 29.

⁹ Bonnie M. Morrison, "The Importance of a Balanced Perspective: The Environments of Man," Man-Environment Systems, 4, No. 3 (1974), p. 171.

environment (E) relationship. According to Fosberg,¹⁰ an ecosystem is defined as a functioning interacting system involving one or more living organisms and their environment. In this connection, Vivian stated: "The history of any group of persons is a record of the interaction of individuals in that group, of that group with other groups, and the interaction of all of them with their environment."¹¹

While all elements in an ecosystem are interdependent, it would be impossible within the confines of this research and the competencies of the analyst, to examine all the determinants and consequences of poverty. The more modest objectives of the study are to pinpoint certain key relationships. This study emphasizes the O—E relationships focusing on (1) the internal attributes of O including race, family structure and family members' attitudes indicating in general their perceived ability to control their environment and (2) such composites of E as housing and community characteristics.

Results from a recent Survey Research Center (SRC) study¹² indicate that the number of children and whether

¹⁰Francis R. Fosberg, (ed.), Man's Place in the Island Ecosystem (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1963), p. 2.

¹¹Eugene V. Vivian, Sourcebook for Environmental Education (St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co., 1973), p. 117.

¹²James N. Morgan et al., Five Thousand American Families--Patterns of Economic Progress (Ann Arbor:

the head of household is male or female, white or nonwhite are all factors contributing to the persistence of poverty within families. The degree of urbanization was also found to be an important factor, in that families of rural areas have a greater tendency toward poverty than families living within 30 miles of a large urban center. This relationship was found to be true for blacks and whites; however the effect of urbanization was considerably greater for blacks than for the entire population under study. Living in large cities decreased the chances of being persistently poor for blacks more than for whites. The explanation suggested by Morgan and his associates was that the job opportunity situation in metropolitan areas is relatively better for blacks.

An important finding from the study was that, of the attitudinal and behavioral indexes created and analyzed by SRC, no evidence was found which would indicate that either satisfaction with self, confidence about one's future, economizing in the use of resources, or precaution against risk affect the well-being of poor families. As a consequence, it was suggested¹³ that the use of these attitudinal and behavioral dispositions might yield fruitful research if utilized as something to be explained.

Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1974), Vol. I, pp. 20-37.

¹³ Morgan et al., Five Thousand American Families, Vol. II, p. 345.

This suggestion inspired the design for this analysis. In addition, the data base for this research was available and facilitated this type of analysis. It was assumed that a partial explanation of these attitudes and behaviors might be possible if analyzed in terms of their relationship to established family characteristics. In addition, it is expected that this approach will promote an understanding of (1) why these attitudes do not affect the well-being of the poor or (2) how a different conception and analysis of them might reveal their significance.

The primary purpose of this study is to explain "O" within an ecosystem's framework. The attitudes and behavior patterns characteristics of "O" are used as dependent variables as well as one component of "e"--housing standard. Also an element of "E" is degree of urbanization which forms an independent variable. Equally important characteristics of "O" which are also treated as independent variables relative to attitude and behavior are family status which refers to the continuing presence of one or both parents, family life cycle and race.

In working towards realization of its purpose, through examination of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables selected for scrutiny, this study will achieve significance in three related areas. First, it should make a definite contribution to the small but growing reservoir of research elaborating

upon this framework. Secondly, such a contribution to research should both promote a rationale and provide a basis for family educators and policy makers to treat family problems in terms of wholeness. And lastly, though perhaps most notably, by extending the SRC analysis of the attitudes and behavior of the poor (an analysis which resulted in findings of "no effect" based on these variables), this study will reevaluate the relevance of those variables by treating them as dependent rather than independent. And that reevaluation will hopefully shed new light on the SRC's conclusion regarding the economic plight of the poor:

If these findings are confirmed by additional years of data collected on trends in the families' fortunes, they have dramatic implications for the way we view the poor. If the poor cannot control their own fates, it seems unfair to distinguish the old and disabled as deserving and the rest as undeserving and in need of persuasion to change.¹⁴

This chapter is designed to familiarize the reader with the present status of research on poverty as well as provide a theoretical point of departure for this study. In this effort, the chapter has been divided into two main sections and corresponding subsections. The first section presents research pertaining to the dependent variables involved in the study (economizing, risk avoidance, personal efficacy and planning and housing standard), and

¹⁴Morgan et al., Five Thousand American Families, Vol. I, p. 339.

interrelationships between their determinants and consequences. The second section is devoted to research findings on the independent variables in this study (family life cycle stage, family

CHAPTER II

urbanization) and considers their interrelated determinants and consequences.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Human behavior is a multifaceted phenomenon which is difficult to analyze regardless of its dimensionality. Indeed, much of human behavior is non-observable, and that which is observable is difficult to define and categorize. Therefore, many complementary as well as competing analytical frameworks have been developed in an effort to elucidate discrepancies in existing behavior theories by expounding new theories. Of primary interest here are theories contributing to poverty related research.

This chapter is designed to familiarize the reader with the present status of research on poverty as well as provide a theoretical point of departure for this study. In this effort, the chapter has been divided into two major sections and corresponding subsections. The first section presents research pertaining to the dependent variables involved in the study (economizing, risk avoidance, personal efficacy and planning and housing standard), and discusses those variables in terms of the

interrelationships between their determinants and consequences. The second section is devoted to research findings on the independent variables in this study (family life cycle stage, family status, race and degree of urbanization) and considers their interrelated determinants and consequences.

Economizing Behavior

In order to Dependent Variables of social change through This section of the chapter presents research devoted to an examination of some specific attitudes and behavior patterns of the poor with regards to economizing, risk avoidance, personal efficacy and planning and housing standard. In a discussion of lower-class behavior, Gans asserts that "behavior results initially from an adaptation to the existential situation. Much of behavior is no more than a situational response that exists only because of the situation and changes with a change in situation."¹⁵ Yet frequently, the adaptive behavior exhibited by the lower-class has been analyzed from a middle class perspective. This is an inappropriate context, however, and has resulted in distorted conclusions about the poor. Rainwater comments on this inappropriateness and the resulting distortion when he warns that any discussion of lower class culture in isolation from the particular social, economic

¹⁵ Herbert J. Gans, "Culture and Class in the Study of Poverty: An Approach to Anti-Poverty Research," On Understanding Poverty, ed. Daniel P. Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 212.

and ecological setting to which that culture is an adaptation will prove misleading. Indeed, as he goes on, "The dynamic adaptational quality of any culture must be the center of attention if social process and social change are to be understood."¹⁶

Economizing Behavior

In order to relate to the issue of social change through problem solving, then, an appreciation of lower-class culture as an element of lower-class life is essential, according to Rainwater.¹⁷ And the underlying problem contributing to the maintenance and perpetuation of poverty is a lack of resources, a lack from which emanate the innumerable constraints tending to handicap the poor.

This scarcity of resources taxes the ability of a poor family to manage the internal affairs of its family ecosystem. Insufficient monies make it difficult for them to save or to participate more fully in the mainstream of American society. Yet, the real dilemma for the poor has been the constant criticisms of this inability to participate fully as well as their efforts to participate in and to enjoy the affluence of America.

David Caplovitz, "Economic Aspects of Poverty," *Psychological Factors in Poverty*, ed. Vernon I. Allen (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1970), p. 229.

¹⁶ Lee Rainwater, "The Problem of Lower-Class Culture and Poverty-War Strategy," On Understanding Poverty, ed. Daniel P. Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 247.

¹⁷ Ibid. Michael New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969; pp. 233-234.

Caplovitz discusses one area in which middle and lower-class economizing behavior are similar and dissimilar. According to him,¹⁸ the economic behavior of the poor differs markedly from that of middle-income groups. The area of comparison he chooses is monetary savings. In his assertion, "Low-income families are not nearly as likely as middle-income families to have life insurance, or to be covered by pension plans or to have savings."¹⁹ In comparing the behavior of lower-class and middle-class families with regards to saving habits, Martineau²⁰ argues that middle class families aspire toward savings. Their savings tend to take the form of "investments," a method of savings which implies risk, long term involvement and the possibility of higher returns. The aspirations of low-income families, on the other hand, are distributed about equally between spending and saving, although whenever money is saved, it is a non-investment saving with practically no risk factor. Moreover, that saving is always easily convertible for spending purposes and carries small returns.

¹⁸ David Caplovitz, "Economic Aspects of Poverty," Psychological Factors in Poverty, ed. Vernon L. Allen (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1970), p. 229.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Pierre Martineau, "Social Classes and Spending Behavior," Dimensions of Consumer Behavior, ed. James U. McNeal (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1969), pp. 233-234.

Martineau²¹ contends that from an analysis of spending and saving much can be learned about the psychological attributes which differentiate classes and determine their behavior tendencies. From his own analysis he concludes that the psychological make-up of low-status groups promotes a present and past time orientation; a limited attention span, a rural identity; an essentially non-rational world which is vaguely and unclearly structured with sharply defined and limited horizons and limited choice making; much concern for security and insecurity, thought in concrete terms and a view that the world revolves around one's family and one's self. The psychological profile for middle-status groups, however, is quite the opposite. This group has a future time orientation and a viewpoint span extending in time. Middle class members are more urban and rational in their self identification; they possess a well-structured sense of the universe and their horizons are vastly extended. Moreover, they are self-confident, risk-taking individuals with a clearer perception of choice-making, and Martineau finds them immaterial and abstract in their thinking and, in self-perception, tied to national happenings.

Katona views the behavior of the lower and middle-class with regard to saving behavior differently. Saving for Katona consists of the "negative act of refraining

McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1960, pp. 101-103.

²¹Ibid., pp. 233-235.

from spending the whole current income.'"²² It is true, he maintains, that the highest-income group of families does not dissave very frequently, but neither is dissaving a function of the lowest income group. On the contrary, it is among middle and upper-middle income families that dissaving is most prevalent. He cites additional support for this conclusion from studies of the Survey Research Center which, over a ten year period, revealed evidence contradicting the belief that the lower the income, the more frequent is dissaving.

Further, according to Katona, dissavings results from three major sets of circumstances: "inability to meet necessary expenditures out of income, unwillingness to keep habitual expenditures at the level of income, and willingness to make expenditures beyond the level of income."²³ Those who associate dissaving with poverty often assume that it is the first of these three sets of circumstances which plagues the lower class and it is true that the unemployed will draw on their savings; after all, low income people have few assets on which to draw and little credit on which to borrow. Nevertheless, middle and high income people will dissave, too, at times of illness and accident, regardless of prosperity or recession.

²² James N. Morgan, Martin H. David, Wilbur J. Cohen, Harvey H. Brazier, *Income and Welfare in the United States* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1960), pp. 101-103.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

And dissaving to pay living expenses during retirement occurs for them regardless of economic climates.

In an attempt to describe determinants for economizing behavior, the absence of saving among the poor would appear to be related more to the lack of sufficient income from which to set aside a saving than to behavioral characteristics peculiar only to the lower-class. Indeed, Morgan and his associates indicate that "The meager assets held by the poor result from low incomes, financial disasters, or poor financial management in the past."²⁴ And, unfortunately, this situation does not look promising for the future since current data on health insurance and pension rights imply that, due to lack of protection against poor health and involuntary retirement, the poor will continue to be plagued by economic dilemmas.

Some consequences of continual conflict with these dilemmas according to Caplovitz,²⁵ and characteristics borne of this conflict that distinguish the poor from the middle-class are: (1) rather than checking accounts, the poor live in a world of money orders; (2) they spend a greater proportion of their income on food and housing and will not likely have a telephone; and (3) they have a

²⁴James N. Morgan, Martin H. David, Wilbur J. Cohen, Harvey E. Brazer, Income and Welfare in the United States (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1962), p. 198.

²⁵Caplovitz, "Economic Aspects of Poverty," pp. 230-235.

negatively correlated debt-income ratio. With regards to the ability to purchase certain durable appliances such as TV sets, phonographs, washing machines and automobiles, they do not differ greatly from the middle class. This behavioral tendency towards durable goods has been labeled "Compensatory consumption."²⁶

Through the use of installment credit the poor have become consumers of major durable goods and, more than any other group, they have been victimized by fraud and deception. However, the acquisition of automobiles, appliances and the dream of a home appears to be compensation for blocked social mobility.²⁷

Another consequence of the deprived state of the poor, a state most certainly affected by their economizing behavior, is the tendency of a family possessing one of the components of poverty described by Ornati²⁸ to have linkages with several other components. An example is the correlation said to exist between the lack of education

²⁵ Robert A. Liston, *The American Poor* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 35-39.

²⁶ David Caplovitz, "The Merchant and the Low-Income Consumer," *Poverty in America*, eds. Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh, Alan Haber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966), pp. 197-211.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Oscar Ornati, "Poverty in America," *Poverty in America*, eds. Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh, Alan Haber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966), p. 26.

and income and type of occupation.²⁹ The poor are inadequately educated. Ulmer³⁰ describes an uneducated man as more than likely a poor man, below average in aptitude, unsuccessful and fatalistic. And Moles,³¹ in discussing the educational achievement of poor families, alludes to the interrelationship of motivation which provides the drive, and skills which provide techniques and opportunities for training. With regards to skills, Wilcox³² discloses that due to the lack of such within the low-income category, they are the lowest paid employees, the first to become unemployed and the ones who remain unemployed the longest. Therefore, the low income of many workers results from a combination of two factors: low income while working and loss of income while not working. And an even more severe handicap contributing to this added strain of inadequate income is the irregularity of income

²⁹ Robert A. Liston, The American Poor (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 35-39.

³⁰ Curtis Ulmer, Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Adult (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 34-36.

³¹ Oliver C. Moles, Jr. "Educational Training in Low-Income Families," ed. Lola M. Irelan Low Income Life Styles (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966), Publication No. 14, pp. 31-39.

³² Richard A. Wilcox, "Who are the Unemployed," In Aid of the Unemployed, ed. Joseph M. Becker S.D. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1965), p. 37.

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of many of the poor who are primarily dependent upon seasonal or day labor employment.³³

Hence we see the interrelatedness of determinants and consequences of economizing behavior for the poor. Following from the fact of this interrelatedness, then, a correlation can be said to exist between income, unemployment, underemployment, unemployability, the emotional and family stability of the household unit, poor housekeeping standards, and credit, housing the behavioral problems, to mention a few.

The ecology of these relationships makes it difficult to speak in terms of cause and effect, but it can lead to the development of a sensitivity, on the part of researchers, to the interrelatedness of conditions and events, of determinants and consequences. Attitudes do not develop nor does behavior occur in a vacuum. As the correlations above would indicate, there is a past, present and future component to all relationships, and the search for an understanding of behavior mandates recognition of and grappling with these components.

Risk Avoidance Behavior

It is important, according to Ornati,³⁴ to identify the groups that are poor and the relative risk associated

³³Liston, The American Poor, pp. 35-39.

³⁴Ornati, "Poverty in America," p. 26.

with poverty that individuals incur because of conditions beyond their control. The contemporary poor he considered to be:

. . . nonwhites, families with no earners, families whose heads are female and men aged 14 to 25 or over 65. The contemporary poor are also those with less than eight years of education, inhabitants of rural farm areas, members of families in which there are more than six children under 18, and residents of the South.³⁵

These characteristics are called poverty linked, and many of them overlap resulting in some families possessing more than one characteristic. An example would be a family of more than six dependents which is nonwhite, rural and headed by a female.³⁶

A major area of risk which can represent such linkage of one poverty characteristic with several is the inability of the poor to provide for hospitalization insurance and their failure to practice preventive medicine or to seek prompt medical care when illness occurs. The consequences of this inability are many and the risk involved can be devastating to the family's ecosystem. Ulmer illuminates this risk when he states of the poor that:

When they become sick, they are sick longer than any other group in society. Because they are sick more often and longer than anyone else, they lose wages and work, and find it difficult to hold a steady job (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968). Publication No. 14, p. 51.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 27.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 24-30., August 14, 1974, p. 01.

and because of this, they cannot pay for good housing, for a nutritious diet, for doctors.³⁷

According to Irelan,³⁸ the health of the poor is affected by their lack of money, a lack which in turn affects both their physical and mental health. Without an education, the poor fail to appreciate the need for preventive medicine or the need to see a doctor once ill-health sets in. Without sufficient money to meet the survival needs of food, clothing, warmth and shelter, poor families are seldom willing to spend their income on health need.

In almost every phase of health care and behavior, the poor behave differently from the middle class and more affluent sectors of American society. They have higher prevalence rates for many diseases, including schizophrenia. They have less accurate health information. Illness is defined differently. They are less inclined to take preventive measures, delay longer in seeking health care, and participate less in community health programs. When they do approach health practitioners, they are more likely to select subprofessionals.³⁹

There is evidence that the poor are often rejected on those occasions when they do present themselves for medical assistance.⁴⁰ In fact, in many hospitals they meet an outright refusal of service. Many doctors do not

³⁷ Curtis Ulmer, Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Adult, pp. 37-38.

³⁸ Lola M. Irelan (ed.), Low-Income Life Styles (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966), Publication No. 14, p. 51.

³⁹ Ibid. 69-70.

⁴⁰ The State Journal, August 14, 1974, p. D1.

wish to contend with the forms and redtape associated with indigent patients. And, according to Rosenblatt,⁴¹ once an agency acquires a reputation (earned or not) of not wanting to help Blacks and Puerto Ricans, these groups will stop seeking their services. They will hesitate to use facilities which they perceive as unfriendly toward them.

Rosenblatt⁴² associates this tendency of the poor not to seek medical assistance until their illness becomes dysfunctional with other manifestations of their lack of a future orientation. He sees the behavior determinants not wholly in terms of a lack of finances. (However, one must concede the problem is aggravated by the lack of money.) He does not see the absence of health care as part of the value system of the poor, much as their attitude toward the care of appliances. Just as they fail to repair a car before it is beyond repair, or attempt to repair household appliances, the poor permit their health to deteriorate. These material items are discarded at an early stage of malfunction, and through easy installment buying, they can be obtained again. Rosenblatt thus equates the care of the body with the care of appliances. The body becomes

⁴¹Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," in *Black Poverty*, ed. Daniel P. Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, 1967), pp. 171-181.

⁴²Daniel Rosenblatt, "Barriers to Medical Care for the Urban Poor," *New Perspectives on Poverty*, eds. Arthur B. Shostak and William Gomberg (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 69-76.

⁴²*Ibid.*

just another item to be used until it's worn out, without concern for repair.

Personal Efficacy and Planning

Planning ahead has not been associated with characteristic behavior exhibited by the poor. Indeed, research data indicate a definite lack in this behavior area,^{43,44} and in seeking an explanation for this lack many writers take refuge in a description of the poor as present-oriented and externally controlled.

In an attempt to explain or define what is meant by the two phrases "present-oriented" and "externally controlled," Sherman describes behavior which is externally controlled as that which reflects the belief that forces external to the self determine the outcome of events, while internally controlled behavior reflects the belief that one's self is the determining factor. Further, according to Sherman,⁴⁵ externals (or those whose behavior is externally controlled) exhibit more conformity and are more easily influenced by others than internals (or those

⁴³ Melvin L. Kohn, Class and Conformity: A Study in Values (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1969).

⁴⁴ Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," On Understanding Poverty, ed. Daniel P. Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 187-200.

⁴⁵ Steven J. Sherman, "Internal-External Control and its Relationship to Attitude Change Under Different Social Influence Techniques," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 26 (1973), pp. 23-29.

whose behavior is internally controlled), and they tend to show less confidence in their judgment. Internals have high expectancy for success in their own behavior, and research also tends to indicate that internals are superior in the handling of their environment and in attempting to manipulate it. Sherman⁴⁶ concludes that if internals do in fact fit this description then they should show a greater resistance to social influence represented by the persuasive attempts from outside sources.

In understanding why the poor could be viewed as fitting Sherman's description of the externally controlled, it may be useful to review Alexis and Wilson's discussion of perception and personality needs. They argue that "perception is guided by inner cognitive sets that reflect past learning experiences, values, motives--basic personality needs."⁴⁷ And there are three main sets of personality variables which impinge on perception: one's self-confidence, one's needs and one's values.

The way the individual uses input information to confirm his initial beliefs about a situation is influenced by his confidence in his own ability to overcome obstacles.⁴⁸ And, "the manner in which new information

⁴⁶ Donald B. Rothblatt, "Housing and Human Needs," *Town Planning Review*, 42, No. 2 (April 1971), pp. 132-144.

⁴⁷ Marcus Alexis and Charles Z. Wilson. Organizational Decision Making (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1967), p. 68.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

is weighed reflects the perceiver's state of confidence."⁴⁹ The value system of the perceiver also influences the perceptual process.

In our discussion of the research on the previous three dependent variables, economizing, risk avoidance and personal efficacy and planning we have established the nature of the living circumstances of the poor as being less than conducive to a belief in the organism's effect on alteration of those circumstances.

Housing Standard

Adequate housing constitutes another major problem area for low-income families. Enormous housing shortages for families of low and moderately low-income have resulted from the rapid rise in urbanization.⁵⁰ And the impact of this shortage is experienced through overcrowded living conditions. In fact, low-income families are likely to live in houses which were built for other types of families and may have been occupied by more than one generation of families. In addition, according to Schorr,⁵¹ these houses have disadvantages beyond that of

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Donald N. Rothblatt, "Housing and Human Needs," Town Planning Review, 42, No. 2 (April 1971), pp. 130-144.

⁵¹ Alvin L. Schorr, Slums and Social Security (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare, Government Printing Office, 1966), Report No. 1, p. 52.

age since they were probably designed for families that were of different size, habit patterns and at a different stage of the family life cycle. Also, it is likely that the housing has been altered to accommodate several families within a space that once served to shelter only one.⁵²

In seeking low-income housing, an added burden is the relatively large size of low-income families. The greatest difficulty is found among families of six or more persons.⁵³ Overcrowding can result not only from too many children; relatives and non-relatives often need to be housed under the same roof as well.⁵⁴ This doubling up tendency, according to Morgan et al., may result in an early departure of children from the home. They assert that "among families with older heads, more children moved out from homes which were overcrowded in 1968 than from homes with adequate space."⁵⁵ This undoubling of families and the creation of new households by the children, then, are attributed to the persistence of poverty in the parental home and the apparent belief by the children that housing units the life style of the people.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ George Schermer Associates, More Than Shelter: Social Needs in Low- and Moderate-Income Housing (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968), Report No. 8, p. 29.

⁵⁴ Ibid. N. Rothblatt, "Housing and Human Needs," pp. 130-131.

⁵⁵ Morgan et al., Five Thousand American Families, Vol. I, p. 102. pp. 141-144.

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"striking out on their own was better than what they could expect if they stayed at home."⁵⁶

Equally as crucial to the family ecosystem as housing space is the impact of high rise apartment complexes. Hellyer⁵⁷ and Rothblatt⁵⁸ argue that high rise apartments are unsatisfactory for families with children; low rise structures would better serve these families because they are more conducive to close supervision of children. Rothblatt⁵⁹ does report, however, that the social and psychological needs of families who do live in high rise, high density apartment situations receive greater satisfaction when such situations provide communal terraces on each floor which could serve as substitutes for courtyards.

Hellyer does envision a new mode of housing system which would more nearly serve to fulfill the needs of families at various stages of the life cycle. This mode would be built around a thoroughly developed public transit system and would reflect in the very construction of the housing units the life style of the people.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Paul Hellyer, "Cities of the Future: Heaven or Hell?" Queens Quarterly, 78, No. 2 (Summer 1971), pp. 167-174.

⁵⁸Donald N. Rothblatt, "Housing and Human Needs," pp. 130-144.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 141-144.

Near the transportation terminal high-density, hi rise apartments would be available for people who want them. A little further out, medium-density town houses Still further out, even lower-density, single type accommodation would be possible.

A family could spend their entire lifetime within the same community, if they wanted to. They could move into bachelor apartments while at university or working as single persons; then into a single apartment when married; then into a larger apartment when married; later into family type accommodation when children arrive and additional space and privacy are most required. Still later they could choose a single-family detached home if their economic circumstances allowed and, finally, back to an apartment again once the family had grown if that is their individual preference.⁶⁰

Most certainly, the desire to move on to better housing like that described by Hellyer, motivates the low income group and determines their living aspirations. Schermer Associates⁶¹ indicate that a major problem confronting the poor in their quest for improved housing is fear by upper-class residents that the neighborhood will deteriorate because of certain attitude and behavioral characteristics ascribed to the poor. It is believed, for example, that the children of the poor are often unsupervised; that there is weak maternal control in the home because of the absence of a male head; that there is a lack of creative and constructive leisure time for children and that children have few success models on which to pattern their lives; that peer group pressures practically forbid individuals to pursue or conform to middle

⁶⁰ Hellyer, "Cities of the Future," pp. 173-174.

⁶¹ Schermer Associates, More Than Shelter, p. 31.

class patterns and norms; and that there exist among the poor a high rate of behavioral and emotional problems.

As a result of having to confront upper class attitudes and, hence, be inhibited in their search for better housing, Schorr⁶² maintains that the following consequences plague the low income group forced to remain in poor housing situations. They tend to develop a perception of self that leads to pessimism and passivity, stress exceeding the individual's adaptability, poor health, dissatisfaction, preference for company, not solitude, an attitude of cynicism toward people and organizations, no legitimate outlet for heightened sexual stimulation and relationships which extend in the neighborhood rather than in deep family relationships.

Independent Variables

Family Life Cycle Stages (FLC)

Observation and research reveal that discernible changes occur within the family as it moves through the family life cycle stages, changes which are evident in the "family's place of residence, its composition, and its economic well-being."⁶³ Patterns of change vary between

⁶²Schorr, Slums and Social Security, pp. 31-32.

⁶³Paul C. Glick and Robert Parke, Jr., "New Approaches in Studying the Life Cycle of the Family," Demography 2 (1965), p. 187.

families because of differences in such factors as family size, income and age. The effect of these variables in determining the needs of families is tremendous.⁶⁴ Housing provides a prime illustration of how the needs of the family vary in relation to size, income and age during the different stages of its growth and development.

The following is a descriptive analysis, presented by Glick and Parke,⁶⁵ in which the changing nature of family needs is described at each stage. According to these authors, a small family has reduced space needs and may value beauty more than space. As the family grows, however, its need for space increases and at this time it may value space more than beauty.

Because of anticipated mobility the need of the young married is for a small apartment, usually it is rented, with little furniture. At this time future needs are indeterminate. Moreover, the income of the husband is low; therefore, it is inexpensive to operate the apartment which is usually in the city.⁶⁶

The next ten to twelve years are fluid because these are the child-bearing years. Both the needs and

⁶⁴ Nelson N. Foote, Janet Abu-Lughod, Mary M. Foley and Louis Winnick, Housing Choices and Housing Constraints (New York: McGraw-Hill Book, 1960), p. 95.

⁶⁵ Glick and Parke, "New Approaches," pp. 187-200.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 95-133.

resources of the family are altered as the income increases and the family grows. As an adjustment measure, the family moves away from the high rent areas (though they remain still in the city proper) to provide a playground and a family environment for the children. Mobility is greater during this first decade of marriage than it will ever be again. In fact, the family moves three to four times during the first ten years of marriage; most of these moves are from one area to another within the same community. The important value now is space, not locational convenience.⁶⁷

During the child-rearing period the family owns its home and settles down to a relatively stable existence for the next five to ten years. The house is adequate and the family is not planning to move again.⁶⁸ Space problems develop again during the child-launching stage. This problem, previously caused by the growth in family size, is now created by the needs of the children for privacy--a children's sphere apart from the parent's sphere. The husband's income has been rising and is probably at its peak so the home becomes inappropriate. If the husband is going to achieve success and have it visibly displayed, he must buy his home now. In addition, a more impressive home contributes to a semblance of good

⁶⁷ Morgan, David, Cohen, Bracer, *Income and Welfare in the United States*, p. 191.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 432.

"background" for the children when they marry. Therefore, the family seeks another home which assumes its greatest importance in the years just preceding the final departure of the children. It becomes a symbol of economic achievement and social standing. There is no regard for price, and the home will likely be suburban.⁶⁹

When the post-child years arrive and the children marry or leave the home to find jobs, the family is suddenly undercrowded. The couple may now move into an apartment or remain with the house where they can garden and enjoy these remaining years.⁷⁰

Clearly evident, then, according to Morgan,⁷¹ is the fact that family income and number of dependents vary in the course of the FLC. With regards to planning behavior, a dependent variable, he asserts,⁷² in his discussion of planner characteristics, that age of the head of the family unit and FLC are related to the family's feeling about their ability to plan ahead. Older people feel less able to plan ahead than do younger people. In his survey about half of the population thirty-five years or younger felt able to plan, whereas less than one third of

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Morgan, David, Cohen, Brazer, Income and Welfare in the United States, p. 191.

⁷²Ibid., p. 432.

those persons sixty-five and older felt that they were less able to plan ahead. Age, however, is not the only factor contributing to attitudes about planning. Married couples without children are more likely to feel able to plan than will those couples with children, according to Morgan. And the category least likely to be able to plan is that of the single parents, perhaps due to their generally low income as well as the possible difficulty which may confront them in their attempt to coordinate employment and child care times. The feeling that one is unable to plan ahead as a function of age results from the narrowing of alternatives available to the aging, according to Morgan and his associates.⁷³ They report⁷⁴ that the elderly probably find that more of their plans miscarry, whereas younger people have less experience and have seen fewer of their plans succeed or fail. Another possibility may be the belief, on the part of the young, that there are many available alternatives, while for the aged career lines become set, definite retirement circumstances and retirement income develop, and sickness and disease restrict physical capabilities.

There is an obvious effect of age and family composition on the labor force participation. Indeed, the

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid.

size of the family and its economic situation are so closely related that the coming and going of family members can have a greater effect on family finances than can changes in earnings and employment. The needs of the parental family diminish, and possibly its income as well, when the children leave home. The result may be an alteration in the work habits of the husband and/or wife.^{75,76}

In terms of the association of FLC to saving and dissaving, an aspect of economizing behavior, Katona⁷⁷ reports that FLC is closely correlated to dissaving, especially in relation to installment buying. Young married couples with children are the most frequent users of installment credit. At this stage they are establishing their household and tend to buy extensively through installment credit, a habit which occurs primarily during the first five to ten years of marriage. Then, between the age of forty-five and sixty-five, saving is most common.

The time period during which young people are buying on installment occurs shortly after marriage when their income is rising and is expected to continue to rise.

Associated, too, with the relatively frequent act of

⁷⁵ Mollie Orshansky, "The Shape of Poverty in the Perspective of Poverty and Income Distribution," ed. James G. Thompson, D. C. Heath Co., 1971, pp. 82-83.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 101.

⁷⁷ Glick and Parke, "New Approaches," pp. 187-202.

⁷⁷ Katona, The Powerful Consumer, p. 104.

dissaving is upward mobility of the young. As a result of this dual effect, Katona⁷⁸ asserts that there is uncertainty as to whether it is age and FLC or the expected improvement in income which is accountable for the dissaving pattern of the young married. The literature on FLC tended to reflect the stages of middle class Americans and raises the question of whether it can be assumed that these same types of patterns exist within the low-income category as these families move through their life cycle stages.

Family Status

Family status is also of considerable importance in analyzing family economics. In 1966 it was estimated that about 44 percent of the nonfarm poor households under age 65 were headed by a female. This includes families without as well as those with children. About 50 percent of the households with the head sixty-five years or older were headed by a female.⁷⁹

According to Jackson and Velten,⁸⁰ women with heads of families with inadequate incomes are women, children, the aged and the disabled constituted about half

⁷⁸Ibid. they can be severely curtailed. This type of

⁷⁹Mollie Orshansky, "The Shape of Poverty in 1966," Perspective on Poverty and Income Distribution, ed. James G. Scoville (Lexington: D. C. Heath Co., 1971), pp. 82-83.

⁸⁰Carolyn Jackson and Terri Velten, "Residence, Race, and Age of Poor Families in 1966," Perspectives on the United States, p. 198.

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of the families counted as poor in 1966. Women were said to outnumber men eight to five among the poor, while in the age group of sixty-five and older there were only two women living in poverty for every man. Particularly ill-favored were aged women who lived alone; more than three out of five of these were living in poverty. Regardless of age or family status, however, the woman was poorer than the man. Those who had to double as family head and homemaker were three and one-half times as likely to be poor as men heading a family, and they were even more disadvantaged if they had children younger than age six to care for.

Thirty-five percent of the 5.2 million women heading a family in 1966 were counted as poor, and two out of three with children under six were raising their children in poverty. Many of these women could not take a job at all, while few were able to manage a part time job because of their responsibilities at home.⁸¹

According to Morgan,⁸² because one-third of the heads of families with inadequate incomes are women, their labor force participation rate and the hourly wage rate they can command are severely curtailed. This type of

Poverty and Income Distribution, James G. Scoville, ed. (Lexington: D.C. Heath Co., 1971), p. 89.

⁸¹Schermer Associates, More Than Shelter, p. 30.

⁸²Morgan, David, Cohen, Brazer, Income and Welfare in the United States, p. 198.

family is least able to plan for the future, an obvious relationship to their generally low income.⁸³

Race

In terms of accumulated assets, the nonwhites and single parents with children have the least reserves from their past incomes. Some assets have been accumulated by the aged and farmers, but these are very few.⁸⁴

There are proportionally more nonwhite families living in poverty, even though there are more white families who are poor.⁸⁵ The major factors contributing to the high proportion of poverty among minorities are discrimination and lack of education or job skills. And when looking at those who command high wages and those who command low wages, race has the most significant effect on wages earned. Indeed, Blacks tend to have less education than Whites and to work in lower paying jobs than whites of similar education and competencies.

Based on such findings, Morgan and associates stated that, putting aside the lower wages due to less education and poorer occupation, it can still be estimated that Blacks earn about \$.40 less per hour than similar Whites. Yet this is an understatement of the true Black/

⁸³ Ibid., p. 432. Cohen, Brazer, *Income and Welfare in the United States*, p. 129.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 199.

⁸⁵ Paul Davidoff and Neil Newton Gold, "Exclusionary Zoning," Jackson and Velten, "Residence, Race, and Age," p. 89.

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White differential if local demand conditions are not accounted for when the fact is considered that many Blacks live in large cities where wages tend to be higher. But, by controlling for background, education, occupation, urban industry, as well as local area conditions, "we estimate that a black man on the average earns \$.51 an hour less than a white man in similar circumstances. If they both worked an average number of hours during a year, the Black family would receive about \$1100 less from the head's earnings than the White family for no other reason than the difference in race."⁸⁶

Degree of Urbanization

Another factor contributing to the unemployment and underemployment of minorities is the degree of urbanization. According to Davidoff and Gold,⁸⁷ the flight of White residents to the periphery of urban centers has had the effect of reducing job availability, housing construction and the population. Whites, in their efforts to escape from minorities and the poor, have found protection in the outer fringes of the city and are able to feel secure in their refuge because of exclusionary zoning policies which in fact and by law deny access to poor

⁸⁶ Morgan, David, Cohen, Brazer, Income and Welfare in the United States, p. 129.

⁸⁷ Paul Davidoff and Neil Newton Gold, "Exclusionary Zoning," Yale Review of Law and Social Action, I No. 2 and 3 (Winter 1970), pp. 57-63.

people and minorities. And, while the cities deteriorate into ghettos of the poor and minorities, the suburbs become, and are likely to remain, affluent and white. These authors urge that attention be devoted to the urban crisis stating that:

. . . it is important that policy makers realize that this remarkable shift in the location of urban economic growth has taken place, and that the process of industrial and commercial decentralization has had a transforming impact on the distribution of opportunities and rewards within urban areas.⁸⁸

According to Jackson and Velten,⁸⁹ there were only about 10 percent of the Black population residing in the suburbs in 1966, and, further, there was an association between residential patterns and age as well as income. Marked differences were found between the residential patterns of heads of household who were 22-54, 55-64 and 65 years of age and older.

For poor Whites, the residential pattern did not differ much as a function of age; however, for poor Non-whites, there was a marked contrast. The poor metropolitan Whites were about equally divided in their residence location, without respect to age, with about 50 percent living in the city and 50 percent living in the suburbs. Among the younger black families, on the other hand, about 60 percent lived inside metropolitan areas, mostly within the

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 58.

⁸⁹Jackson and Velten, "Residence, Race, and Age," pp. 93-95.

central cities. If the head of the black family was older than fifty-four, 60 percent lived outside metropolitan areas, principally in rural areas. The proportion of Whites living outside metropolitan areas was about equal for each age group. Once outside metropolitan areas, the residential pattern did not vary for poor white and non-white families; that is, poor White patterns of residence were similar to those for poor Nonwhites of the same age rather than those of white families above the poverty line.⁹⁰

There are several problem areas associated with the growth in urbanization, according to Hellyer,⁹¹ among which are environmental pollution stemming from the automobile, factories, power plants, airplanes and furnaces and the effect of noise on the central nervous system. Kristof⁹² extends these by adding the effects of inadequate garbage disposal, poor sanitation services resulting in littered streets, cracked and broken sidewalks, broken and unpaved streets and inadequate sewage and drainage systems. In addition, Kristof notes possible social disabilities such as mugging, robbing and assault, as well as unemployment, juvenile delinquency and narcotics.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Hellyer, "Cities of the Future," pp. 168-169.

⁹² Frank S. Kristof, Urban Housing Needs Through the 1980's: An Analysis and Projection (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 88.

Needless to say, urbanization has had enormous consequences for the ecosystem of the family. One consequence, as earlier mentioned, is the number of families (many of whom have young children) forced to live in high rise apartments. However, apartment living is unsatisfactory for families with children for a number of reasons, according to Hellyer.⁹³ Among the reasons given are:

(1) the amount of living space in square feet which is approximately 600-800 square feet of apartment compared to a 900-1200 square foot house; (2) the availability of a basement in a house in which children can play, father can practice carpentry and mother can plant her African violets. In addition, a house provides the private yard in which the children can play.

In examining the social and psychological consequences of high rise apartments on low-income families in Marlboro House, New York City, and Bouwlust I Housing Estate in the Hague, Netherlands, Rothblatt⁹⁴ reported a set of human needs which appear to be influenced by the design of the house. These dwellings were selected to test the effect on family and individual needs of the presence and absence of a communal terrace which provides

⁹³Hellyer, "Cities of the Future," p. 171.

⁹⁴Rothblatt, "Housing and Human Needs," pp. 130-144.

some of the satisfaction which one might acquire from a courtyard.

Rothblatt⁹⁵ defines these needs as family needs, belongingness needs, esteem needs and independence needs. The needs of the family consist of the easy supervision of children when they are outside, mutually shared family leisure time, participation by the husband in work activities inside or near the home and family activities at home and in the neighborhood. Ease in making friends with neighbors and participation in formal and informal groups constitute belongingness needs, while the esteem needs encompass pride in the appearance of the dwelling unit, a feeling of family status with respect to friends and relatives and a sense of accomplishment by the husband regarding his leisure time activities. Finally, the independence needs involve privacy, satisfaction with the size and arrangement of the apartment and a feeling of uniqueness about each individual apartment or building.

This study revealed that the family and belongingness needs were more fully satisfied in apartment complexes where there was a communal terrace. A preference was also indicated for apartments with lower floors.

Nevertheless, despite these findings, the typical high rise apartment complex continues to prevail. One major cause of these high rise apartment complexes is

⁹⁵Ibid.

limited available land for building and governmental policies regulating building codes.⁹⁶ As long as low-income groups are locked in the inner city because they cannot get access to land on the fringes of the city, thus making land inside the city available for redevelopment, the urban crisis will likely continue.^{97,98} The residents of the inner city do not have the resources to improve their housing nor is there a sufficient number of low and moderate income houses to meet the demand. If improvement is to take place in the housing market according to Rothblatt,⁹⁹ the government must become involved in the construction of new homes to meet the demand for housing unfulfilled by the private supply of low cost and moderate cost housing units.

Schorr¹⁰⁰ argues that the research on housing is partial and requires integration if it is to meet the social and psychological needs of families. He believes that too much attention has been devoted to the idea of an infinitely adaptable psychological man who is not greatly influenced by his physical surroundings. Further, he feels that while

⁹⁶Hellyer, "Cities of the Future," pp. 167-174.

⁹⁷Foote, Abu-Lughod, Foley, and Winnick, Housing Choices and Housing Constraints, pp. 95-133.

⁹⁸Davidoff and Gold, "Exclusionary Zoning," pp. 57-63.

⁹⁹Rothblatt, "Housing and Human Needs," p. 130.

¹⁰⁰Schorr, Slums and Social Security, pp. 32-33.

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more attention is being devoted to the sociological man, such attention carries the seed of misunderstanding because a sociological perspective tends to view man as intricately involved in relationships and unable to change.

Summary

Examination of the attitudes and behavior patterns of the poor reveals that these, which do not conform to the norms of middle class society, are not necessarily deviant but are adaptations to the environmental stimuli.

With regards to savings it was revealed that dis-saving is not a function of the poor, but rather a practice of the middle class. Thus, while the poor did not save, this was more a function of income. The evidence did indicate, however, that the poor engage in extensive installment buying of major durable goods. This tendency has left them victims of economic exploitation by merchants. Such use of credit for installment purchases has been termed compensatory consumption by Caplovitz, and represents compensation for lack of status. Middle class families, on the other hand, use installment credit to display their actual status and economic success.

Numerous factors are said to affect family needs as the family moves through its growth and developmental stages. Some of these are income, family size and age. The family's need for housing varies with each stage.

Race and family status are highly correlated with poverty. More families headed by women are in poverty than families headed by men. Age is also a factor as a high percentage of the aged are in poverty. The major factors contributing to poverty among the nonwhite population are racial discrimination, lack of education and job skills.

Also seriously affecting the social and psychological well-being of families is the degree of urbanization. Urbanization has so altered the family's ecosystem that researchers and policy makers are concerned about the deteriorating effects it is having on health, behavior and environment. As a result of this concern, ways are being explored to bring man and environment more into harmony in the metropolitan centers.

CHAPTER III

THEORY

The basic theoretical approach for this study is the ecological approach. This approach was used because it provides a holistic mode of analysis in that it does not compartmentalize human behavior; on the contrary, it integrates it with other relevant variables, transcending the problem of fragmentation so prevalent among other approaches. The ecological approach is said to have the following advantages¹⁰¹ over other methodological approaches competing for verification:

1. It treats man and the environment within a single framework. Without this relationship an ecological perspective would be impossible.
2. It is a rationally structured approach, that is, there is order to these relationships.
3. It analyzes the functioning system not just the form, therefore, it is a dynamic system.

¹⁰¹Paul Ward English and Robert C. Mayfield (eds.), Man, Space, and Environment (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 118.

Ecology is derived from the Greek word "oikos"¹⁰² meaning "knowledge of the household."¹⁰³ It has been defined as a science "concerned with the relationship between organisms and their environment and the interrelationships and interdependences of these organisms."¹⁰⁴ It emphasizes the interspecies as well as the intraspecies relationships including both the physical and biotic environments.¹⁰⁵ Odum prefers to define ecology in more specific terms and refers to it simply as the "study of the structure and function of ecosystems."¹⁰⁶ According to Vernberg and Vernberg,¹⁰⁷ whenever we consider both the biotic community and its physical environment together, the resulting interacting community is an ecosystem. Consistent with the previous definitions of an ecosystem is

¹⁰²Nancy Hook and Beatrice Paolucci, "The Family as an Ecosystem," Journal of Home Economics 62, No. 5 (May 1970), p. 315.

¹⁰³Clifford C. Humphrey and Robert G. Evans, What's Ecology (Northbrook, Ill: Hubbard Press, 1971), p. 6.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁵John Vernberg and Winona B. Vernberg, The Animal and the Environment (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 5.

¹⁰⁶Eugene P. Odum, "Relationships Between Structure and Function in Ecosystems," Behavior and Ecology, ed. Thomas C. Emmel (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1970), pp. 59-62.

¹⁰⁷Vernberg and Vernberg, The Animal and the Environment, p. 325.

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the definition used by Turk et al.¹⁰⁸ in which an ecosystem is said to consist of plants and animals occurring together as well as that part of the physical environment with which they interact and, an interaction between the organism and environment has reference to the "transfer of energy or mass between an organism and its environment."¹⁰⁹

The ecosystem is characterized as "nearly self-contained, so that the matter which flows into and out of it is small compared to the quantities which are internally recycled in a continuous exchange of the essentials of life."¹¹⁰ In its ecosystem the organism "lives in a state of dynamic equilibrium with the environment, . . . the environment is in a constant state of flux Hence, if an organism is to succeed, an equilibrium between its total functional capabilities and the external environmental factors must be reached."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸Amos Turk, Jonathan Turk, Janet Wittes and Robert Wittes, Environmental Science (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., 1970), p. 1.

¹⁰⁹G. G. Spomer, "The Concepts of 'Interaction' and 'Operational Environment' in Environmental Analysis," Ecology 54, No. 1 (Winter 1973), p. 201.

¹¹⁰Turk et al., Environmental Science, p. 1.

¹¹¹Vernberg and Vernberg, The Animal and the Environment, p. 1.

Mason and Langenheim¹¹² disagree with the broad general use of the term environment in ecological studies. Environment, to be meaningful must be limited, that is, only those phenomena which actually enter a relationship with a particular organism is the environment of that organism. Only phenomena which are immediately and directly operationally significant to a given organism is referred to as the operational environment. The potential environment consists of all unused phenomena that are in a condition to be operationally employed. Consequently, these authors defined environment as:

The environment of any organism is the class composed of the sum of those phenomena that enter a reaction system of the organism or otherwise directly impinge upon it to affect its mode of life at anytime throughout its life cycle as ordered by the demands of the ontogeny of the organism or as ordered by any other condition of the organism that alters its environmental demands.¹¹³

Inclusive in this definition is a time-space-organism dimension whose constituents form a class.¹¹⁴ In terms of direct effect, according to Spomer,¹¹⁵ the only operational factors are those involved in the interaction of organism and environment.

¹¹²Herbert L. Mason and Jean H. Langenheim, "Language Analysis and the Concept Environment," Ecology 38, No. 2 (January 1957), pp. 325-340.

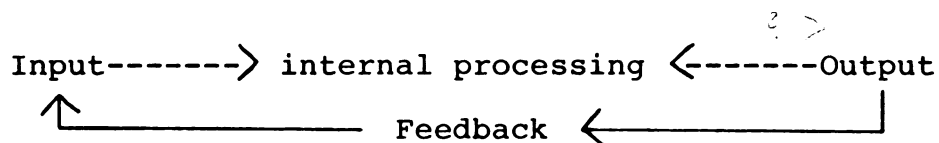
¹¹³*Ibid.*, p. 332.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹¹⁵Spomer, "The Concepts of 'Interaction,'" p. 201.

The operational environment for this study is the family ecosystem. The family ecosystem includes the home as near environment and analyzes the family's (O) relationships with its environment (E). Also interacting with the family and defined as part of the operational environment for this analysis is the residential environment. Specifically, as delimited by Hook and Paolucci, the general concern of home economist is "the family and that part of the near environment that impinges directly upon the family and is subject to manipulation by the family."¹¹⁶

The O—E relationship is characterized by a triangular alliance beginning with input (energy/information), succeeded by an internal processing stage, interaction, and finalizing with an end product, output, part of which becomes new input through the mechanism of feedback. The inputs are the matter/energy which enters the family



system and provides for its continued operation. Thus, the family fits into the category of an open and dynamic system by virtue of the triangular process which enables it to maintain a degree of stability while undergoing continuous change. This adaptability of the family to more

¹¹⁶ Hook and Paolucci, "The Family as an Ecosystem," p. 316.

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or less resources is important to explanations of the attitudes and behavior patterns of the poor with respect to economizing, efficacy and planning, risk avoidance and the quality of housing. Yet, it appears as if this factor is frequently overlooked in explanations relating poverty to the realities of life. This is unfortunate since a closer scrutiny of the adaptability of organisms to gradual changes over time reveals the emergence of behavior patterns and attitudes reflecting individual adaptation to environmental stimuli. Through the feedback mechanism organisms continuously monitor their environment, make the appropriate response and adjust accordingly. As a consequence, behavior can only be defined and understood within the ecological context of the organism and environment.

The family has been defined as a social system and as such involves more than just a group of components. These components must interact and be interdependent before they can be a system.¹¹⁷ A very comprehensive conceptualization of the family is the definition used by Hook and Paolucci. According to these authors, the family is "a corporate unit of interacting and interdependent

¹¹⁷ Norman W. Heimstra and Vernon S. Ellingstad, Human Behavior: A System's Approach (Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1972), pp. 478-510.

personalities who have a common theme and goals, have a commitment over time and share resources and living space."¹¹⁸

The basic thesis of this investigation is that elements of "0" such as individual attitudinal and behavioral attributes vary over the developmental stages of the family life cycle and between families with different structures. The ecosystem of a family changes as these ecological relationships change. The adaptation of a one parent family to the conditions of poverty may be different from that of a two parent family. Morgan and his associates stated that single parents with children have a double burden, that of rearing the children and earning a living.¹¹⁹

More specifically, using the family as the organism or unit of inquiry, this investigation analyzes the differential effect of stage of the family life cycle, family status and race on various construct measures of "0" characteristics or processes--personal efficacy and planning, propensity to economize and to avoid risk and the effect of output to the environment, namely, housing standard. Degree of urbanization, an environmental input,

¹¹⁸Hook and Paolucci, "The Family as an Ecosystem," p. 316.

¹¹⁹Morgan, David, Cohen, Brazer, Income and Welfare in the United States, p. 216.

was also examined to test for its effect on outputs and the organism.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables are housing standard, personal efficacy and planning, economizing and risk avoidance (Fig. 3.1). The model for this analysis is mixed in that it consists of elements of both "O" and "E" treated as dependent as well as independent variables. Specifically, the study is designed to examine the relationship between "O" and "O," "O" and "E" as well as "E" and "E."

The first dependent variable, housing and neighborhood quality, is defined as a monetary assessment of the home as well as a qualitative measure of the structural and plumbing defects. In our analysis it is a measure of one output from an "O" to the "E." Attention is focused on the immediate environmental conditions under which the poor must live. The housing environment of the poor is the least desirable in the nation and according to Liston¹²⁰ it is a disgrace. Housing and the neighborhood quality constitute the immediate environment and is therefore an inescapable reality.

¹²⁰Liston, The American Poor, pp. 49-50.

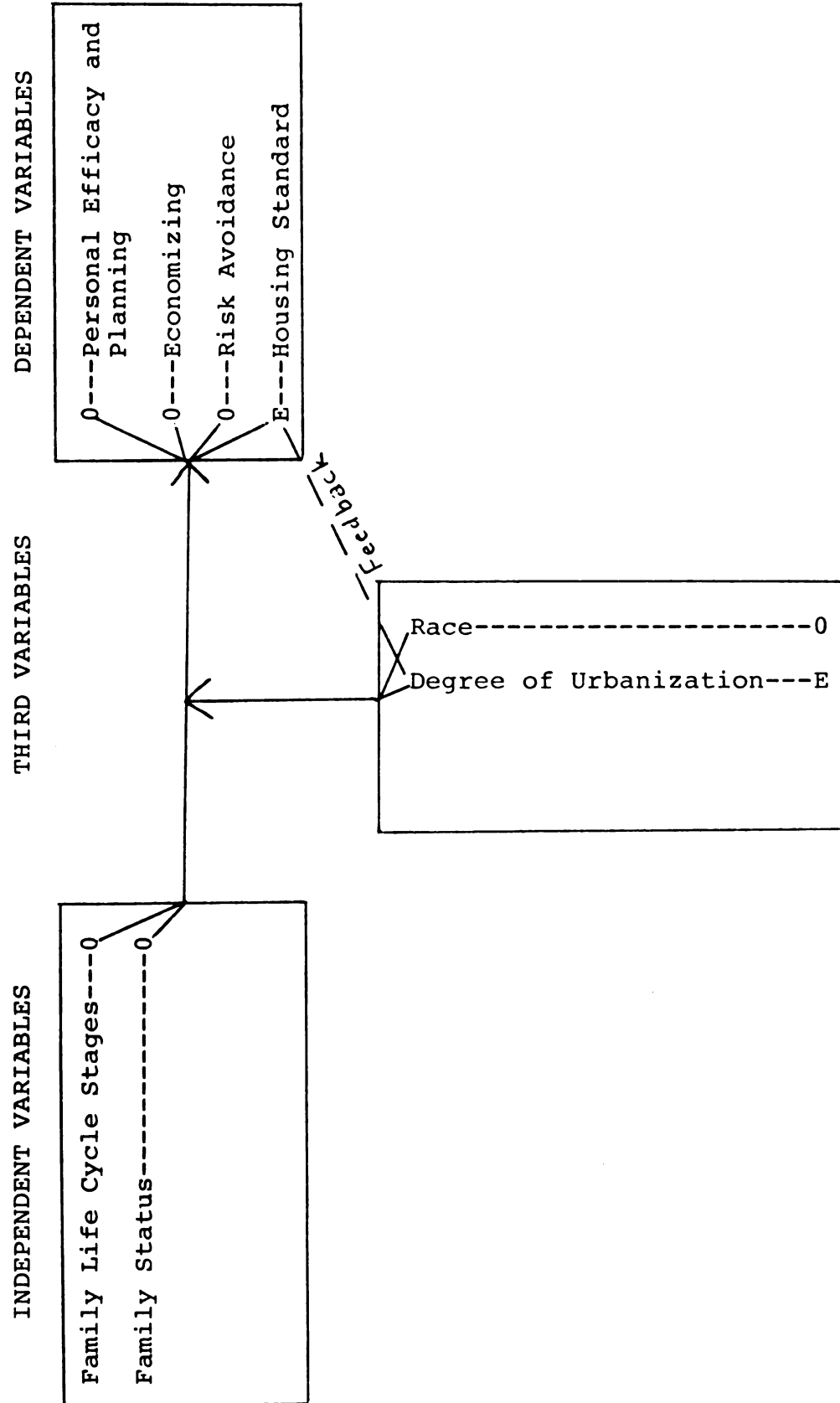


Fig. 3.1.--Model of Ecosystem Interaction. --- indicates feedback.

Personal efficacy, also a dependent variable, is an "0" process measure. As used herein, it has reference to that level of personal or internal control which an individual exercises over his life. It provides a feeling of being in control. The experience of being in control is the sense in which "one actively chooses, successfully wills, or achieves mastery over himself and the circumstances in which he finds himself."¹²¹ In short, it is the expectancy that events will proceed in accordance with personal intention or wish.¹²² Planning is associated with personal efficacy in that those with low expectation of success or a diminishing sense of personal control are not likely to make plans and will probably not make any plans which constitute a real challenge to execute. It must be assumed that the effect of feedback with respect to success or failure enters as a factor in feelings of personal efficacy and willingness to plan for the future.

Another "0" process is also represented in the propensity of families to economize. Economizing is defined as conservation in the use of resources. It

¹²¹Richard W. Coan, Marcia T. Fairchild and Zipporah Dobyns, "Dimensions of Experienced Control," Journal of Social Psychology, 91 (1973), p. 53.

¹²²Ibid., p. 55.

relates directly to the manner in which resources are utilized. It is a managerial process representing a means toward defined family output goals. Our concern is the variability in the economizing behavior of families across the stages of the family life cycle.

Risk avoidance is the fourth dependent variable. It is defined as behavior which tends to diminish the effect of unplanned financial and physical occurrences. It too exemplifies an "O" process measure. Because of their low income, families with low-incomes fail to take full precautionary measures against accidents due to the added strain on resources.¹²³ Yet, these are the families most prone to becoming victimized by risk factors.¹²⁴ They are most susceptible to loss of productive time due to illness and they are most vulnerable to unemployment and underemployment.¹²⁵ Accepting these as "givens," it is one aspect of this study's focus to examine the extent to which families assume greater or less risk as they progress through the stages of the life cycle and in relation to family status.

¹²³Ulmer, Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Adult, pp. 37-38.

¹²⁴Ireland, Low-Income Life Styles, p. 51.

¹²⁵Ulmer, Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Adult, pp. 37-38.

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To avoid confusion in distinguishing between various components of the index on personal efficacy and planning and risk avoidance, an attempt is here being made to clarify what appears to be an overlap in meaning. The planning index is a more subjective entity and represents the respondent's satisfaction with himself and his confidence about his future whereas the risk avoidance index is more objective and relates to measures undertaken in the present to buffer against possible adverse future occurrences.

Independent Variables

The independent variables, like the dependent variables, consist of both "E" and "O" characteristics. The "E" component represents an input and is presumed to affect the "O" processes and the housing output to "E." The other independent variables are components of "O" hypothesized to be determinants of the "O" processes used as dependent variables and the "E" output variable. The independent organismic measures are family status, family life cycle stage and race. The environmental input measure is the degree of urbanization.

Family status has been defined as one form of family structure in which the family contains one or both parents. The "O" input defined as the family status

measure has significance for this study because it is assumed that single parent families organize their households differently and engage in different types of experiences than two parent families. This is especially true since a family's chances of being persistently poor is greater for a female who is also head of the family. The possibility of poverty is greater still if there are children under six in the family.

Stage of the family life cycle was based on Evelyn Duvall's¹²⁶ developmental stages and defined as the developmental sequence a family undergoes from stage one, couples without children, to stage six, the point at which all the children have been launched. FLC was considered important because, according to Glick and Parke:

. . . this orientation provides a means for analyzing the changes which take place in the composition and economic characteristics of families from marriage through child bearing, children leaving home, the "empty nest" period, and the final dissolution of the family.¹²⁷

Third Variables

The introduction of third variables was deemed necessary because of their expected relationship to the independent and dependent variables. These third variables are race which is an "O" characteristic and degree of urbanization which is an "E" input.

¹²⁶Evelyn Duvall, Family Development (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1967), pp. 3-26.

¹²⁷Glick and Parke, "New Approaches," pp. 187-202.

Assuming that family status and stage of the life cycle are related to housing standard, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance, it is hoped that these third variables will more definitively define the nature of these relationships. Race refers to whether a family is black or white and degree of urbanization refers to residential location in relation to distance from an urban center of 50,000 population or more.

Hypotheses

The hypothesized relationships between the variables were derived from the initial problem (explain processes such as economizing, personal efficacy and planning, risk avoidance and housing standard) and the theoretical framework employed. (They will be determined by characteristics of the family ecosystem.) Specifically, the hypotheses are:

- (1) that single parent families will differ from two parent families in the varieties of their mode of housing, in their level of efficacy/planning and, in their propensities to economize and to avoid risk.
- (2) that stage in the family life cycle will affect the variety in mode of housing, the level of efficacy/planning and propensities of families to economize and to avoid risk.

- (3) that Blacks and Whites will differ by stage in the life cycle on the variety of their mode of housing, the level of personal efficacy and planning and the propensity to economize and to avoid risk.
- (4) that degree of urbanization will affect the varieties in mode of housing, level of personal efficacy and planning, and propensity of families to economize and to avoid risk.

Nominal Definitions

Housing and Neighborhood Quality

Housing and neighborhood quality was defined as a monetary assessment of the respondent's home as well as a qualitative measure of the structural and plumbing conditions of the house.

Personal Efficacy and Planning

That level of personal or internal control which an individual exercises over his life as well as a measurement of the individual's ability to plan for the future were defined as personal efficacy and planning.

Economizing

Economizing means conservation in the use of family money resources.

Risk Avoidance

Risk avoidance was defined as behavior undertaken in the present which tends to buffer the effect of unplanned financial and/or physical mishaps.

Family Status

Family status was defined as one form of family structure in which there is only one parent in continuous residence in the family or a family in which both parents are in continuous residence.

Stages of the Family Life Cycle

These are defined as the developmental sequences a family undergoes from stage one, couples without children, to stage six, the point at which all the children have been launched.

Family

A family has been defined by Hook and Paolucci as "a corporate unit of interacting and interdependent personalities who have a common theme and goals, have a commitment over time and share resources and living space."¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Hook and Paolucci, "The Family as an Ecosystem," p. 316.

Low-Income Family

All families from the sample whose income was equal to or less than $\$2,000 + N$ ($\$1,000$) where N represented the number of people in the family were defined as low-income families.

Race

Respondents were categorized as either black or white.

Degree of Urbanization

Degree of urbanization was defined as the residential location of respondents in relation to distance from an urban center of 50,000 population or more.

Ecosystem

An ecosystem was defined as a community or habitat which results from the interaction of the biotic community (plants and animals) and its physical environment.¹²⁹

Ecology

Ecology is the science which "deals with the relationship between organisms and their environment and the interrelationships and interdependencies of these organisms."¹³⁰

¹²⁹Vernberg and Vernberg, The Animal and the Environment, p. 325.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 5.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study was undertaken to determine the effects of family status and family life cycle stages on the behavior of families in the areas of housing, efficacy/planning, propensities to economize and to avoid risk. To this end, data collected by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center were utilized to test the research hypotheses.

Data for this study were based on the 1972 questionnaire (see appendix) of A Panel Study of Income Dynamics. This was the fourth wave of a six year longitudinal study.¹³¹

This chapter endeavors to outline the procedures used in reducing and interpreting the data to meet the

¹³¹ The information on the procedure for collecting and processing the data contained in this chapter was taken from Volumes I and II of the "Tape Codes and Indexes" to A Panel Study of Income Dynamics conducted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR), the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. All planning, collection and processing of this data was done by Dr. James Morgan and his staff at ISR. Some of the processes have been summarized for use in this paper. For more detailed information consult Volumes I and II.

needs of this particular research. It briefly describes (1) SRC's methods of sampling and data collection, (2) the data processing and classification, (3) the procedures for analyzing and interpreting the data and, (4) a summary.

Procedures for Sampling and Data Collection

Sampling Procedure

The interview population selected by SRC was partially based on a sample of respondents interviewed in 1966 and 1967 by the Bureau of the Census for the Office of Economic Opportunity. The remainder of SRC's population was derived from their master sampling frame in an attempt to include a more representative cross section of the United States. When SRC took over the interviewing process in 1968 their selection process of respondents from the Census Bureau population was based on a formula of selecting families if their incomes were equal to or less than $\$2000 + N(\$1000)$ where N represents the number of persons in the family.

One thousand eight hundred and seventy two respondents from the sample of dwellings previously interviewed by the Bureau of the Census were combined with 4802 respondents selected by SRC from its master sampling frame to form the interview population of 1968. All subsequent waves of interviews have been based on the respondents forming this population.

The Census sample, however, was not a representative sample. It excluded families whose heads were over sixty and those persons not signing a release form for release of the data, and it included only those families residing in standard metropolitan areas with the South being the only exception to this rule. In addition, Blacks formed a disproportionate number in the Census Bureau sample population. Since the focus of this study is on the analysis of relationships between variables and not the estimation of population parameters, sample representativeness is not a crucial issue.

In 1974, SRC's total sample was 5285 respondents. Though the data for this study were taken from the 1974 sixth wave of tapes, the variable year for this analysis was 1972 because the 1973 data reflected slight changes from the previous years. The 1974 data were not available at the time this study was designed, however the tape was available at the time these data were retrieved.

The subpopulation used in this study was the White and Black low-income families. These were selected on the basis of the formula cited above which provided 937 cases. Omitted from this subpopulation were single person households.

Data Collection

The major data collection technique was the personal interview. Interviews were conducted with the head

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of the household and with individuals in the household who were 17 or over or who were self sufficient. The interview data were supplemented by environmental information of the county such as the rate of unemployment.

Data Processing and Classification

Once the data were collected it was edited with a threefold purpose in mind: (1) to account for all changes made in year to year membership, (2) to correct discrepancies made in the interview and prepare it for coding and, (3) to calculate and record the numeric data on worksheets that were later keypunched. Every edited interview was double checked by another editor.

To facilitate analysis of the data, indexes were created by SRC. Some of these indexes were created deductively from an a priori theoretical consideration while others were created inductively by examining the data to determine how the components correlated. Where a positive correlation existed between the components of an index, the index was retained. If a component had a negative correlation with the index or one of its components it was eliminated.¹³²

¹³²For information on the reliability of the instrument the reader is referred to SRC's manual, cited earlier in the text, pages 340-349 of Volume I. Regarding the reliability of the indexes used in this study, the reader should consult pages 353-365 of Volume I.

The discussion of the remainder of this section will reflect the substance of the indexes which constitute the dependent variables for this study. Life cycle stage and family status formed the independent variables and are of primary importance while race and degree of urbanization, though defined as third variables, are treated as independent variables. This distinction was made because they were felt to be secondary in explanatory importance, but the need to control for their effects mandated their inclusion in the study design and analysis.

Dependent Variables

Housing and Neighborhood Quality

An index was created consisting of seven components to measure the conditions under which families live. This index allows one point, unless otherwise stated, where each of the conditions listed were met.

Owns home

Lives 5-30 miles from the center of a city of 50,000 or more

Single family home

Neighborhood of single family houses

Value per room value = (10 x rent for non-owners)
\$2000 or more

2 or more extra rooms

Dwelling contains running water, inside toilet and does not need extensive or major repairs (at least no evidence of above)

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Efficacy and Planning

The questions forming this index were intended to identify the respondent's satisfaction with himself and his confidence about his future. One point was allowed for each of the six components forming this index:

Sure life would work out

Plans life ahead

Gets to carry out things

Finishes things

Rather save for the future

Thinks about things that might happen in the future

Economizing

An index containing six components was created to measure the propensity of a family to economize. The index was created by allowing one point for each of the following:

Spend less than \$150 a year on alcohol

Spend less than \$150 a year on cigarettes

Received more than \$100 worth of free help

Do not own a '70 or later model car

Eat together most of the time

Spend less than \$260 a year on eating out

Risk Avoidance

An index containing nine components was compiled to measure risk avoidance. A respondent may get one or

two points depending upon whether the component was/was not relevant. For a non-relevant component a neutralization score was added to neutralize the effect of that component. A respondent for whom the component is relevant earns two points for scoring and zero points for not scoring. If the component is irrelevant the respondent gets one point.

	Points
Newest (assumed to be best) car in good condition	1
All cars are insured	1
Neutralize non-car owners	2
Uses seat belts some of the time	1
Uses seat belt all of the time	2
Has medical insurance or a way to get free care	1
Head smokes less than one pack of cigarettes a day	1
Have some liquid savings but less than two months	1
Have two months income saved	2

Independent Variables

Stages in the Family Life Cycle

Stages for the life cycle were created from the subpopulation sample through a recoding process of several variables. The intent was to analyze specific changes within families across the developmental stages. These

stages were categorized as follow:

Stage one, young married--childless couple, wife younger than 35

Stage two, preschool age--oldest child 0-6 years old

Stage three, school age--oldest child 7-12 years old

Stage four, teenage--oldest child 13-20 years old

Stage five, contracting--youngest child 11 or more years and/or oldest child 20-60 years old

Stage six, middle years--no children under 25 in the household and oldest child 20-60 years old

Family Status

Family status refers to the continuing presence of one or both parents in the household. As used in this study it refers to a one parent or a two parent family.

Third Variables

Race

The race of the respondent was determined by the observation of the interviewer and classified as Black or White.

Degree of Urbanization

Degree of urbanization was a measurement of the distance the respondent lived from the center of the nearest urban center of 50,000 population or more. Respondents were asked "How far is this dwelling from the center of the city?" The city has reference to the nearest city of 50,000 or more population.

<u>Stages</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Frequency</u>			
		<u>White</u>		<u>Black</u>	
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Young married	Childless couple--wife younger than 35	23	6.8	17	2.8
2. Preschool age	Oldest child 0-6 years old	71	20.9	141	23.6
3. School age	Oldest child 7-12 years	46	13.6	117	19.6
4. Teen age	Oldest child 13-20 years	73	21.5	231	38.6
5. Contracting	Youngest child 11 or more years and/or oldest child 20-60 years old	23	6.8	68	11.4
6. Middle years	No children under 25 in household and oldest child 20-60 years old	103	30.4	24	4.0
	TOTAL	339	100%	598	100%

Fig. 3.2.--Life Cycle Stages by Sample Size.*

*Format adapted from Dennis R. Keefe, A Sociological Systems Analysis of Family Food Consumption Behavior, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia, 1972, p. 32.

Less than 5 miles
Five to 14.9 miles
Fifteen to 29.9 miles
Thirty to 49.9 miles
Greater than 50 miles

Procedures for Analyzing and Interpreting the Data

The procedure used to analyze and interpret the data are discussed in this section. The dimensions of discussion are at three levels, namely: (1) purposes to be analyzed, (2) hypotheses to be tested and, (3) statistical analysis of the hypotheses.

Purposes to be Analyzed

The intent of this investigation was an analysis of the effect of specific family process measures on designated individual attitudinal and behavioral measures. Specifically, the focus of this research was on the differential effect of life cycle stages and family status on housing standard, efficacy/planning, propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

While the variables race and degree of urbanization were not of primary interest to the study, care was taken to control any effect which might be contributed by these sources.

Hypotheses

Hypotheses were formulated to test the effect of these variables. The first set tested for differential effect of family status and stage of the family life cycle on the dependent measures. The second set tested for differential effect of race while the third tested for the differential effect of degree of urbanization on housing standard, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance. All hypotheses are stated here in a non-directional null form to facilitate acceptance or rejection. The hypotheses are:

- (1) There will be no differences between single and two parent families in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.
- (2) There will be no attitudinal and behavioral differences between families at various stages of the life cycle in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.
- (3) There will be no differences between races at various stages of the life cycle in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

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- (4) There will be no differences between families living at various distances from large urban centers in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

Statistical Analysis of the Hypotheses

The general program used for the analysis of these hypotheses was the multivariate analysis of variance. The univariate test for each hypothesis pinpointed specific variables contributing to the results of each multivariate analysis.

The multivariate analysis was programmed on the computer program developed by Jeremy Finn¹³³ of the State University of New York. The analysis was done by the Control Data Corporation 6500 computer used by Michigan State University Computer Laboratory.

The "F" test of significance was used in each case to test the null hypothesis of no effect between the variables. The .05 probability level was the criterion used for the acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses.

¹³³ Jeremy D. Finn, Multivariate: Fortran Program for Univariate and Multivariate Analysis of Variance and Covariance (Buffalo: Department of Educational Psychology, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1967).

Scheffe's¹³⁴ post hoc analysis was used to determine significance among selected variables.

Summary

The sample under investigation was a subsample (937 respondents) of low-income families with children taken from a larger low-income sample (1355 respondents) of subjects selected because of their status as head of the household.

A multivariate analysis of variance was used to test for the effect of family structure, race and degree of urbanization on housing, efficacy/planning, propensity to economize and to avoid risk. A univariate analysis of variance was used to pinpoint exact variables contributing to the multivariate results. All hypotheses were tested at the .05 alpha level of significance with appropriate degrees of freedom.

¹³⁴Gene V. Glass and Julian C. Stanley, Statistical Methods in Education and Psychology (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970).

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CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter has been devoted to analyzing the statistical results of the research hypotheses tested. These analyses and presentation of results are divided into three major sections. These are:

- (1) Analysis of the effect of family status and stage in the family life cycle on housing, efficacy/ planning, economizing and risk avoidance.
- (2) Analysis of the effect of race on housing, efficacy/ planning, economizing and risk avoidance at various stages of the family life cycle.
- (3) Analysis of the effect of degree of urbanization on housing, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance.

Research hypotheses relating family structure, race and degree of urbanization to housing, efficacy/ planning, propensity to economize and to avoid risk were tested using a multivariate analysis of variance

procedure. Wherever possible two way analyses were implemented to test for interaction among the independent variables.

Results

Section I--Family Life Cycle by Family Status by Housing, Efficacy/Planning, Economizing and Risk Avoidance

The results of the multivariate analysis of variance are presented in Table 1.1 along with Tables 1.2 and 1.4 which gives the associated scores. Tables 1.3 and 1.5 present the means of these variables while Figures 3.3 and 3.4 graphically illustrate these means.

Examination of Table 1.1 reveals significant main effects for family status and life cycle stage with a F

Table 1.1.--Multivariate Analysis of Variance of Family Status and Stage in the Family Life Cycle by Housing Standard, Efficacy/Planning, Economizing and Risk Avoidance

Type of Variance Tested	F Test for MANOVA		
	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Main effect of family status	47.48	4 & 926	.0001*
Main effect of life cycle stage	10.03	16 & 2830	.0001*
Interaction of family status by life cycle stage	1.44	16 & 2830	.1106

*indicates significance at alpha = .05.

ratio of 47.48 and 10.03 and with degrees of freedom of 4 and 926 and 16 and 2830 respectively. This means that there is an effect on housing, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance associated with family status and life cycle stage. No significant interaction was evident however between family status and life cycle stage.

Table 1.2 and 1.4 display the results of the univariate test contributing to the main effect of family status and stage in the life cycle.

With the foregoing statistics in mind, the results of the test of the hypotheses of interest in the study are presented. The hypotheses will be examined in the context of the significant main effects of the independent measures. The results will be discussed in terms of differences found between mean values on these measures.

Family Structure Research Hypotheses

H_1 : There will be no differences between single and two parent families in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

Considered across all dependent measures, the main effect of family status becomes clear. The F ratio for family status on the dependent measures in the order presented above was 66.88; 66.17; 51.24 and .77

Table 1.2.--Univariate Analysis of Variance of Family Status.

	F Test of Univariates Contributing to Main Effect of Family Status		
	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Housing Standard	66.88	4	.0001*
Efficacy/Planning	66.17	4	.0001*
Economizing	51.24	4	.0001*
Risk Avoidance	.77	4	.3802
Error		929	

*indicates significance at alpha = .05.

respectively. Except for risk avoidance, these ratios were found to be significant at $P = .05$ when evaluated with 4 and 929 degrees of freedom.

The hypothesis of no difference resulting from family status on housing standard, efficacy/planning, and economizing was rejected. There was support for that portion of the hypothesis claiming no difference in the tendency to avoid risk between single parent and two parent families. Examination of Table 1.3 and Figure 3.3 discloses the scores on these measures. Figure 3.3 reveals that among one and two parent families, housing standard and efficacy/planning are highest among two parent families but the propensity of two parent families to economize ($\bar{X} = 3.95$) is considerably less than it is

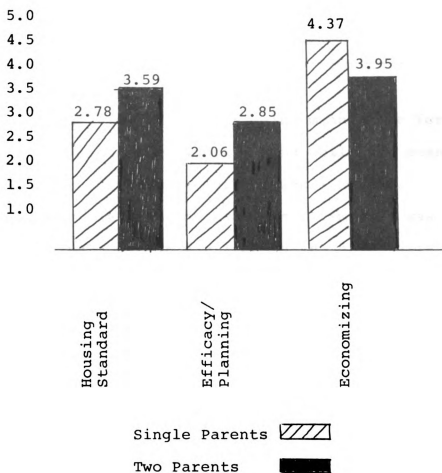


Fig. 3.3.--Diagram of Means for Effect of Family Status.

Table 1.3.--Table of Means for the Effect of Family Status on the Dependent Variables.

Family Status	*Housing Standard	*Efficacy/ Planning	*Economizing	Risk Avoidance
Single Parent	2.78	2.06	4.37	3.64
Two Parent	3.59	2.85	3.95	3.57

*indicates significance at alpha = .05.

for single parent families ($\bar{X} = 4.37$). The mean score for two parent families on housing was $\bar{X} = 3.59$ while the mean score on housing for one parent families was $\bar{X} = 2.78$. On efficacy/planning the mean for two parent families was $\bar{X} = 2.85$ and for single parent families on the same variable the mean was $\bar{X} = 2.06$. Therefore, in terms of the varieties of their modes of housing and the level of efficacy/planning, two parent families tended to score significantly higher than single parent families. The reverse is true for economizing. Single parent families tend to engage in behavior that leads to economy significantly more than two parent families. There were no significant differences between the two types of families on risk avoidance.

H₂: There will be no attitudinal and behavioral differences between families at various stages of the life cycle in their mode of housing, their

Table 1.4.--Univariate Analysis of Variance of Life Cycle Stage.

	F Test of Univariate Contributing to Main Effect of Life Cycle Stage		
	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Housing Standard	17.10	4	.0001*
Efficacy/Planning	.26	4	.9043
Economizing	15.30	4	.0001*
Risk Avoidance	14.77	4	.0001*
Error		929	

*indicates significance at $\alpha = .05$.

level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

The effect of stage in the life cycle was significant across three levels of the dependent measures. It had a univariate F value on housing standard, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance of 17.10; .26; 15.30 and 14.77 respectively. Except for efficacy/planning, it was significantly related to the dependent measures when evaluated at 4 and 929 degrees of freedom at the .05 level of probability.

The hypothesis that there is no difference resulting from stage in the life cycle on housing standard, economizing and risk avoidance was rejected. That there

is no difference associated with efficacy/planning was retained as the evidence supports that portion of the null hypothesis.

The results in Table 1.5 and Figure 3.4 visually display the differences in the mean scores of these variables.

It is indicated in Table 1.5 and Figure 3.4 that housing standard for families tend to improve across stages of the life cycle. The lowest mean ($\bar{X} = 2.76$ for preschoolers) and the highest mean ($\bar{X} = 4.26$ for middle age families) reveal a difference of 1.50 points. The mean for contracting families ($\bar{X} = 3.44$) is the second highest standard for housing and indicates a difference of .82 points. Examination of Fig. 3.4 suggest that on all three dependent measures, families have the highest score during the middle years. It should be pointed out

Table 1.5.--Table of Means for Effect of Family Life Cycle on the Dependent Measures.

Life Cycle Stages	*Housing Standard	Efficacy Planning	*Economizing	*Risk Avoidance
Preschool Age	2.76	2.45	4.19	3.36
School Age	3.11	2.53	4.09	3.62
Teenage	3.10	2.40	3.96	3.46
Contracting	3.44	2.48	4.32	3.59
Middle Age	4.26	2.66	4.52	4.36

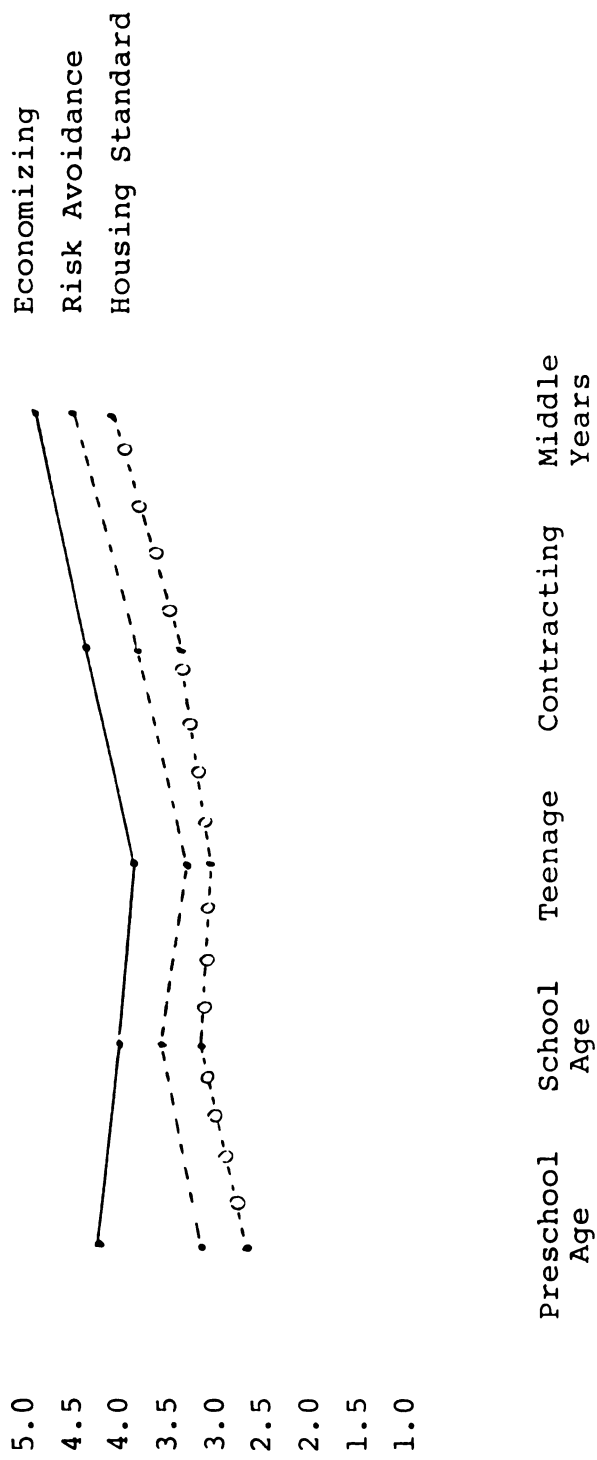


Fig. 3.4.--Diagram of Means for Effect of Life Cycle Stages.

however, that stage one, the young childless couple, was not included because the inclusion of family status precluded any category in which a single and two parent structure was not possible.

The differences between the means were significant across all stages when contrasted to the mean for families in the middle years as determined through application of Scheffe's post hoc analysis. Therefore, it can be concluded that the mode of housing is significantly more improved during the middle years than in the earlier stages of the family life cycle.

Families tend to economize less when there are teenage children ($\bar{X} = 4.52$). The second highest mean is the contracting stage ($\bar{X} = 4.32$) followed by the preschool age stage ($\bar{X} = 4.19$) and then the school age stage in which economizing behavior ($\bar{X} = 4.09$) is slightly above the level of the teenage stage. From the data analysis it appears as if families begin their life cycle stages of expansion with a high level of economy which begins to diminish as the children grow older. It again rises when the family begins contracting and continues through the middle years. When these stages were contrasted to the stage constituting the middle years for the purpose of determining significance, all were significantly different from the propensity of families in the middle years to

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economize. The one exception in which there was no significant difference was the contracting stage.

Precaution against risk progresses as families move through the life cycle. The least caution is taken at the preschool age stage ($\bar{X} = 3.36$) succeeded by the teenage stage ($\bar{X} = 3.46$). The greatest precaution was revealed to exist among families during the stage of their middle years ($\bar{X} = 4.36$), followed by the contracting stage ($\bar{X} = 3.59$). Scheffe's post hoc analysis indicates that the difference is significant across all stages of the life cycle, except the contracting stage, when the mean scores on risk behavior are compared to the mean score on risk behavior of families in the middle years stage.

On the basis of the evidence presented, the hypothesis of no difference across the stages of the life cycle on housing standard, economizing and risk avoidance is rejected. The evidence supports that part of the hypothesis contending no difference in efficacy/planning across the stages of the life cycle.

Section II--Stages of the Family Life Cycle by Race

An examination of the effect of race across the life cycle stages on the dependent measures is the focus of this section of the analysis. The results of the multivariate analysis of variance are presented in Table

2.1 along with Table 2.2 which gives the associated scores. Table 2.3 presents the mean scores while Figure 3.5 graphically illustrates the effect of race by stage on the dependent measures.

Examination of Table 2.1 reveals significant interaction between race and life cycle stage. A multivariate F ratio of 20.06 with 20 and 3059 degrees of freedom and a probability value of .0036 was computed. This two way interaction prevents interpretation of the hypothesized significant multivariate test for main effects. In short, when the cell sizes are unequal the test for main effect is not a pure test of main effects and it is not independent of the interaction effect. Because there is

Table 2.1.--Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Housing Standard, Efficacy/Planning, Economizing and Risk Avoidance Between White and Black Families in Six Stages of the Life Cycle.

Type of Variance Tested	F Test for MANOVA		
	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Main Effect of Race	30.35	4 & 922	.0001*
Main Effect of Stage	5.84	20 & 3059	.0001*
Interaction of Race by Stage	20.06	20 & 3059	.0036*

*indicates significance at alpha = .05.

significant interaction between stage and race, one must use caution in discussing the main effects.

In order to locate the source of the interaction among the four dependent variables, a univariate analysis of variance associated with each dependent measure was considered. Such procedure allows for examination of interactions with each dependent variable. The results for each of the dependent variables are presented in Table 2.2.

Hypothesis Relating Differential
Effects of Race by Stage on
the Dependent Measures

H₃: There will be no differences between races at various stages of the life cycle in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

Table 2.2.--Univariate Analysis of Variance of Race by Stage on the Dependent Measures.

	F Test of Univariates Contributing to Multivariate Interaction		
	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Housing Standard	2.71	5	.0195*
Efficacy/Planning	1.51	5	.1852
Economizing	1.61	5	.1531
Risk Avoidance	2.91	5	.0131*
Error		925	

*indicates significance at alpha = .05.

The interaction between race and stage occurs as a result of significance on two of the dependent variables, housing and risk avoidance. The "F" statistic associated with the interaction of housing standard by race by stage was 2.71 with 5 and 925 degrees of freedom and $P = .0195$. Risk avoidance by race by stage was significant at $P = .0131$ with a "F" value of 2.91 and 5 and 925 degrees of freedom.

With this in mind, the mean values of the cells are presented in Table 2.3 and diagrammed in Figure 3.5.

While the multivariate main effects of the independent variables, race and stage of the life cycle, could not be interpreted because of significant higher order interaction, some insight into the contribution of each can be gained from an examination of Table 2.3 and Figure 3.5.

Table 2.3.--Means for Race by Stage on Housing Standard and Risk Avoidance.

	<u>Housing Standard</u>		<u>Risk Avoidance</u>	
	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>
Young Married	3.04	2.47	4.17	3.94
Preschool Age	3.11	2.56	3.29	3.39
School Age	4.28	2.70	3.69	3.58
Teenage	3.61	2.92	3.38	3.57
Contracting	4.0	3.22	3.78	3.48
Middle Years	4.50	3.08	4.55	3.45

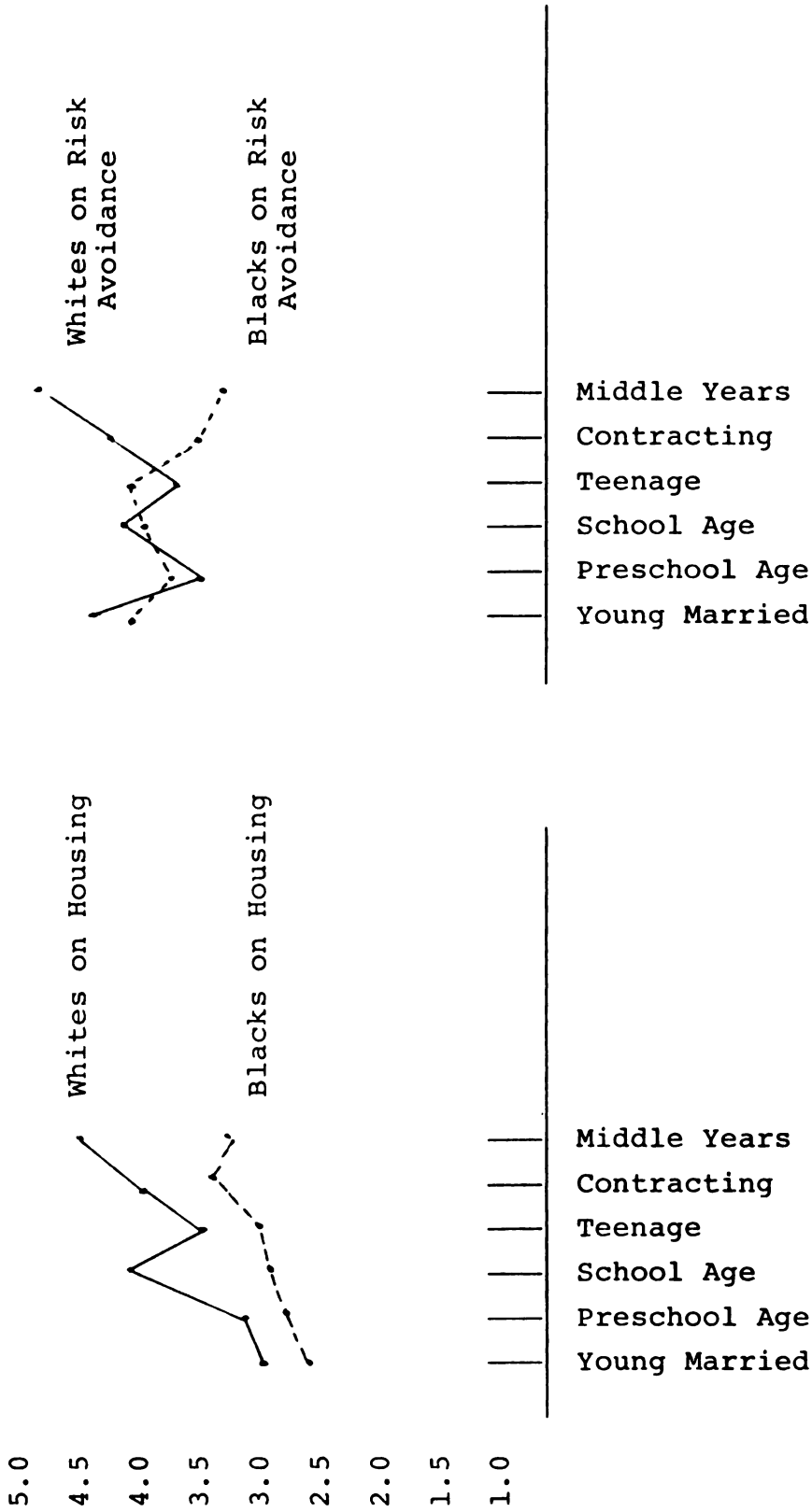


Fig. 3.5.--Race by Stage by Housing Standard and Risk Avoidance.

In examining the differences in the housing standard of black and white families, it was revealed that housing standards tend to improve for both races as they progress through the developmental stages. This tendency towards improvement is much more substantial for Whites than it is for Blacks. As one would expect, there is a steady upward progression from stage to stage with one exception for both races. At stage three, families with school aged children, the means housing standard for Whites increase substantially. And relative to the means for this stage, White families experienced a decline for stages four and five, however, excepting this interruption (the increase in stage three), the trend is towards improved housing standard which eventually reaches its peak during the middle years. Within the Black race, housing standard progresses upward until the middle years where a slight decrease is noted. The means indicate that the most improved housing for Blacks, the contracting stage with its mean of 3.22, is slightly better than the poorest housing among Whites, the young married ($\bar{X} = 3.04$).

As can be observed in Table 2.3 and Figure 3.5, Whites tend to be most cautious during the middle years ($\bar{X} = 4.55$). This does not hold true for Blacks. At this stage of the life cycle Blacks tend to be much less cautious ($\bar{X} = 3.45$). Blacks are most cautious at stage one, the young married stage ($\bar{X} = 3.94$). The tendency to

take greater risk is highest for both Blacks and Whites at stage two, the presence of preschool aged children, of the life cycle. Across all stages of the life cycle, except preschool and teenage stages, Whites tend to take greater precaution against risk than Blacks do at the same stage. The observed differences between Blacks and Whites on risk avoidance were significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no difference between Blacks and Whites is rejected.

Section III--Differences Associated with Degree of Urbanization

The third section of this analysis test the hypothesis relating to the effect of urbanization on the dependent measures. Table 3.1 provides a partial picture of the effect of the degree of urbanization on housing standard, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance. The remainder of the analysis is presented in Tables 3.2 and 3.3. Insight into the effect of urbanization on the dependent measures is provided through an examination of Table 3.2 and Table 3.3.

Table 3.1.--Multivariate Results of Degree of Urbanization.

	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Main Effect of Degree of Urbanization	12.11	16 & 2982	.0001*

*indicates significance at alpha = .05.

Hypothesis for Degree of Urbanization

H₄: There will be no differences between families living at various distances from large urban centers in their mode of housing, their level of efficacy/planning, and their propensity to economize and to avoid risk.

On the univariate test of degree of urbanization, the "F" ratio for housing standard was 39.47 and 7.39 for efficacy/planning both having 4 and 979 degrees of freedom and significant at $P = .0001$. Economizing and risk avoidance were not significant. The mean values of the cells associated with the main effect are presented in Table 3.3. Figure 3.6 is a graphic presentation of these results.

Table 3.2.--Univariate Test for Degree of Urbanization.

	F Test for Univariates Contributing to Main Effect of Degree of Urbanization		
	F Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Probability
Housing Standard	39.47	4	.0001*
Efficacy/Planning	7.39	4	.0001*
Economizing	2.05	4	.0845
Risk Avoidance	.584	4	.6747
Error		979	

*indicates significance at $\alpha = .05$.

Table 3.3.--Means for Degree of Urbanization by Housing Standard, Efficacy/Planning, Economizing, Risk Avoidance.

	Degree of Urbanization in Miles			
	Less 5	5-14.9	15-29.9	30-49.9 Greater than 50
*Housing Standard	2.18	3.53	3.96	3.23 3.45
*Efficacy/Planning	2.26	2.26	2.69	2.58 2.86
Economizing	4.11	4.03	4.17	4.25 4.24
Risk Avoidance	3.64	3.55	3.76	3.57 3.67

The mean score for housing is highest at a distance of 15-29.9 miles ($\bar{X} = 3.96$) from the center of the nearest city of 50,000 or more population. The least desirable housing is at 5 miles or less ($\bar{X} = 2.18$). Housing standard improves as one moves away from large urban centers, reaches its peak at 15-29.9 miles away, tends to decline slightly at 30-49.9 miles ($\bar{X} = 3.23$) and improves again at a distance equal to or greater than 50 miles.

Examination of Fig. 3.6 also reveals that the level of efficacy/planning increases with distance from the center of the city but not to as great a degree as housing standard. Residents at the greatest distance, 50 miles or more ($\bar{X} = 2.86$), exhibit the highest level of efficacy/planning followed by 15-29.9 miles ($\bar{X} = 2.69$). The least amount of efficacy/planning is evident at less than 5 miles ($\bar{X} = 2.26$) and 5-14.9 miles also with a mean of 2.26.

The null hypothesis of no difference among families living at various distances from an urban center of 50,000 or more population is rejected.

Summary of Results

The major findings can be summarized as follows.

A. Family Status and Stage of the Family Life Cycle

No significant multivariate interaction was found between family status and stage of the family life cycle.

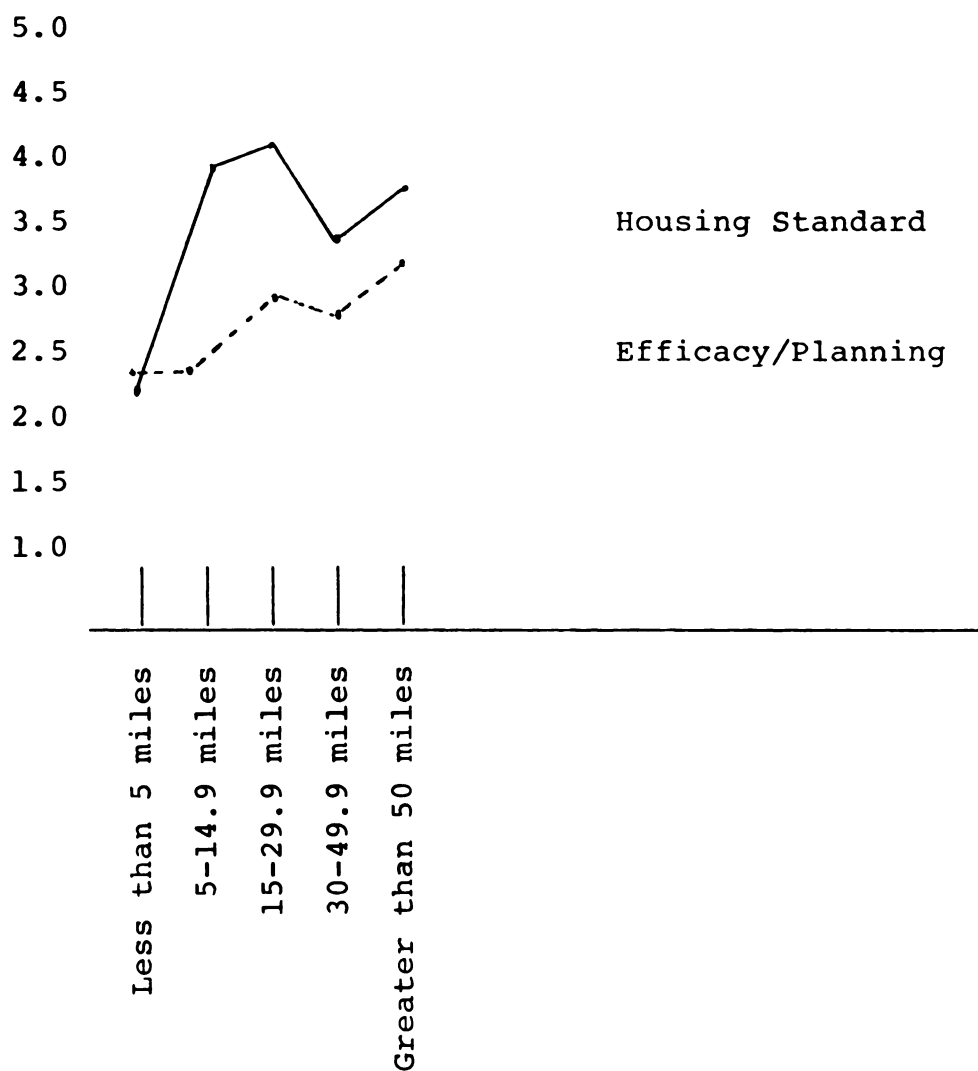


Fig. 3.6.--Diagram of Means for Housing Standard and Efficacy/Planning.

The main effects were significant for both family status and stage in the life cycle. A univariate test to locate the source of the main effects was considered. The means were used to indicate variations in the scores of the dependent measures on the independent measures. Risk avoidance did not contribute to the main effects on the family status measure nor did efficacy/planning contribute to the main effects on the life cycle stage measure.

The findings concerning family status and stage of the life cycle can be summarized as follows:

- (1) There were differences in the behavior of single and two parent families in housing, in the level of efficacy/planning and in propensity to economize. The mode of housing and the level of efficacy planning were significantly higher for two parent families than they were for one parent families. On the other hand, one parent families did significantly more economizing than two parent families.
- (2) There were significant differences in the behavior of families across the stages of the life cycle in housing, propensity to economize and to avoid risk. The mode of housing was significantly more improved during the middle years than at earlier stages. In terms of economizing, the differences, except for the contracting stage, were significant

in favoring the tendency to economize most during the middle years. The differences associated with risk were also significant in favoring the behavior of those in the middle years. Once again, the differences were not significant between the contracting stage and the middle years.

B. Stage of the Life Cycle by Race

Significant multivariate interactions between stages of the life cycle and race prevented a direct interpretation of any of the hypothesized multivariate main effects of the score on the dependent variables. Instead, univariate tests were considered to pinpoint the factors contributing to the main effect. The means were used to indicate variations in the scores of the dependent measures on the independent measures.

The hypothesis of no difference across the stages of the life cycle between Blacks and Whites was not supported by the data therefore the hypothesis was rejected.

C. Differences Associated with Degree of Urbanization

The analysis revealed significant main effects associated with degree of urbanization. Evidence in support of the hypothesis of no difference on the dependent measures as families move away from urban centers of 50,000 population or more was not adequate to support the

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hypothesis, therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. The dependent measures which were significant were housing standard and efficacy/planning. It was concluded that families do differ as a function of degree of urbanization on these two measures. Propensity to economize and risk avoidance were not significant as a function of degree of urbanization.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is a compendium of the earlier chapters with conclusions and recommendations.

Summary

Review of the Literature

The literature reviewed was divided into two major sections and corresponding subsections. The first section presented research pertaining to the dependent variables involved in this study (economizing, risk avoidance, personal efficacy and planning and housing standard), and discussed those variables in terms of the interrelationships of their determinants and consequences. The second section was devoted to research findings on the independent variables in this study (family status, family life cycle stages, race and degree of urbanization) and, once again, in describing these variables, considered their interrelated determinants and consequences.

Examination of the attitudes and behavior patterns of the poor revealed that these, which do not conform to

the norms of middle class society, are not necessarily deviant but are adaptations to the environmental stimuli.

With regards to savings, it was revealed that dissaving is not a function of the poor, but rather a practice of the middle class. Thus while the poor did not save, this was more a function of income. The evidence did indicate, however, that the poor engage in extensive installment buying of major durable goods. This tendency has left them victims of economic exploitation by merchants. Use of credit for installment purchases has been termed compensatory consumption by Caplovitz, and represents compensation for lack of status. Middle class families, on the other hand, use installment credit to display their actual status and economic success.

Numerous factors are said to affect family needs as the family moves through its growth and developmental stages. Some of these are income, family size and age. The family's need for housing varies with each stage.

Race and family status are highly correlated with poverty. More families headed by women are in poverty than families headed by men. Age is also a factor as a high percentage of the aged are in poverty. The major factors contributing to poverty among the nonwhite population are racial discrimination, lack of education and job skills.

Also seriously affecting the social and psychological well-being of families is the degree of urbanization. Urbanization has so altered the family's ecosystem that researchers and policy makers are concerned about the deteriorating effects it is having on health, behavior and environment. As a result of this concern, ways are being explored to bring man and environment more into harmony in the metropolitan centers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this investigation was to analyze the relationships between family status and stage of the family life cycle and the variety in the modes of housing, the level of personal efficacy and planning and the propensities to economize and to avoid risk among families of low-income. The theoretical framework employed was the ecological approach. The specific ecological niche carved out for investigation was the family as an ecosystem. Here the family was defined as organism (O) in an organism to environment (E) relationship.

The ecosystem model was mixed consisting of both "O" and "E" components as dependent and independent variables. The dependent measures of concern were housing standard, an "E" component, personal efficacy and planning, economizing and risk avoidance which were "O" components. The independent variables were family status and family life cycle stages representing "O" components. Also

serving as independent variables were race an "O" component, and degree of urbanization, an "E" component. These latter two variables were defined as third variables because they were of secondary importance, yet it was necessary to control for their effects.

Design and Analysis of the Study

Nine hundred and thirty seven subjects, categorized as low-income and selected by a formula of reject if income is greater than $\$2000 + N(\$1000)$ where N is the number of persons in the family, formed the nucleus of this study. These subjects were a subgroup of a national sample of 5285 respondents to a study on family well-being conducted by the University of Michigan over a period of six years.

The scores of the respondents were analyzed by the multivariate analysis of variance technique. A univariate analysis of variance was used to pinpoint specific means contributing to the multivariate main effects. Scheffe's post hoc analysis was utilized to determine significance between select means on variables contributing to significance. Research hypotheses were formulated and tested at a probability level of .05.

Results

The major findings of the hypotheses are summarized below.

- (1) There were significant differences in individual scores on housing standard, efficacy/planning and economizing as a result of parental status. Two parent families scored significantly higher than single parent families in the variety of their modes of housing and in their level of efficacy and planning; however, single parent families scored significantly higher on propensity to economize than two parent families. No significant differences were located when the scores of single and two parent families were compared on risk avoidance.
- (2) Families were found to differ significantly in their attitude and behavior at various stages of the life cycle on housing, economizing and risk avoidance but not on efficacy and planning.
- (3) There was no significant interaction between family status and stage of the life cycle
- (4) Significant multivariate interactions were found between race and stage in the life cycle on housing standard, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance. This prevented direct

interpretation of the lower order main effects of these variables.

- (5) The univariate analyses of variables contributing to the main effects revealed significant differences between Blacks and Whites across the life cycle on housing standard and risk avoidance. Whites tended to have significantly more variety in their modes of housing and to take greater precautionary measures against risk than Blacks.
- (6) There were also significant main effects for degree of urbanization. Families tended to improve their mode of housing and to exhibit a higher level of efficacy and planning as distance from the center of an urban city of 50,000 population or more increased.

DISCUSSION

The framework utilized in this study was ecological and the particular niche carved out for this study's focus was the ecosystem of the family. In my opinion this utilization and this focus provide the most comprehensive perspective from which to analyze and more nearly approach a sound conclusion concerning the subject matter being investigated--a perspective which, in turn, reflects the existence of the numerous factors (many of which should be controlled) impinging upon any investigation of this kind. Yet, this framework, being in a less developed stage than

many existing frameworks, might be viewed more in terms of a conceptual framework rather than a theoretical one. The use of this framework, while enabling a better conceptualization of the problem and consequently influencing the conclusions drawn, does not provide techniques for handling the data which are different from existing theoretical approaches.

A. Effect of Family Status
and Life Cycle Stages on
Housing Standard, Efficacy
and Planning, Economizing
and Risk Avoidance

The hypothesis of no difference between single and two parent families on housing, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance was not supported by the data. On the basis of the statistical results derived from the univariate analysis, it can be concluded that family status contributes significantly to the differential attitude and behavioral patterns of families on housing, efficacy/planning and economizing but not on risk avoidance. Two parent families scored significantly higher on the variety in their mode of housing and on efficacy/planning but single parent families scored significantly higher on the measurement of propensity to economize.

Research done by SRC¹³² using the data which formed the basis of this study provides additional information on family status and effect of children on family well-being. According to these researchers, the sex of the head of the household, race and the presence of children are factors contributing to the chances of a family being persistently poor. A family which is persistently poor was defined as a family which fell into the bottom fifth of the sample every year. SRC reported that the chances for a female head to be persistently poor was about 28 percent of their sample as against 12 percent for males. Since most single parent families are females, it is consistent with our findings that they experience greater hardship.

Other possible explanations of these differences include: (1) the possibility of a less complicated pattern of decision making in single parent families. That is, a single individual makes the ultimate decision regarding resource disbursement, whereas in a two parent family structure a consensus between spouses may be necessary. (2) Women tend to be somewhat more sensitized to the needs of the family because traditionally the responsibility for household management was the domain of the woman and,

¹³²Morgan et al., Five Thousand American Families, Vol. I, pp. 20-37.

since most single heads of households are women, this tendency may be an important factor.

On efficacy/planning two parent families have probably experienced greater success. Indeed, Morgan and his associates indicated that single parent families are least able to plan than two parent families or the families at the various stages of the life cycle. In this case the physical and emotional support of a spouse may have enabled these families to feel stronger about their ability to influence the course of their lives. Also, the tendency of these families to have significantly more variety in their mode of housing, given roughly comparable income to single parent families, provide some indication of their relatively stronger belief in their personal control over their lives. In brief, their higher score on personal efficacy and planning may account, in part, for the observed significant differences in housing and neighborhood quality. In addition, the physical and emotional support spouses provide for each other may be a really critical indicator of why two parent families are significantly different from one parent families on the variables of significance measured.

Significant differences were also found between families at various stages of the life cycle. Housing standard, economizing and risk avoidance scores tended to increase as families progressed through the life cycle

stages. This was not the case with personal efficacy and planning. No significant differences existed between families on this measure at the various stages of the life cycle.

Housing standard was poorest for families with preschool age children. Excluded from this test were young married couples without children. It was assumed that because parents of preschool age children are beginning families, they tend to have less resources. As family income increases and/or the demand on resources diminishes, housing standard tends to improve and this was evident in the results of this analysis.

Economizing presented an interesting but understandable interruption of the pattern of improvement across the life cycle stages. Families were found to economize least when they had teenage children. The money demands of teenage children were apparently greater than they were for children at the other stages. The data also indicated that families tended to economize most during the middle years.

SRC¹³³ reported that age of the youngest child was a factor in the rate of family improvement. According to their analysis, in those families in which all the children were in school, thus enabling the mother to work, or the case whereby the children were able to improve the

¹³³Ibid., pp. 44-46.

economic conditions of the family through their own earning power or by leaving home, the family's economic condition improved. They also reported that the middle age population showed a peak in improvement and that families with very young children or no children at all experienced much less rapid improvement than those families with children at other stages of the life cycle.

B. Effect of Stages by Race
on Housing Standard, Efficacy/
Planning, Economizing and
Risk Avoidance

The results of this study did not support the hypothesis of no differences between the races on housing, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance.

Significant differences were revealed between Blacks and Whites across the life cycle stages on housing, efficacy/planning, economizing and risk avoidance. Significant higher order interaction was observed between race and stage leading to caution in the interpretation of the significant main effects.

The two dependent measures contributing to the significant main effect of race by stage was housing standard and risk avoidance. The housing standard of whites was considerably higher than that of Blacks at all stages of the life cycle. A similar trend existed on risk. Whites across all stages except preschool age scored higher than blacks on behavior contributing to

the avoidance of risk. Since the poor tend to be negligent in preventive measures^{134,135} as a result of limited resources, and since poor Blacks tend to have still fewer resources, the findings of this study are in tune with existing data. While the poor as a whole are discriminated against, the harshest discrimination is directed towards Blacks. Perhaps this factor contributes to the wide variation in housing standard between the two categories.

Since housing tends to deteriorate with level of income and the record¹³⁶ reveals that race has the largest effect on the determination of who has high and who has low wages and, since efficacy/planning and economizing were found not to affect family well-being,¹³⁷ the significant effect located was in harmony with expectation.

C. Effect of Degree of Urbanization on Housing Standard, Efficacy/Planning, Economizing and Risk Avoidance

Degree of urbanization was significantly related to housing standard and a family's level of efficacy and planning but not to their behavior in economizing and avoiding risk.

¹³⁴Ulmer, Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Adult, p. 36.

¹³⁵Ireland, Low-Income Life Styles, p. 51.

¹³⁶Morgan et al., Five Thousand American Families, Vol. I, pp. 140-145.

¹³⁷Ibid., pp. 333-339.

The analysis indicated that housing standard improved up to a distance of 30 miles from the center of an urban population of 50,000 or more and begins a decline as proximity away from the urban center increases. Housing standard does not deteriorate however to the low of less than five miles away.

SRC reports a similar result in terms of a family's chances of being persistently poor. In their account¹³⁸ the possibility of being persistently poor is considerably smaller for respondents living within 30 miles of a large urban center. This relationship changes for Blacks as proximity to a large urban center increases. Their chance of being persistently poor is considerably less and is reduced still more as the urban center becomes larger. Perhaps this is due to the widening of job opportunities.

Why these families exhibit a higher level of efficacy and planning, especially since this attribute does not affect family well-being, is not clear. A partial explanation may be the relative status of those less than 30 miles away to those who live more than 30 miles away. In relation to each other, the slight advantage accruing to families of more than 30 miles away may have affected their behavior on efficacy/planning.

¹³⁸Ibid., pp. 33-37.

Conclusions

The findings of this research might be generalized to all human organisms in a resource shortage environment. Not only do poor families change their behavior patterns and attitudes with regards to personal efficacy and planning, economizing and risk avoidance and their mode of housing as they move across the stages of the life cycle and within one or two parent family structures, but other families as well experience similar changes. Since this study was restricted to low-income families further research is needed to examine whether this same type of variability exists within higher income groups as well. Substantial variability was found to exist among Black and White low-income families in the variety of their mode of housing. Is there a parallel to this finding among higher status Black and White families? Do these families differ in a similar pattern to that of low-income families in terms of economizing, risk avoidance and their level of efficacy and planning at the various stages of their life cycle and as a function of family status?

Another area for research is the utilization of the feedback mechanism in a longitudinal study. Such a research endeavor might be possible in using the data at ISR since it covers a six year span and is readily available for analyses.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Researchers

While extensive research has been done in an effort to isolate and understand more fully the relationships among family variables, such variables as family size, family status and life cycle stage as well as environmental variables impinging upon family behavior, variables such as degree of urbanization, cost of living increases and job opportunities, there is still an urgent need to provide greater individualized service to the needy. Research is greatly needed to determine when and under what circumstances families and/or individuals are most indigent and how best to effectively and efficiently deliver needed services. In as much as individuals differ both in time and space, families too, must also differ. Therefore, an appropriate response would take into consideration variations between families as well as variations within families reflecting the various stages of the life cycle and the family status.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

Documented in this research, as elsewhere in literature pertaining to the family life cycle stages is overwhelming evidence indicating that families behave differently at different stages of the family life cycle with respect to management of money resources. This fact

takes on added significance when level of income, family size, degree of urbanization and family status are considered. Each is related to the potential and actual resources over which the family unit has control. Since a family's resource level is thus affected, policy makers might become more sensitized to the needs of the disadvantaged families through the enactment of legislation which reflected these variations and allowed for an automatic percentage increase or decrease in assistance depending upon a family's size, stage in the life cycle, presence of one or both parents, current income and degree of urbanization. Legislation in the past has been based overwhelmingly on the number of children in the household and the presence of one or both parents. This is short sighted and fragmented. Moreover, it leads to greater fragmentation through the enactment of additional legislation to deal with parts of the problem unresolved through passage of the first piece of fragmented legislation. What is needed is a unifying force coordinating, controlling and adjusting the assistance given to those who are in need.

If menial and unskilled labor is functional to the extent that someone must perform tasks at all levels of a system if the system is to maintain a dynamic equilibrium, poverty and a lack of dignity is not. Accepting this premise, policy makers, researchers and educators

are required to lead the nation in developing a new image of public assistance. When viewed in terms of "systemness," each part, in its own way, contributes to the maintenance of the whole and is therefore an essential ingredient. Instead of public assistance, the process might be referred as a supplemental income or subsidy to the unemployed, underemployed and to the aged.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

1568 F Spartan Village
East Lansing, Michigan 48823
September 25, 1974

Dr. James Morgan
Survey Research Center
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Dr. Morgan:

In connection with our conversation on yesterday regarding the Panel Study Data, I am writing for additional information which would enable me to locate the person(s) on Michigan State University's campus who now has a copy of the interview schedule, tapes and other relevant data. I would be most appreciative if you would enclose any information you have which would aid me in my present research endeavors.

I will send you a follow-up letter indicating my exact use of the data once I have had an opportunity to study it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lula T. King

October 4, 1974

Ms. Lula T. King
1568 F. Spartan Village
E. Lansing, Michigan 24423

Dear Ms. King,

Dr. Morgan has asked me to respond to your letter of September 25.

As far as I know, no one at Michigan State has the Panel Study Data nor the documentation. Dr. Morgan suggested I send you the enclosed 1970 questionnaire and sixth year codebook. If you decide to use the data we will send you the rest of the documentation with the understanding you will make it a part of your departmental library.

The data tapes are at the University of Michigan Computing Center and can be called with the MTS system. The enclosed card gives the tape numbers and the tape mount instructions.

If you have any questions, please call me at 313-764-8376.

Very sincerely,

Evelyn Hansmire
Survey Research Center

EH/kw

A PANEL STUDY OF INCOME DYNAMICS

TAPE CODES
AND INDEXES

1968-1972 INTERVIEWING YEARS
(WAVES I-V)

VOLUME II

Conducted Under Contract to the Office
of Economic Opportunity

SURVEY RESEARCH CENTER

I S R INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

1972

1972 FAMILY TAPE CODE

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>
67 (2467)	152 (4652)	<u>Number of major adults in family</u>
	34.8	1. Head only (no wife in family)
	65.2	2. Head and wife
	<u>100.00</u>	
68 (2468)	153-154 (4653-4654)	<u>Family size in 1972 (number of members in family)</u>
		xx. Actual number in FU
143 (2545)	361-362 (4861-4862)	<u>Number of Children in FU-- aged 0-17</u>
		xx. Actual number of children
		00. Inap.; no children in FU
146 (2546)	363-364 (4863-4864)	<u>Age of Youngest Child</u>
		01. Up to 23 months old
		17. Seventeen
		00. Inap., no children in FU
147 147 (2547)	365 365 (4865)	<u>A1. Children under 25 in FU?</u>
	51.3	1. Children under 25 in FU
	48.7	5. No children under 25 in FU
	0.0	9. NA, DK
	<u>100.0</u>	

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>
399 (2799)	674-675 (5174-5175)	M6-10. Ages of the three oldest children
		00-99 Age of Head's oldest child
423 (2823)	707 (5207)	M33, M36, M39-M40. How many grades of school did you (HEAD) finish?
		1. 0-5 grades
		2. 6-8 grades; "grade school"; DK but mentions could read or write
		3. 9-11 grades; some high school; junior high
		4. 12 grades; high school
		5. 12 grades plus non-academic training
		6. College, no degree
		7. College degree, no advanced degree mentioned
		8. College, advanced or professional degree
		9. NA; DK to all of L33-L40
		0. Inap, cannot read or write or has trouble reading or writing; same Head as last year

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>
428 (2828)	712 (5212)	<u>N3. Race</u>
	86.0	1. White
	11.3	2. Negro
	2.2	3. Spanish American; Puerto Rican; Mexican; Cuban
	0.5	7. Other (including Oriental, Filipino)
	0.0	9. NA
	<u>100.0</u>	
436 (2836)	722 (5222)	<u>N12. How far is this DU from the center of that city? (CITY in N11)</u>
	20.3	1. Less than 5 miles
	31.1	2. 5-14.9 miles
	14.6	3. 15-29.9 miles
	11.2	4. 30-49.9 miles
	22.6	5. 50 or more miles
	0.3	9. Outside continental United States
	<u>100.1</u>	
452 (2852)	753-757 (5253-5257)	<u>Total 1971 Family money income</u>
		Summation of the following variables:
		V107 Taxable Income of Head and Wife
		V123 Total Transfers of Head and Wife
		V125 Taxable Income of Others
		V128 Transfer Income of Others
		00001. One dollar or less
		99999. \$99,999 or more

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>
453 (2853)	758 (5258)	<u>(Bkt. V452) Total 1971 Family money income</u>
	0.3	0. Under \$500
	1.0	1. \$500 - 999
	4.5	2. \$1000 - 1999
	6.6	3. \$2000 - 2999
	6.3	4. \$3000 - 3999
	6.7	5. \$4000 - 4999
	14.1	6. \$5000 - 7499
	14.1	7. \$7500 - 9999
	22.5	8. \$10,000 - 14,999
	23.8	9. \$15,000 or more
	<u>99.9</u>	
535 (2935)	927 (5427)	<u>(Bkt. V144) Bracket age of wife</u>
	9.0	1. Under 25
	15.2	2. 25-34
	14.0	3. 35-44
	12.2	4. 45-54
	8.4	5. 55-64
	4.6	6. 65-74
	1.3	7. 75 and older
	0.0	9. N.A.
	35.3	0. No wife
	<u>100.0</u>	
538 (2938)	936 (5436)	<u>1972 housing and neighborhood quality</u>
		Owns home V166=1
		Lives 5-30 miles from center of city of 50,000 or more V436=2,3
		Single family home V437=1
		Neighborhood of single family houses V439=2
		Value per room Value= (10 x rent for non- owners) \$2000 or more V522=4-8
		2 or more extra rooms V527=5-9

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>	
538 (cont) (2938)	(5436)	Dwelling contains running water, inside toilet and does not need extensive or major repairs (at least no evidence of above)	V433≠5
		<u>Score Value</u>	
	0.4	0	
	3.0	1	
	10.4	2	
	16.8	3	
	16.0	4	
	15.3	5	
	21.0	6	
	17.1	7	
	<u>100.0</u>		
539 (2939)	937 (5437)	1972 reported efficiency and <u>planning</u>	
		Sure life would work out	V343=1
		Plans life ahead	V344=1
		Gets to carry out things	V345=1
		Finishes things	V346=1
		Rather save for future	V348=5
		Thinks about things that might happen in future	V355=1
		<u>Score Value</u>	
	4.0	0	
	9.9	1	
	18.9	2	
	25.3	3	
	20.7	4	
	14.9	5	
	6.4	6	
	0.0	7	
	<u>100.1</u>		

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>
544 (2944)	942 (5442)	<u>Economizing (1972)</u>
		Spend less than \$150 a year on alcohol V72<0150
		Spend less than \$ 50 a year on cigarettes V74<150
		Received more than \$100 worth of free help V472<0100
		Do not own a '70 or later year model car V158≠70-72
		Eat together most of time V293=3,4
		Spend less than \$260 a year on eating out V80<0260
		<u>Score Value</u>
	0.7	0
	5.0	1
	14.4	2
	26.4	3
	35.5	4
	16.6	5
	1.4	6
	<u>100.0</u>	
545 (2945)	943 (5443)	<u>Risk Avoidance (1972)</u>
		Newest (assumed to be best) car in good condition V159=1
		Neutralize non-car owners (2 points) V157=0
		All cars are insured V160=1
		Uses seat belts some of the time (1 point) V162=3
		Uses seat belts all the time (2 points) V162=1

<u>Variable Number</u>	<u>Tape Location</u>	<u>Content</u>	
545 (cont) (2945)	943 (5443)	Has medical insurance or a way to get free care	V315=1 or V317=1
		Head smokes less than one pack a day	V74<109, 146 or 183 depending on state cigarette tax
		Have some liquid savings but < than two months	V510=2,4
		Have two months' income saved (2 points	V510=1
<u>Score Value</u>			
	0.2	0	
	1.3	1	
	4.1	2	
	10.4	3	
	17.3	4	
	22.4	5	
	25.4	6	
	13.0	7	
	5.9	8	
	0.0	9	
	<u>100.0</u>		

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