A STUDY OF ACTIVITIES SHARED BY HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS WITH MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES

by

Autumn D. Nelson

A Problem

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The family, as a social institution, provides unique opportunities for interaction among its members. Each person becomes an environment as well as a highly emotional stimulus to the others. Ideally, family life is intimate and private and should, therefore, provide for the free expression of personality.[1] Experiences which take place within the family have lasting significance, due to their priority in the lifetime and reinforcement throughout. For this reason, facts gathered which concern family situations are valuable aids to the understanding of human conduct.

In order for the family to exert an influence upon its members in the process of interaction, there must be opportunities for interaction to take place; there must be shared activities among family members. These shared activities could be related to the basic functions of the family as a social system. Winch considers these to be the following:

1) Familial
2) Economic
3) Political
4) Socializing-Educational
5) Religious

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[1]Ernest R. Groves, The Contemporary American Family, New York, J. B. Lippincott, 1947, pp. 12-13.

According to Winch, however, as a result of historical changes, American families are relinquishing economic, political, educational and religious functions to other agencies.[2]

The Industrial Revolution removed a great deal of the economic function from the home. The school has been delegated education responsibilities that the family formerly had and can no longer adequately do. Political and religious functions have never been as important in the American family as the others.[3] Socialization, too, occurs through the function of many different agencies in addition to the family.[4] Therefore, if the family performs fewer functions, there is going to be less opportunity for interaction. If the family uses very little of its time to serve economic, educational, political or religious functions, it however is still the primary source of emotional gratification, which may be provided through other social agencies.

It is possible that the types of activities which family members share may or may not provide opportunities for meaningful interaction. That quality is important is indicated by the statement by Groves that the importance of the family as a stage for interaction cannot be measured quantitatively.[5]

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[2]Robert F. Winch, The Modern Family, New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1963, p. 86.

[3]Winch, p. 150.

[4]Winch, p. 175

[5]Groves, p. 14.

Insight concerning the contacts which take place between students and members of their families may have several implications for the work of the homemaking teacher. Certainly, the personalities of individual members will be affected by experiences gained through shared family activities. Becker and Hill state that the essential clue to personality is interaction between persons.[6] Family members are among the most significant of these because, although all families meet basic and fundamental requirements, they do it in differing ways. What happens to the children of many different kinds of families affects the adjustments they make to the larger society. Therefore, to be aware of what happens within the family may aid in the understanding of personality differences. We need to know if family members are sharing experiences and in what kind of activities they share them. Often, we assume that contact takes place, for example, during mealtimes, when, actually, this may not be typical of the families concerned.

As a teacher in South Haven, Michigan, the author has noted that many students seem to spend very little time with family members. In fact, students have sometimes said that often they fail to see a working parent from week-end to week-end. This fact, if true, suggests that some students may not have opportunities for the expression of ideas and feelings while at home. It is also possible that students may not be entirely satisfied

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[6]Howard Becker and Reuben Hill, Family, Marriage and Parenthood, Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1955, p. 173.

with their family contacts. This, in turn, may influence their conception of ideal family relationships as well as the way in which they view their own contributions to family life.

With these factors in mind, this study was undertaken for the purpose of determining what families did together, and how the girls in the sample felt about the activities they shared with other family members.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To determine the frequency and the activities in which contact takes place between the student and members of her family.

2. To determine whether the urban student typically has more or fewer contacts with her family than the rural student.

3. To obtain indications of the feelings of the student toward the contacts which take place with her family members.

It was hoped that the study would contribute some information to our knowledge of present day families, and especially the families represented in the homemaking classes of the high school concerned. With this information, concepts in family living classes could be related to the kinds of families represented by the class members. It was also hoped that data would be obtained concerning the kinds of activities shared by family members which might provide opportunities for ~~valuable~~ interaction. If few activities provide such opportunities, then the functions of the school and other agencies may need to be enlarged to fulfill some additional socialization needs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Family living is a continuous stream of small and large events. Each event has some effect upon the members concerned. Many crucial episodes have evolved out of interaction with one's family, but even the small events such as eating may show the patterns of behavior of a family, which have permanent effects on individual behavior.[7] Carter found in his study that the nature of relationships with parents is more important than the nature of experiences because the self image or feeling of worth that an individual has develops through his relationships with others. Many families pass on tangible possessions to their offspring but through interaction, intangibles are passed on to family members. Some of these are (1) career knowledge, (2) subtle folk knowledge and methods of behavior toward others, and (3) human relations.[8]

Personality Development

Adolescence, the period of our study, is the final stage of growth and, perhaps for that reason, home life has definite effects upon adjustment. If one is overprotected, he may not be able to rise to demands.

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[7]Nelson Foote, "Family Living as Play", Marriage and Family Living, Vol. 17, p. 299.

[8]Don C. Carter, "The Influence of Family Relations and Family Experiences on Personality," Marriage and Family Living, Vol. 16, p. 213.

If unloved, he may be insecure and afraid; if dominated, he may not be independent; sibling rivalry may result in a lack of confidence. Effects upon the personality in adolescence are especially important because it is during this period that personality is in a period of transition. The family may be very influential (often, negatively) because the adolescent is very apt to feel a closeness to his peer group and rebellion against his family. Interaction with members of his family, especially those in authority, can therefore be quite crucial.[9]

Natural causes of conflict exist between parents and children. These are often evident in patterns of interaction. For example, the age gap is one. Also, adults are more conservatively realistic while youth have Utopian ideals. Another cause of conflict concerns sex tension where parents may represent morality and the adolescent reflects the natural cravings of his age.[10] Many times these conflicts become exaggerated because of the contradictions that he may find in sources outside the family.

Perhaps the most important reason for the prominence of interaction in its effect upon personality is the fact that whatever is done may be an expression of feeling toward others and therefore it has personal implications. Since this pattern of interaction has priority in the lives of

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[9]Nathan W. Ackerman, "The Adaptive Problems of the Adolescent Society," The Family in a Democratic Society, New York: Columbia University Press, 1949.

[10]Kingsley Davis, "The Sociology of Parent-Youth Conflict," American Sociological Review, Vol. 5, p. 534.

family members, individuals tend to continue through life to react to social situations somewhat in accord with these first impressions.[11]

The home exerts its influence upon the individual in the transmitting of culture, as it selects, interprets and evaluates cultural phenomena; and through this process, values are formed which also are transmitted to the child.[12] The most important factors in family living, in their influence upon members, are, first, the confidence, affection and companionability pattern, and, second, family discord. All other reactions are subordinated in effect. Since parental attitudes help the child form a self concept, a lack of home ties may have a detrimental influence upon him.[13] Even though children may dislike and resent certain modes of behavior and attitudes in parents, they may adopt them. Some of the criticism which adolescents make of parents have to do with discipline and control, temperamental behavior and traits, personal habits, their conduct and attitudes.[14] The importance of children's attitudes toward parents is that they determine his attitudes toward all adults, especially those in authority.[15]

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[11]Groves, p. 13.

[12]John Horrocks, The Psychology of Adolescence, Cambridge, Mass: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1951.

[13]Ruth Strang, The Adolescent Views Himself, New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1957, p. 360.

[14]Leland Stott, "Adolescents' Dislikes Regarding Parental Behavior, and Their Significance," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Vol. 53, 1940, p. 393.

[15]Arthur T. Jersild, The Psychology of Adolescence, New York: MacMillan Co., 1957.

One process of interaction which serves as a device for cultural transmission is ritual as used in families. It is defined by Bossard and Boll as "prescribed formal procedure, arising out of a family interaction, involving a pattern of defined behavior directed to some specific end or purpose and which acquires rigidity and a sense of rightness as a result of its continuing history."[16] Its role, when used by a family, depends upon content and the manner of its utilization. The use of ritual seems to be on the increase, perhaps since families have more leisure to devote to the refinements of family living. Rituals are developed cooperatively and stimulate a sense of group participation for all members.[17] This implies that family members are somewhat likeminded in that they share interests in the family.

Methods of Studying Social Behavior

One of the reasons research in the area of social behavior has gotten a late start is that there is difficulty involved in measuring social phenomena in quantity or in describing them in objective terms. Attitude is equally hard to determine accurately. According to Thurstone, attitude is "the sum total of man's inclinations, and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic."[18] When asked to give his opinion, man symbolizes his

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[16]James Bossard and Eleanor Boll, Family Situations, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1943, p. 463.

[17]Bossard and Boll, p. 465.

[18]L. L. Thurstone, The Measurement of Attitude, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929, p. 6.

attitude which may not be the truth. Some questions or areas may present threats to him and he may answer rationally, but untruthfully.[19] A better way to judge attitude may be by actions, but even actions may show a discrepancy from what is stated. If you consider it possible to solicit attitudes, Garrison cites several methods, giving the advantages and disadvantages of each. The diary is useful with adolescents because they are interested in keeping them. Limitations to the diary method are that reporting may be selective and emotion tinged. The retrospective report may involve error in memory. The longitudinal study has advantages, but it takes a long time and the fact that the test must be repeated several times may impair its accuracy.[20]

Although there are a variety of methods of investigation which can be used on social situations, they have not been used widely. For this reason, Sussman feels that there is a disproportionate reliance on interview and questionnaire techniques, which results in stagnant methodology and an unimaginative approach.[21] Other researchers have suggestions which they feel are appropriate in this area. Luce and Raffia suggest using game theory in which behavior often involves conflict of interest, decisions must be made in the face of risk and uncertainty and ganging up of family members may occur.[22] Hawkes says investigation should be longitudinal

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[19]Thurstone, p. 6.

[20]Karl Garrison, Psychology of Adolescence, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956.

[21]Jessie Bernard, "Areas for Research in Family Studies," Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 42, pp. 406-409 (cites Sussman).

[22]Bernard, Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 42, p. 406 (cites Luce and Raffia).

so that we can see the child through all stages of development. He also says that to understand the child in the family we need a conceptual framework which breaks the environment affecting the child into observable components. To develop this framework / the environment is placed on a continuum according to the degree of nurture of the individual ranging from stifling to disregarding him. Then interaction variables in the environment can be recognized. These variables are affectional family relationships, control of behavior, acceptance of the individual and family unity, all of which also are placed on a continuum. If this framework is used, individual perceptions of interactions could be viewed to better understand the family impact upon the child.[23]

If observation of behavior is going to be of value, it should be done as activity occurs. It is more accurate than people's retrospective or anticipatory reports. There are some disadvantages to its use as a method of gathering data. Sometimes, since actions cannot be predicted, we cannot be present to observe them. Preparation must be given the observer, also, if he is to record information accurately. He should be instructed in (1) what should be observed, (2) how to record the observation, (3) what procedures should be used to try to assure the accuracy of the observations, (4) what relationship should exist between the observer and the observed.

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[23]Glenn Hawkes, "Family Influences on Personality," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 44, p. 767.

[24]Claire Selltiz and Marie Jahoda, Research Methods in Social Relations, New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1957.

The first observations used were parents observing their children. One disadvantage to having individuals give such subjective views of interaction is that most everyday interaction is commonplace and therefore unconscious to family members. Hawkes suggests that interviews may be used to supplement observations by determining the attitudes, perceptions or interests of families.[25] If observation is to be used, the methods of recording are of great importance. The types of situations that can best be observed are stress conditions which show the stability of the parent-child relationship and patterns of behavior and decision making situations which serve to differentiate roles, how children establish independence and to show the strength of the parental role. An advantage of observation is that interaction can be evaluated as it occurs. However, units of interaction should be defined to include verbal and nonverbal interaction.[26]

Before deciding upon the method of investigation, however, Hawkes suggests that first, one should have a sound basis for a problem. Then one is in a position to decide upon the most appropriate methods of investigation.

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[25]Glenn Hawkes, "Home Interview with Families," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 49, pp. 167-172.

[26]Glenn Hawkes and Damaris Pease, "Observation and Parent-Child Interaction," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Vol. 30, pp. 453-457.

A study of interaction between family members shows the necessity of education for family life. Parents may be helped to see that they tend to train their children exactly as they were trained, the results, usually, may be individuals with the same difficulties.

The literature shows that the greatest amount of research has been done on determining the effect of physical well being, economic status and physical environment upon personality. However psychologists and sociologists point out that there are many other influencing factors. At Iowa State, the problem was investigated as an interdisciplinary one in which the researchers emphasized the quality of interpersonal relationships and its effect on personality, and the evaluation of existing research techniques. They also attempted to add to knowledge and understanding of personal development and family relationships. Their key to understanding is the realization that whatever one sees, hears or reacts to is the real environment that he has, and in order to understand relationships, one must know what he sees there. They have concluded that previous research was disorganized due to the absence of a framework.[27] An attempt to remedy this situation has been undertaken at the University of Minnesota where work has been done with inventorying information gathered about family life, so that it is more readily accessible to anyone wishing to use it. They have undertaken to establish the following plan of organization:

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[27]Hawkes, Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 44, p. 768.

1) Identification of what was investigated
2) Classifying and summarizing findings
3) Identifying frames of reference
4) Organizing findings into interrelated hypotheses and propositions.

Important in doing this is to know the frameworks in which the work was done. The most frequently used frameworks are:

1) Interactional approach in which the family is studied through analysis of overt action.
2) Structure-Function approach in which the family is seen as a social system and is studied for the function it performs in society.
3) Situational approach in which the family is seen as a social unit and individual and cultural values are transmitted by it.
4) Developmental approach in which the stages of the life cycle determine the behavior.[23]

Progress is being made in an attempt to facilitate the study of social behavior. Many authors have indicated various means of investigation which they feel would give their findings more meaning. Through use of these methods and experimentation with others, the study of relationships among people can be improved and with it the understanding of our society.

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[23] Reuben Hill and Donald House, "The Identification of Conceptual Frameworks Utilized in Family Study," Marriage and Family Living, Vol. 22, pp. 299-310.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURES

The locale of the study was the L. C. Mohr High School in South Haven, Michigan. A community with a population of approximately 7,000, South Haven is located on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan in the southwestern corner of the state. It is a summer resort area, has several manufacturing industries and makes use of its moderate climate for the production of fruit, particularly peaches and blueberries.

Sample

About half of the student body of the high school is urban and half is rural. Students in homemaking classes composed the sample for this study; only girls are enrolled in homemaking classes. They represented the same proportion of urban and rural students.

Method

The primary information sought concerned the kinds of things the girls did with members of their families, for how long and the feelings that the girls had about these activities. They were told that this was the information wanted and that the purpose of the study was to learn certain facts about today's families and especially those living in South Haven.

Each girl was given a questionnaire and copies of two forms to record the information needed for the study. (See Appendix) The questionnaire was used to obtain a description of the sample. The questions asked concerned the number and ages of brothers and sisters living at home, whether the parents both lived there and others who lived there, and the fulltime or parttime hours of employment engaged in by members of the household. One form was used to record the kind of activity, its duration and with whom it was done. The other form was used to record the most and least enjoyed of the activities on the first form. Each girl was given two copies of each of the two forms so that she could record activities shared with family members on a Saturday and on a weekday and her feelings about the shared activities for each day. The girls were assured that all replies would be confidential and were asked to identify the questionnaire and the four forms by use of their mother's maiden initials, so that the five might be kept together.

Analysis

In compiling the data, the responses were first separated into three residence categories; urban, rural-nonfarm and farm. The activities were grouped according to type; recreation, work, eating, and other. The "Other" category was used to include miscellaneous activities unrelated to the other categories, or when the purpose of the activities could not be determined.

All of the activities were grouped together regardless of residence except for "eating". The reason for this was that eating was the only category in which there was shown any difference by residence in the amount of shared time. Since this difference was appreciable, it was felt that it should be considered.

The information shown on the tables of shared activities indicates the average number of minutes spent in the activity by the girl with the whole family, or with separate members of the family on a weekday and a Saturday. If the activities were not shared with the whole family, they were done only with mother, father, sister or brother or any combination of these members. In computing the averages, only those persons who lived with mother, father, sister(s), or brother(s) were counted in those respective groups.

On the tables of findings, it should also be noticed that the numbers of cases are not all the same. Some students reporting did not give information about two day's activities, or they gave the activities of a Sunday or two weekdays.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

One hundred and two girls were asked to participate in this study. About 66 percent of them returned usable forms. Thirty of the students were urban, 28 lived in the country but not on farms and nine lived on farms. One urban girl lived with her mother alone and so her shared activities were not included in the data relating to activities shared by the whole family but rather in the column of activities shared with "mother". In all cases there was a mother present in the family. However, four girls lived only with a mother and siblings.

For the composition of the families in the sample see Table I.

TABLE I

Number and Composition of Families in Three Residence Categories

Residence	Girls	Families	Mothers	Fathers	Sisters	Brothers
Farm	9	9	9	9	5	7
Rural-Nonfarm	28	28	28	27	15	22
Urban	30	29	30	26	22	20
Totals	67	66	67	62	42	49

In order to make judgments about the amount of time spent doing things with members of the family, one must consider the possible amount of time in which to share activities. The large factor influencing this is the

number of hours and the amount of employment engaged in by family members. This is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

Full or Part time Employment of Family Members

Family Member	Day Fulltime	Night Fulltime	Day Parttime	Night Parttime	Irregular Fulltime
Father	44[1]	8	1	0	5
Mother	29	6	4	0	0
Sister	1	1	2	0	0
Brother	5	2	3	3	0
Self	0	0	5	21[2]	0

[1]Includes those who farm.
[2]Includes week-end babysitting.

Recreation

The largest amount of time spent in activities with other family members was in recreation. This included television viewing, radio listening, indoor and outdoor games and miscellaneous. The latter category included such things as parties, visiting, "goofing around", a carnival, concerts and a movie.

Weekday - On a weekday, the only recreational activity in which all family members participated was television viewing. This was also the recreational activity in which the greatest amount of time was spent by the student with other family members. However, the greatest amount of viewing was done with the entire family. Recreation not done with the

whole family was most often done with a sister, with the exception of television in which the amount of time spent watching with a brother was next that spent with the whole family. Outdoor games were second in importance as a recreational activity. Although it might be assumed that these were sports, the girl's sister was the most frequent partner in these activities. See Table III.

TABLE III

Average Number of Minutes Spent in Recreation
With Family Members on a Weekday

Activities	Whole Family N=60	Mother n=61	Father n=56	Sister n=40	Brother n=44
Television and Radio	35	20	10	23	26
Indoor games	--	1	--	2	1
Outdoor games	--	--	1	12	4
Miscellaneous	--	3	.3	11	4

Saturday - On Saturday the recreation activities engaged in by the entire family were not restricted to television viewing, even though this took the greatest amount of time. The student more often watched television with a brother or sister than with either parent or the whole family. Only mentioned twice, the radio was listened to while doing dishes, usually with sisters.

Miscellaneous recreation activities which included a variety of things, were nearly as common as television on Saturday. These

activities, when shared with a sister, were much more prevalent on Saturday than on a weekday. This category included attending parties, and visiting friends, which was rarely done on weekdays. See Table IV.

TABLE IV

Average Number of Minutes Spent in Recreation With Family Members on a Saturday

Activities	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=57	Sister n=38	Brother n=44
Television and Radio	14	14	7	27	30
Indoor Games	2	3	2	8	3
Outdoor Games	--	--	3	11	13
Miscellaneous	9	7	8	30	5

The greatest difference in recreation activities between Saturday and the weekday was in number of things done. On Saturday, television viewing was not nearly as important and brothers and sisters were much more important viewing partners than parents or the whole family. Miscellaneous activities were greater in number on Saturday than on the weekday.

Work

Work activities which were shared were meal preparation, house cleaning, dishes, laundry, yard work and miscellaneous. The latter category included, painting, washing the car, pet care and service at a banquet.

Weekday - No work activities were shared by the entire family on a weekday. The largest amount of time spent in shared work was in the category of Miscellaneous, a group which included all work activities which did not fit into the established categories. The remaining most frequent weekday activities were meal preparation and washing dishes. See Table V.

TABLE V

Average Number of Minutes Spent in Work Activities With Family Members on a Weekday

Activities	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=56	Sister n=40	Brother n=44
Meal Preparation	--	2	--	5	--
House cleaning	--	3	--	4	1
Yard Work	--	--	--	2	--
Dishes	--	1	--	4	2
Laundry	--	1	--	1	--
Miscellaneous	--	5	--	12	.2

Saturday - Shared work activities were quite different on Saturday, probably due to a different amount of time available. Some work activities were carried on by the entire family. These involved yard work and washing the car. The girl's most time consuming activity was house cleaning, which she did with her sisters, brothers, or her mother. Dishes and laundry were most often done with a sister. See Table VI.

TABLE VI

Average Number of Minutes Spent in Work Activities With Family Members on a Saturday

Activities	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=57	Sister n=38	Brother n=44
Meal Preparation	--	2	.2	--	.2
House Cleaning	--	22	--	37	5
Yard Work	2	5	10	--	5
Dishes	--	2	--	5	1
Laundry	--	2	--	6	--
Miscellaneous	2	--	1	--	3

While the amount of time spent on tasks such as meal preparation and dishes did not change, the amount spent in housecleaning was a great deal larger on Saturday than on the weekday. This is probably due to the fact that the former must be carried on daily, but housecleaning is traditionally a Saturday task.

Eating

Weekday - On a weekday, the only meal eaten together as a family was dinner and this was by less than half of the families. Dinners were as often eaten without father as with him and a small number of dinners were eaten without either parent present. Since this was a school day, no lunches were eaten with family members as the high school does not allow students to go home to eat. Breakfast was usually eaten with

siblings rather than with mother or father, but it was sometimes eaten with just mother. See Table VII

TABLE VII

Number of Meals Eaten With the Whole Family or Family Members on a Weekday

Meals	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=56	Siblings n=47
Breakfast	--	18	--	25
Lunch	--	--	--	--
Dinner	30	10	4	11

Saturday - On Saturday, all three meals were sometimes eaten together but by a small percentage of the families. Dinner was the meal most frequently eaten with the entire family, but this by less than half of them. Breakfast was more often eaten with mother than with anyone else, although it was almost as frequently eaten with siblings. Lunch was most often eaten by the whole family together. Father was never present for lunch unless the whole family was there. See Table VIII.

It was more common for breakfast and lunch to be eaten with the whole family on Saturday than on the weekday. However, there still were not many families eating dinner together. More meals were recorded as eaten at home on Saturday than on the weekday.

TABLE VIII

Number of Meals Eaten With the Whole Family or Family Members on a Saturday

Meals	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=57	Siblings n=45
Breakfast	7	11	2	10
Lunch	13	5	--	6
Dinner	29	4	2	3

Other Activities

Included in this grouping are those activities which did not have common characteristics with the rest but were fairly common family activities. They were shopping, travel, visiting, babysitting, grooming, health, educational or religious activities. The latter group included a clinic for administering polio vaccine and going to school. Miscellaneous activities included "sitting around", singing together, walking and fighting.

Weekday - "Other" activities were more frequently engaged in by the entire family on a weekday or Saturday than any activities in the other categories. Shopping involved the greatest time expenditure by the whole family and shopping with the entire family was exceeded only by shopping with mother. Travel as a family was not as common as travel with mother, sister or brothers. The amount of time spent for purposes of

health and education was highest for activities carried on with brothers. This involved travel to school and sometimes shared classes. See Table IX.

TABLE IX

Average Number of Minutes Spent in Other Activities With Family Members on a Weekday

Activities	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=56	Sister n=40	Brother n=44
Shopping	4	6	.8	4	.3
Travel	1	4	2	5	5
Visiting	--	3	1	4	.4
Babysitting	--	--	--	17	5
Grooming	--	4	--	--	--
Health, Education and Religious	2	5	--	1	7
Miscellaneous	--	3	1	10	4

Saturday - The most frequent activity engaged in by the entire family on Saturday was shopping. This involved all day shopping trips to nearby cities. It was even more common for the student to go shopping with mother, sisters or brothers. In the case of the sister or brother, the student sometimes recorded "went to town". Thus this may not have involved actual shopping. It is probable, also, that although shopping was the most common whole family activity reported in this group, it is

unlikely that the family group remained together during the entire period of shopping, so that its value as a shared activity was limited. Grooming included setting hair, which was often done with mother, or occasionally a sister. It was called "travel" when the girl reported "went for a ride" without any other purpose indicated. See Table X.

TABLE X

Average Number of Minutes Spent in Other Activities With Family Members on a Saturday

Activities	Whole Family n=60	Mother n=61	Father n=57	Sister n=38	Brother n=44
Shopping	9	13	.4	21	12
Travel	2	2	1	--	.2
Visiting	1	1	.4	11	.7
Babysitting	--	--	--	--	--
Health, Education and Religious	1	3	.6	5	2
Grooming	--	3	.3	2	--
Miscellaneous	--	3	--	5	2

More activities were recorded in the "Other" category on Saturday than on the weekday, probably because there was more time available. Shopping was much more important as a Saturday activity, probably because the stores were open for longer hours. One reason that the health, education and religious category was fairly high as a whole

family activity as well as one which involved others, was probably that upon the first Saturday after the study was begun, the community sponsored a polio vaccine clinic in which many families participated and which many girls recorded.

A Comparison of Urban, Farm and Rural-Nonfarm Activities Carried on with Family Members

In the areas of work and recreational activities, there were no appreciable differences in the amounts of time spent together in urban, farm, or rural non-farm families. However, in meals eaten, there was some difference between the urban, rural-nonfarm and rural homes on the weekday and on Saturday. See Tables XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV and XVI.

TABLE XI

Number of Meals Eaten With Other Family Members of Urban Families on a Weekday

Meals	Whole Family n=29	Mother n=29	Father n=25	Siblings n=21
Breakfast	--	7	1	12
Lunch	--	--	--	--
Dinner	9	5	1	5

TABLE XII

Number of Meals Eaten With Other Family Members of Rural-Nonfarm Families on a Weekday

Meals	Whole Family n=23	Mother n=24	Father n=22	Siblings n=21
Breakfast	--	6	2	9
Lunch	--	--	--	--
Dinner	14	5	3	6

TABLE XIII

Number of Meals Eaten With Other Family Members of Farm Families on a Weekday

Meals	Whole Family n=8	Mother n=8	Father n=8	Siblings n=7
Breakfast	--	5	3	4
Lunch	--	--	--	--
Dinner	7	--	--	--

TABLE XIV

Number of Meals Eaten With Other Family Members of Urban Families on a Saturday

Meals	Whole Family n=24	Mother n=27	Father n=25	Siblings n=22
Breakfast	1	4	--	7
Lunch	2	2	--	2
Dinner	8	3	1	3

TABLE XV

Number of Meals Eaten With Other Family Members of Rural-Nonfarm Families on a Saturday

Meals	Whole Family n=25	Mother n=28	Father n=24	Siblings n=20
Breakfast	5	4	1	1
Lunch	5	3	--	3
Dinner	15	1	1	--

TABLE XVI
Number of Meals Eaten With Other Family Members of Farm Families on a Saturday

Meals	Whole Family n=8	Mother n=3	Father n=8	Siblings n=7
Breakfast	1	3	1	2
Lunch	6	--	--	1
Dinner	6	--	--	--

It should be recalled that in considering dinner meals, only 50 percent of the total number of families ate dinner together on the weekday or Saturday. See Tables VII and VIII. In the farm families, however, seven out of eight and six out of eight ate dinner together on a weekday and a Saturday, respectively. See Tables XII and XVI. In the rural nonfarm families, 14 out of 23 and 15 out of 25 had dinner together on the weekday and Saturday respectively. See Tables XII and XV. In the urban families, Tables XI and XIV, one third or less of the families had

dinner together on either day. This difference was not shown with breakfast, since none of the families had breakfast together on the weekday, and only seven out of the total number of families had breakfast together on Saturday.

If dinner was not eaten with the entire family, father was the member most frequently missing in all residence categories. On a weekday, if the family did not eat together, the dinner meal was most often eaten by the girl with siblings. On Saturday, mother was the one with whom they most often ate dinner.

Breakfast, which was never eaten with the whole family on a weekday, was most often eaten with brothers or sisters. On Saturday, it was most often eaten with mother. Father was never present for breakfast on a weekday, and was present only twice out of 57 possibilities on Saturday.

ATTITUDES ABOUT ACTIVITIES

In selecting and grouping items for this analysis, only those items which were selected three or more times as most or least enjoyed were considered. In the category of recreational activities, none was placed in the category of least enjoyed. Nineteen girls indicated that the most enjoyed activity was television viewing. The reasons given for the enjoyment of television centered around a preference for that kind of entertainment, or because the household seemed to be peaceful and quiet while this was going on. Students sometimes said "there was nothing better to do".

Work activities were never enjoyed, but, of all those activities cited, house cleaning and dishes were most often disliked. Thirteen girls enjoyed house cleaning least and 17 dishes. The reasons for disliking both tasks were much the same; they were boring, took too much time and the girls made such comments as "I had to do more than my share", and "mother isn't satisfied".

Sometimes, as in the case of eating, the same activity got both reactions. Eating was enjoyed most by 16 girls because they were "hungry", because "food was good", "it brings the family together", and "we can talk together". Ten girls said they did not enjoy eating because "everybody's grouchy", "I'm in a hurry", "we hash out problems" and "I get fat".

In the category of "Other", activities were both liked and disliked. Ten girls enjoyed shopping most because they liked to shop and because it was an opportunity to get mother's opinion when buying. Going to school was disliked by four girls because they "didn't feel like it".

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

This study was done in a small high school in Michigan. The sample consisted of 67 girls enrolled in homemaking classes. Questionnaires were used to determine the urban, rural or rural-nonfarm residence of the girls, the composition of the families and other relevent descriptive data. Forms were given to the girls upon which to record shared family activities, with whom they were shared and their feelings about these activities. Records of a weekday and a Saturday were kept.

The findings indicated that the activities most often shared with family members were recreational. The average number of minutes was highest for the time spent in viewing television, and it was done with the entire family for the largest amount of time on a weekday. Except for watching television, the girls' most frequent partner in any activities not including the whole family was her sister. However, her brother most often watched television with her. Work activities were nearly always shared with her mother or her sister and were involved with homemaking tasks.

There was no difference in amount of time spent in shared activities of families by place of residence, except for eating, where the number of meals eaten together was highest for farm families. Seven out of eight farm families ate dinner together on a weekday and six out of eight on a Saturday; fourteen out of twenty-three rural nonfarm families ate

dinner together on a weekday and fifteen out of twenty-five on a Saturday; nine out of twenty-one urban families ate dinner together on a weekday and eight out of twenty-four on a Saturday. Dinner was the meal most often eaten together by the family but this was true of only about half of the total number of families on either day. If meals were not eaten with the entire family, they were most often eaten with siblings or mothers.

Other shared activities, which included shopping, travel, visiting, etc., were shared by the whole family more often on Saturday than on a weekday. Shared activities involved mother or sisters more often than other family members. Father was most often missing from shared activities.

The girls indicated that they most enjoyed shared recreational activities. Television was usually named the most enjoyable activity for reasons such as "there was nothing better to do", and "it was quiet". Work activities were most often not enjoyed because they were "boring" or because "it takes too long". Of the activities categorized as "Other" some were liked and some disliked.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings in this study indicate that the amount of time spent by these girls with members of their families was rather small. The activity which involved the greatest amount of shared time was that of watching television. The average amount of time spent in this fashion was greater on weekdays than on Saturday. This finding may suggest that the weekday evenings are too short for the pursuit of certain other activities. It may also suggest that television viewing requires less expenditure of energy and is, therefore, chosen for recreation after a day of work or school. At any rate, viewing television does provide opportunities for interaction to take place. But we may raise questions about how this interaction may affect the relationships among family members. In fact, since interaction might even concern disagreements about the programs to watch, or comments upon the programs, it probably has very little to do with family stability, and therefore is not an activity through which families can develop closer relationships. At the same time, it is the medium of mass communication which is most likely to have an effect upon the viewers.

Father was most often absent from the family when other members watched television, probably because he had to use some of the time when he was home to do various home chores. This may mean that

father's interaction in socialization is minimal since this may make it difficult for boys to learn the role of the male adult in our society, which is, according to Winch,[29] one of the processes of socialization.

Siblings watched television together more often than with either parent, probably because their program interests were similar, they had more leisure time, or perhaps they did it while "doing" their homework.

With television as the exception, recreation activities more often were done by the girls in the study, with sisters than with brothers, probably because their interests are more similar. Shared outdoor games were usually sports, in which brothers were more apt to be interested, but girls were often the partner.

One approach to the study of things done together by family members would be to look at the use of leisure time, or time which has not been allocated for other activities. As a result of technology, we have a great deal more leisure time for use today than ever before. It is, therefore, interesting to note how families are using it. To the young person, it could provide opportunities for the pursuit of hobbies, which would lean to self development, or to foster the development of friendships, and therefore, perhaps, further the socialization process. The parents of children could make use of this increased amount of time for the development and pursuit of their own interests, or to facilitate the carrying on

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[29] Winch, p. 118.

of family activities for recreation or enrichment, which may increase its function in socialization.

Most of the work activities were those traditionally considered as homemaking tasks. Therefore, they were more often performed with mothers or sisters and rarely with the whole family. The entire family was most often involved in yard work, or cleaning the car, perhaps because there is 1) more work to be done in the yard, and 2) greater interest in cleaning the car. No job was outstanding in importance on the weekday, but on Saturday, the largest amount of time was spent in housecleaning. This is traditionally a Saturday task; some do it in preparation for Sunday and others do it on Saturday because there are more to help. Washing dishes, although consuming a small amount of time, was frequently recorded as an activity performed with other family members. The average amount of time was small due to the little time required to do the task. That these jobs were most often the girl's and her mother's may indicate that we delegate tasks to traditional female or male roles, in our society.

Perhaps an appropriate time and event for the family to spend together for the purpose of sharing ideas and feelings such as cannot be done in other systems of our society, is at mealtime. This time is usually a quiet period, and comes at times in the day before activities are begun, in the middle or at the termination of the day's activities, a typical time for sharing plans, programs and feelings about the day's

events. Yet, in the study, many families did not present these opportunities to their members through mealtimes. Meals were eaten with siblings, only one parent or alone, and therefore, little opportunity for interaction was available.

The attitudes which girls expressed toward the activities they shared with family members exhibit some things which may have implications for teachers of homemaking and, in fact, mothers of the girls themselves.

It might be expected that recreation activities would be most enjoyed, and the study indicated this to be true. But the reasons connected with enjoyment were such that could have meaning for us. "There was nothing better to do" in regard to watching television suggests that they may have enjoyed something else. Perhaps here is support for the virtue of creative activity for recreational purposes. "It was calm and peaceful" may suggest that we are not fulfilling a desire for members of our families, that desire for privacy and quietness in which ideas and plans may develop.

The activities least enjoyed were work, washing dishes and cleaning the house. This fact may have meaning for members of a family living class who are examining the life and activities of the fulltime homemaker. It may suggest to mothers of teenage girls that they too often delegate to their daughters those activities which leave the least opportunity for creativity, are the most "boring" as the girls put it.

Thus they do not experience those aspects of homemaking which may allow more complete use of an individual's total abilities.

The value of such a study in determining some facts about the functioning of families can be substantial, and yet it can and in this case, it did, have limitations. There were many limitations in this particular study. One concerns the accuracy of the data. In a diary method of data collection, there is always a possibility of inaccurate reporting by members of the sample. A student could easily add information which he may feel is creditable regardless of the fact that it wasn't possible for anyone to know whose response it was. Because of this fact, also, it was not possible to ask those who had failed to respond, to do so. Reminders had to be given to each group repeatedly.

It is possible that a group which has in common participation in a homemaking class, may be representing families which are more interested in promoting family activities than the typical family. Therefore, it may have been more meaningful, for some reasons, to have included a sample from the general student body, including boys as well as girls, for the study. However, the purpose here was to learn about the families that were represented in homemaking classes and therefore, they composed the sample. It would also have been more meaningful to have a greater response.

It is felt, however, that some important facts were learned in this study. Some questions were answered, others were raised. We suggest that it would be important to learn if families of homemaking students in

other communities, or if families in general, in other communities would exhibit the same pattern of shared activities. Just as do all things, the attitudes, activities and interests of families change from day to day. If we are to be working with the products of the family as a socializing agency, we ought to try to understand how and if the family is going about this job.

Many families may be inadequately performing one of the functions which is most essential to socialization and which only can be done by the family, that of giving approval and respect, which doesn't need to be earned. As a result of the failure to do this, family members may express insecurity in the lack of ability to express one's ideas and feelings and fear in exploring the possibilities for self-fulfillment. If one receives approval only from peer groups, he tends to adapt behaviors which represent only conformity to those of the group, but a family, through its acceptance and unearned approval of the individual, can foster the creativity of self-expression, in which the individual can develop his own conscience or concepts of acceptable standards.

Effective teaching involves knowing students and the forces operating upon them which may be in opposition to or in support of the goals we are trying to reach. If it is true that the families are not performing some task which we assume that it is performing, and in this case, approval and acceptance of its members, we should know this, so that we may try to supplement the missing elements in his socialization.

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APPENDIX

FAMILY QUESTIONAIRE

Instructions: Please answer the questions about you and your family. Do not put your name or the names of family members on any of the forms.

1. How old are you?_____

2. Do you live within the city limits of South Haven?_____

   a town other than South Haven? _____

   in the country? _____

   on a farm? _____

3. How many people live in your home, including you?_____

4. How many of them are your brothers?_____sisters?_____

5. Give their ages:

Brothers	Sisters	Step or Half-brothers	Step or Half-sisters
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

6. Do you live with:

   Your mother only_____Your father only_____

   Your own mother and father_____your own mother and father by adoption_____.

   Your own father and mother by adoption_____.

   Stepmother and your own father____stepfather and your own mother_____.

   Foster parents or legal guardian_____Grandparents_____

   Other (tell how and if they are related to you)_____

7. What other people live in your home?_____

8. Which of your household members work away from home?

	Fulltime - When to When?	Parttime - When to when?
Father	_____	_____
Mother	_____	_____
Yourself	_____	_____
Others (identify, brother, sister, etc.)	_____	_____
	_____	_____

RECORD OF ACTIVITIES WITH FAMILY MEMBERS OR OTHERS LIVING IN YOUR HOME

Instructions: Keep this record for one week day and one Saturday. Record each activity which you did with someone in your home. Be sure to include all of the things which you did together, working, mealtimes, things done just for fun, etc.

What You Were Doing	How Long?	With Whom?	Age (if brother or sister)

ACTIVITIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Look at your record of activities and give the following information about the ones you list below:

Activities I Enjoyed Most	With Whom Done	Why I Enjoyed Doing This

Activities I Enjoyed Least	With Whom Done	Why I Did Not Enjoy Doing This