Characteristics of Low-Income Families in the Head Start Program in Three Eastern South Dakota Counties

Christopher Lee Smith

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CHARACTERISTICS OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES IN THE HEAD
START PROGRAM IN THREE EASTERN SOUTH DAKOTA COUNTIES

By
CHRISTOPHER LEE SMITH

A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master of Arts, Major in
Sociology, South Dakota
State University

1970

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CHARACTERISTICS OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES IN THE HEAD START PROGRAM IN THREE EASTERN SOUTH DAKOTA COUNTIES

This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Arts, and is acceptable as meeting the thesis requirements for this degree, but without implying that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

Thesis Advisor

Date

Head, Rural Sociology Department
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Professors: Robert M. Dimit, James L. Satterlee, and Orville Lanham, of the Department of Rural Sociology, Ralph Hood, of the Department of Psychology, and my fellow graduate students. All of them gave so willingly of their time and knowledge;

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And, my wife Anita and my daughter Rochelle, for whom this past year must have often seemed like a nightmare. Their patience, understanding, and perseverance, both with me and with life itself, has been truly exceptional and too often overlooked.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF THE HEAD START PROGRAM, CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESIGN OF PROJECT HEAD START</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Economic Opportunity Act</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Head Start Program</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start Nationally</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start Locally</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATION</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of Poverty</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DESCRIPTIVE HYPOTHESES</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW OF LITERATURE PERTINENT TO OBJECTIVE ONE</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW OF LITERATURE PERTINENT TO OBJECTIVE TWO</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter

VARIABLES AND HYPOTHESES .......................... 55

Statement of Hypotheses ................................ 57

IV. DESIGN OF THE STUDY ................................... 61

Introduction ............................................. 61

BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT STUDY ...................... 61

SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS ............................... 63

THE INSTRUMENT .......................................... 64

DATA COLLECTION .......................................... 66

Pre-Test .................................................. 66

The Final Interview ....................................... 67

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS AND CHARACTERISTICS 68

Introduction ............................................. 68

Part 1 - Demographic Characteristics .................... 69

Part 2 - Social-Psychological Characteristics .......... 70

PROCEDURE FOR ANALYSIS ................................ 79

Chapter Summary .......................................... 87

V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY .................................. 89

FINDINGS PERTINENT TO OBJECTIVE ONE ................ 89

Summary of Part One .................................... 111

PARENTAL ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE, AND PARTICIPATION PATTERNS ....................... 112

Introduction ............................................. 112

Attitudes Toward the Head Start Program ................. 113

Findings Summary of Attitudes Toward the Head Start Program .................. 119
## Parental Knowledge About the Head Start Program

Page 120

## Frequency of Parental Participation in Head Start Activities

Page 122

## Summary of Part Two

Page 123

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FINDINGS

Page 124

## VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Page 127

### SUMMARY

Page 127

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Page 132

#### Conclusions

Page 132

#### Limitations of the Study

Page 133

#### Implications of the Study

Page 135

#### Need for Further Research

Page 137

## LIST OF REFERENCES

Page 139

## APPENDIX A

Page 144

## APPENDIX B

Page 160

## APPENDIX C

Page 162
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Head Start Eligibility Index</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Family Social Isolation Index</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Example of Questions Assessing Parental Knowledge of the Head Start Program</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Family Size of Study Sample</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Annual Family Income of Study Sample, 1968-1969</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Farm or Non-farm Residency of the Study Sample</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Extent of Family Isolation of Study Sample</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Extent of Family Instability in Study Sample</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Sex of Household Head of Study Sample</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Employment Characteristics of Fathers in Study Sample</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Employment Characteristics of Mothers in Study Sample</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ages of Parents in Study Sample</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Formal Education of the Parents in Study Sample</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Attitudes Toward Education</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Beliefs About Family Relationships</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Extent of Anomie</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Present/Future Time Orientation</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Attitudes Toward Head Start: Effects on the Child</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Attitudes Toward Head Start: Effects on the Family</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Attitudes Toward the Administration of the Head Start Program</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 21. Attitudes Toward the Facilities of the Head Start
Classrooms         | 117  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. Stigmatization from Association with the Head Start Program</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Parental Knowledge of the Head Start Program</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Frequency of Parental Participation in Head Start Activities</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

I. INTRODUCTION

In March of 1968 there were estimated to be 25.9 million persons living in poverty in the United States, 1 10.7 million who were under the age of twenty-one. 2

Concern by the Federal Government for the younger segment of the American population can be seen in the following quote from a Federal report:

The 82 million children and youth represent one of the most important assets of the United States. The future strength and welfare of our country depend in large measure on how well we develop the potential of these human resources. 3

This concern was backed by a Federal investment estimated at 13.7 billion dollars in 1969, 4 into programs covering many areas of need for America's children and youth. The Head Start Program is one

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2Ibid., p. 15.

3Ibid., p. v.

4Ibid.
of the programs which has received much attention over the years as well as a good portion of the Federal monies.

As one of a multitude of programs and "offices" created under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 for the purposes of confronting and ameliorating the conditions and effects of poverty, the Head Start program was designed to provide for the various needs and deficiencies of pre-school poverty children. Originally, the Head Start program was intended to consist of a few experimental programs reaching a limited number of children. In this way, it was felt, more information could be gathered to help in the eventual development of larger programs founded on proven techniques and orientations. However, realization on the part of Federal administrators, educators, and parents, of the tremendous potential for positive returns from a program such as Head Start, resulted in its immediate acceptance. Pressures for expanding the program were received from these groups, ultimately resulting in an increase in allocations for Head Start to around $100 million for a hastily expanded program which was serving a half-million children by the summer of 1965.5

Upon full-scale implementation of this new program, it was determined that knowledge of its efficiency was basic to the administrative decision-making processes. Program evaluation was conceived of as an essential factor in the determination of the effects and directions

of this and other on-going programs, and in providing valuable guides for the development of new programs.

While attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of the Head Start programs have been numerous, most evaluations have been conducted by individual Head Start programs or by their sponsoring organizations. The conclusions of these studies apparently reflected the lack of universalistic evaluative guides. Some studies showed that the child benefited both cognitively and affectively from participation in Head Start, while other studies showed that these "gains" were more likely the consequence of factors other than participation in Head Start inasmuch as they largely disappeared within a year following participation.  

Thus, because previous evaluations of Head Start failed to provide adequate information on the overall impact of the program, a decision was made by the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity to contract with the Westinghouse Learning Corporation and Ohio University for an evaluative study designed to answer the following question:

To what extent are the children now in the first, second, and third grades who attended Head Start programs different in their intellectual and social-personal development from comparable children who did not attend?  

In his Economic Opportunity Message to the Congress on February 19, 1969, President Nixon noted that, according to preliminary

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6 Ibid., p. 123.
7 Ibid., p. 125.
conclusions of the Westinghouse/Ohio University study, "the long-term
effect of Head Start appears to be extremely weak."

As a consequence of this and other conclusions of the study, much controversy arose
among educators, congressmen, and Head Start administrators and workers.

Criticisms were heard which ranged from the study's failure to include an analysis of all aspects of the program rather than just concentrating on cognitive improvements to accusations of faulty study design and inaccurate interpretation (which reportedly prompted one of the study's statisticians to withdraw and ask that his name not be used in reference to the study).

Focusing on the criticism of the study's failure to analyze all aspects of Head Start, one can determine a deficiency which is shared, in part, by all previous attempts at evaluating the program--that is, the lack of any detailed assessment of the family backgrounds of Head Start participants. This deficiency appears highly unusual for a number of reasons. To begin with, there exists a plethora of literature which makes a singular case for the importance of the socialization process for infants and children, and the importance of the parents and family environment with respect to the socialization process. This leads,

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8Ibid., p. 124.


then, to the realization that the economic, educational, cultural, social, and psychological conditions and opportunities of the home directly influence the child and are, in turn, directly dependent upon the parents. This apparent lack of concern with the child's family background is unusual for yet another reason. As Lane points out, "The philosophy of Head Start is permeated with the idea that children's needs and parents' needs must be considered together."

A third reason may be found in the knowledge that for a family to realize maximum benefits from their child's participation in Head Start, a home environment that is preferably enhancing and reinforcing to the ideas and skills learned in the Head Start classroom, or at least not hostile to the goals of the program, may be of critical importance.

Finally, it appears that there exists a contention that families in poverty generally possess similar characteristics. An assumption such as this has apparently provided justification for the development of a number of programs, of which Head Start is one, which attempt to treat the conditions and people in poverty en masse. But a question arises which asks whether it is better for those whose welfare is being considered to be approached through mass programs or through more individualized means.

One way to answer this question, at least partially, is to examine a sample of families who share the common characteristic of

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being eligible for and participants in the Head Start program. In this way it may be possible to determine to what extent they do, or do not, possess characteristics which are perceived as common to others who share the similar situation of poverty. At the same time, some contribution to present knowledge about Head Start families may be made by filling some of the voids that are present. It is with this goal in mind that the following parts were designed.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In view of the foregoing discussion, this study is seen as fulfilling two purposes: (1) to provide data and information which may fill some of the presently existing voids in our knowledge of Head Start families; and, (2) to serve as an impetus for the generation of ideas which may be incorporated into later, more detailed studies dealing with specific aspects of the family backgrounds of Head Start children.

For these reasons this study will be a deviation from the typical in that its approach will be more exploratory\(^{12}\) than analytical; more question-asking than question-answering; and, thus, more hypotheses-developing than hypotheses-testing.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Little has been published which deals specifically with families in the Head Start program. Therefore, it would seem most appropriate to ask: What characteristics do Head Start families possess; in what way, if any, do these characteristics differ from those characteristics which are frequently attributed to the "poverty-type" family; and, what are the Head Start parents' impressions of the Head Start program?

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objective 1. To determine the extent to which a sample of Head Start families possesses certain social and demographic characteristics which have been cited as common among families participating in the Head Start program, or among poverty families in general.

Objective 2. To assess parental attitudes, knowledge, and frequency of participation of a sample of Head Start families with respect to the Head Start program.

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The remainder of this thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter II, Review of the Head Start Program, Conceptual Orientation and Objectives of the Study, is divided into three major parts. Part I is concerned with the origins and design of the Head Start program.
Part II describes the conceptual orientation adopted for this study. Part III is a summary relating the ideas previously discussed to the study. Chapter III, Literature Review and General Hypothesis, includes three major parts. Part I is a review of selected literature pertinent to the first study objective. Part II is a review of literature pertinent to the second study objective. Part III contains the general descriptive hypothesis and a number of subhypotheses which serve to guide expectations of the study. Chapter IV, Design of the Study, includes information on the background of the study, the construction of the research instrument, definitions of terms and scoring procedures employed. Chapter V, Presentation of Findings, presents the findings of the study relevant to the hypotheses. Chapter VI, Summary and Conclusions, includes a summary of the study, conclusions of the study, limitations of the study, and implications for further research and application.

Attention will now be directed to an examination of the Head Start program and to a discussion of a conceptual orientation which may be perceived within the design of the Head Start program.
This chapter is designed to serve two purposes. The first purpose, covered in the first part of the chapter, is to provide the reader with an understanding of the origins and design of the Head Start program. The second purpose, found in the second part of this chapter, is to examine a conceptual orientation which appears to be inherent within the design of the Head Start program and which will be adopted as an orienting framework for this study.

I. DESIGN OF PROJECT HEAD START

Introduction

Any study will be complicated by a lack of previous literature or research which could serve in establishing boundaries and in determining specific study goals. Inasmuch as there is a lack of literature on this problem it is felt that valuable understanding may be gained from a review of the design of the Head Start program. To accomplish this review, attention will first be directed to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, from which Project Head Start was developed. Following this, consideration will be given to the Community Action Program which was also created out of the E. O. A. of 1964, and which administers the Head Start programs. The final portion of
this section will consist of a more detailed discussion of the design of Project Head Start including its objectives and the general means employed to achieve these objectives, both nationally and locally.

The Economic Opportunity Act

Miller discusses the atmosphere from which the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 emerged. He cites the following as reasons for passage of the Act: Already high unemployment and the threat of its continuation and possible increase due to automation; the plight of the "other America" as exposed by Michael Harrington; and, especially the prevalence of racial tensions as one consequence of the civil rights movement begun in the middle 1950's.¹ He also points out that the programs developed under the Act were not the only anti-poverty oriented programs in operation in the United States, but that their main distinction lay in an emphasis on rehabilitation of the poor themselves through education and retraining rather than just welfare payments or some other form of relief intended to lessen the miseries of poverty.²

Miller refers to this and also provides a glimpse of the attitudinal environment in which the designers of the Act were working when he states:

²Ibid., p. 3.
there is...justification for regarding the Act as the start of a massive effort to rehabilitate people who are defeated and unmotivated and generally regarded as beyond redemption.\(^3\)

Out of this environment came an approach which was based upon the goal of facilitating "maximum feasible participation" of the poor in determining the directions and designs of many of the programs intended for their benefit. To accomplish this objective, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 created the United States Office of Economic Opportunity to administer the many programs included in its design.

**Community Action Program.** To provide a means for the Office of Economic Opportunity to accomplish its objectives, Title II-A of the E. O. A. of 1964 called for the development of the Community Action programs whose primary purpose was the establishment of Community Action agencies and offices in many rural and urban areas. The purpose for the agencies was to serve as a "...local coalition against poverty."\(^4\) Their role as community catalysts for the mobilization of "...all local, state, private, and Federal resources..."\(^5\) was facilitated by the operations of a number of programs, or "projects," which were designed to fill many of the educational, health, employment or:

\(^3\)Ibid.


\(^5\)Ibid.
retraining and legal needs of low-income or welfare family members. Head Start, Follow Through, Upward Bound, and Adult Basic Education, were four of the programs oriented to filling the educational needs of preschool-aged children, kindergarten or primary school-aged children, youngsters in the higher grades, and adults who had never completed their education.

The first Head Start programs were begun nationally in the summer of 1965. The concept of Head Start represented an ideal symbol for the new war on poverty and generated almost immediate national support. Ultimately, what was to have consisted of a few programs reaching a limited number of children, was quickly expanded. Thus, when the first Head Start classrooms opened, they were sponsored by school systems and churches, as well as Community Action agencies, and were serving over one-half million children, in a program which involved a federal investment of $100 million. 6

An examination of the program aims and design will follow.

The Head Start Program

Head Start is an extremely comprehensive program which was designed as an attempt to undo the many deficiencies in children which supposedly resulted from conditions of chronic poverty. Accomplishment of this goal was to proceed through the use of daily

classroom programs in which preschool poverty children would be allowed to learn and develop their abilities largely by instructional play activities.

This goal is obvious in the following statement taken from a Community Action information booklet which discusses the purposes of a Head Start Child Development Center. It states:

The Child Development Center is a place where every effort is made to insure that the impoverished child is provided the services necessary to narrow the gap between him and his more advantaged peers. Thus, health care, as well as educational and cultural horizon widening may be required to provide for the disadvantaged child what is considered a standard part of the early childhood care of every middle-class child.7

Objectives of the Head Start Program. Lane provides a view of some of the specific objectives of Head Start. To her, it is the goal of Head Start to:

1. Improve the child's physical health.

2. Help the child's emotional and social development by encouraging self-confidence, self-expression, self-discipline, and curiosity.

3. Improve and expand the child's mental processes, with particular emphasis on expanding his ability to think, reason, and speak clearly.

4. Help the child get wider and more varied experiences which broaden his horizons, increase his ease of conversation, and improve his understanding of the world in which he lives.

5. Provide the child with frequent opportunities to experience success with the purpose of erasing patterns of frustration and failure and especially the fear of failure.

6. Develop a climate of confidence for the child which will foster a desire to learn.

7. Increase the child's ability to get along with others in his family and, at the same time, help the family to understand the child and his problems--thus strengthening family ties.

8. Develop in the child and his family a responsible attitude toward society and foster feelings of belonging to a community.

9. Plan activities which allow groups from every social, ethnic, and economic level in a community to join together with the poor in solving their problems.

10. Offer chances for a child to meet and see teachers, policemen, health and welfare officials--all figures of authority--in situations which will bring respect and not fear.

11. Give the child a chance to meet with older children, teenagers, and adults who will serve as "models" in manners, behavior, speech, etc.

12. Help both the child and his family to a greater confidence, self-respect, and dignity.  

Component areas of the Head Start Program. The objectives of Head Start directly relate to the preschool poverty child's future life. Head Start was seeking to establish a firmer foundation for the child's later educational experiences, employment potential and even his physical and social well being.

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Thus, the program is composed of five major component areas:

1. **Health.** Head Start centers would provide complete medical examinations, including visual and auditory tests, dental examinations, immunizations, periodic examinations, and follow through to see that correction of defects or deficiencies was done.

2. **Nutrition.** The nutrition programs of the Head Start center would normally provide at least one hot meal and a snack each day. At the same time the program would also provide parents with an opportunity to learn about the preparation of well-balanced meals in the home.

3. **Education.** Each Head Start classroom would contain one teacher and at least two teacher's aides. The teacher would be a paid professional while one of the aides would be salaried and the second aide frequently a parent volunteer. The size of each Head Start class would be set at a maximum of fifteen. In this way each child had a better opportunity for his needs to be realized and dealt with.⁹

   The educational experience of the Head Start children would be based upon learning and development of such areas as language, curiosity, self-image and discipline.¹⁰

4. **Parent Involvement.** Each Head Start program would be required to invite parents to participate with sponsors and administrators in every phase of planning and operation. Parents could

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serve in non-professional capacities, on a paid or volunteer basis, acting as aides to teachers, nurses, or social workers, as clerks, cooks, storytellers, and as supervisors of class recreation activities.

In addition, programs would frequently hold classes for parents on a variety of subjects related to the home, such as home economics, purchase and preparation of food, child care, and improvement of the home environment.

5. Social and Psychological Services. Each Head Start center would have a staff including a social worker or psychologist, who would serve to refer cases with needs beyond the facilities of the center to appropriate community agencies. 11

Head Start Nationally

The program goals and components discussed above have been operationalized in the form of either a summer program lasting from six to eight weeks, or a full-year program which may last up to twelve months with respect to classroom activities for children. However, philosophically the programs do not differ.

A report by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Child Development concerning Head Start programs and participants from 1965-1967, provides some understanding of the magnitude of the program. It is pointed out that during the summer of 1967 almost one-half million children and their families were being

served by almost 10,000 centers in almost 30,000 classrooms. During the full-year program of 1967, these figures were approximately one-half those of the summer session.\textsuperscript{12} In addition, these programs have been operating in every one of the United States, as well as in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, Samoa, and Pacific Trust Territories.\textsuperscript{13}

The Head Start program is immediately available to children from low-income families. However, regulations of the program call for at least ninety percent of the children to be from families defined by a differentiated family-size/family-income scale as low-income. The other ten percent may come from families whose family size and family income place them immediately above the low-income cut-off points. The eligibility index used by Head Start is based upon the net money income of a family in relation to the number of persons in that family. Table 1\textsuperscript{14} lists, by farm and non-farm residency, the maximum family income by family size allowed to retain eligibility for Head Start.

Head Start Locally

Head Start came to South Dakota in the summer of 1965. The programs were sponsored by church groups, school systems, or other public or private groups. In 1966 the first full-year programs were begun in Rapid City and in Sisseton, South Dakota.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 1.
\item\textsuperscript{14} Project Head Start registration form, from Inter-Lakes Community Action, Inc., Box 285, Madison, South Dakota.
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Table 1. Head Start Eligibility Index

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Welfare recipients are eligible regardless of income level.
The sample area of this study covered Brookings, Kingsbury, and Moody counties. The first Head Start classrooms began operating in this area in Brookings and Moody counties in the summer of 1965. The classrooms were sponsored by the school system of the city of Brookings, in Brookings county, and by a minister's group in Flandreau and Colman, in Moody county. The area classrooms were all summer programs until 1967 when a full-year program was started in Brookings.

At the time data were being collected for this study in 1969, summer programs were operating in the towns of Flandreau and Egan, in Moody county; White and Volga, in Brookings county; and, Lake Preston and De Smet, in Kingsbury county. Also, the full-year program was still operating at Brookings, in Brookings county. At that time there were approximately 110 children attending Head Start classes in the study area.

Summary. This section was intended to provide the reader with a relatively thorough understanding of the goals and means which Head Start programs employ in their attempts to help break the cycle of poverty. It was shown that Head Start is a popular component of a comprehensive, nation-wide war on poverty, which utilizes a variety of professional, and volunteer efforts. These skills have been integrated into a program which covers many areas of need found to commonly persist among children from impoverished environments. The programs are conducted in the form of classrooms which may last from six to eight weeks in the summer, or may be up to twelve months in
duration. A table was presented which displayed the index used at the time of this study for determining eligibility for participation in Head Start.

It will be remembered that in the introductory chapter of this study it was determined that scientific concern for the family backgrounds of children who are participating in the Head Start program appears to be lacking, in spite of the influential position the family occupies for the child. It was also pointed out that a viewpoint seems inherent in the design of Head Start and other anti-poverty programs which holds that poor children and their families may be approached in a similar manner, utilizing the same objectives, due to the possession of homogeneous characteristics derived from the common situation of poverty.

In addition, the first part of the present chapter was devoted to a discussion of the origins and design of the Head Start program. Here it was stated that the program was designed to fill the needs and reduce the deficiencies which were perceived as common to children coming from impoverished backgrounds.

Such an assumption of homogeneity among persons in poverty is undoubtedly derived from a viewpoint which sees people in poverty as members of a "culture of poverty." Therefore, the second part of this chapter is devoted to developing an understanding of the concept of "culture of poverty."
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II. CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATION

Introduction

A description of Head Start families may be best facilitated by its being placed within a conceptual orientation which may serve to provide directions and guides in the selection of relevant variables to be found under the more general rubric of "poverty."

A popular conception of poverty holds that poor persons tend to share similar outlooks on life, similar attitudes toward institutions of the larger society, similar environmental conditions (both socially and physically), similar patterns in terms of group and organizational membership, similar beliefs with respect to child-rearing practices and family relations in general, and more, which are passed on from generation to generation. Furthermore, these similarities are seen as differing from patterns found in the larger, more affluent segments of the population. These conclusions have led some to contend that people in poverty are members of a "culture" or "subculture" of poverty. This position will be further discussed and made more clear in the following review of the meanings of the concepts of "culture," "poverty," and "culture of poverty."

Culture

The concept of culture has been variously defined by a number of scholars. Indeed, while total agreement has yet to be achieved, there is a general consensus about the basic meaning of the concept. One of the oldest and still frequently cited definitions of culture
was formulated by E. B. Tylor in a book published in 1871. To Tylor, "...culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."\(^{15}\)

Fierstedt defines culture more simply as "...the complex whole that consists of everything we think and do and have as members of society."\(^{16}\)

Still more succinct, but maintaining the fundamental meaning of the concept, is that described by Valentine as the anthropological definition, which holds culture as being "...the entire way of life followed by a people."\(^{17}\) Valentine develops this idea by stating:

This means that culture includes all socially standardized ways of seeing and thinking about the world; of understanding relationships among people, things, and events; of establishing preferences and purposes; of carrying out actions and pursuing goals. In a general sense, then, culture consists of the rules which generate and guide behavior. More specifically, the culture of a particular people or other social body is everything that one must learn to behave in ways that are recognizable, predictable, and understandable to those people.\(^{18}\)


\(^{16}\)Robert Bierstedt, Ibid.

\(^{17}\)Charles A. Valentine, Culture and Poverty (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 3.

\(^{18}\)Ibid.
With these characteristics in mind attention will now turn to an understanding of the concept of poverty, and ultimately to the relation between culture and poverty.

**Poverty**

Compared to defining culture, definitional consensus on poverty is not easily attained. A definition of poverty may stress different aspects depending on the particular field of study for which an author is writing, or depending also on the particular opinions the author may hold with regard to those people in poverty, the forces which led to the situation, or the means of reducing the existence of poverty. It would appear that an adequate definition must necessarily embrace all aspects of the situation, including direct or indirect references to such specific aspects as the psychological, social, political, physical, and economic consequences of poverty.

Thus, Thomas Gladwin defines poverty by saying:

> Being poor, at least in the United States, consists in a lack of sufficient money to function effectively in the economic system through which everyone is forced to seek the necessities of life.19

In view of the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that Gladwin's definition is too narrow to adequately define the concept of poverty, as is Ornati's which sees poverty as "... the

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lack of command over goods and services sufficient to meet minimum standards."\(^{20}\)

Another definition which suffers from the limitations of determination by economic situation is that which is presently used by many federal anti-poverty programs. Identification of the poor was perceived as necessary for the effective operation of federally sponsored programs designed to reduce the existence and consequences of poverty. Therefore, the United States Social Security Administration developed a definition of poverty which was based upon the proportion of the annual family budget required to purchase food necessary to maintain a nutritionally adequate diet for the family. The diet referred to here is the United States Department of Agriculture's economy food plan for emergency use or when funds are very low. Thus, a family is considered below poverty line when one-third or more of its annual income must be spent for food to provide for minimum nutritional requirements.\(^{21}\)

This definition is the same as that which is used by the Head Start program. The main criterion used for determining the eligibility of a child for participation in the Head Start program is based on the net money income of the child's family. The net money income, as


defined on a Project Head Start registration form is "gross receipts minus operating expenses, from a business firm, farm, or professional enterprise in which a person is engaged on his own account." 22

The advantages of a definition such as this lie in its ability to be adjusted in response to price trends in the food market or to differences in family size, but again, the definition does not refer to the psychological or social consequences of poverty. However, the definition does contain valuable perspectives on the relativity of poverty. Gladwin points out that it is an obvious fact that being poor in the United States is different from being poor in India, and contemporary poverty is different from poverty in the 1920's. Gladwin further contends that the state of poverty is not a point on some absolute scale but is a continuum. 23

When viewed in a relative perspective which would see poverty as a comparative, qualitative concept, a lack of definitional consensus is readily understandable. This is further illuminated in Ferman, Kornbluh, and Haber's book entitled Poverty in America. In their attempt to define poverty, they discuss four different criteria which have been used by numerous writers in their attempts to analyze the nature and extent of poverty in America. The first revolves

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22 Project Head Start registration form, from Inter-Lakes Community Action, Inc., Box 285, Madison, South Dakota.

23 Gladwin, p. 12.
around the limitation of income resources available to a family; the second emphasizes the lack of community resources and income substitutes; the third focuses on the existence of a variety of negative characteristics working in combination, which ill-equip or prevent participation in the labor force; and the fourth refers to behavioral or attitudinal characteristics of the poor, or the persistence of a "culture of poverty."²⁴ It is with this fourth criterion then that this study is primarily interested.

**Culture of Poverty**

Since the "culture of poverty" concept came into popular usage it has been challenged by a number of authors and researchers primarily on the use, or misuse, of the term "culture."²⁵ Herzog points out that any use of the term "culture" must fulfill certain criteria, among them being a feeling among the members that they belong to a cultural entity, and share in its institutions, patterns, and beliefs, with others. Herzog concludes that these elements especially seem to be absent from literature and studies conducted on the so-called culture of poverty.²⁶


Herzog cautions that distortion and misunderstanding may be the consequences for failing to realize the deficiencies of the term "culture." 27

A definition of culture of poverty which appears to adhere to the tenets outlined by Herzog is that by Ferman, Kornbluh, and Haber. They say:

A group of individuals or families may be said to be in poverty when they share a distinctive set of values, behavior traits, and belief complexes that markedly set them off from the affluent groups in the society. This set is a derivative of prolonged economic deprivation, lack of adequate financial resources, and socialization in an environment of economic uncertainty. This "culture of poverty" is characterized by an intergenerational persistence and transmission to the children of the poor. 28

Herzog suggests that the problems which arise with the use of the term "culture" might be avoided if poor persons were instead thought of as members of a subculture of poverty. 29

Gordon provides an opportunity to understand what is meant by the term when he defines a subculture as:

...a subdivision of a national culture, composed of a combination of factorable social situations such as class status, ethnic background, regional and rural or urban residence, and religious affiliation, but forming in their combination a functioning unity which has an integrated impact on the participating individual. 30

27Ibid.


29Herzog, p. 96.

In reviewing Yancey's article entitled The Culture of Poverty: Not So Much Parsimony, it becomes apparent that he is not so much concerned with Herzog's reservations with respect to the use of the term "culture." The terms "culture" and "subculture" do not appear to be considered dissimilar in meaning and they are frequently used interchangeably. Yancey instead concerns himself with distinguishing between two theoretical viewpoints which attempt to account for the concrescence of values, beliefs, behavior patterns, and the like, into a "culture of poverty."

Common value system. Focusing on the development of value systems of the poor, one conceptual trend is seen as following Merton. Characteristic to this school of thought is the contention that a society is integrated by a common system of values to which all members of that society are committed. Thus, while aspiring to goals derived from the dominant value system, but finding institutionalized means or environmental conditions prohibiting the attainment of those goals, persons in poverty develop a value system which is a deviation from the dominant system. The culture of poverty, thus derived, is seen, by those who support this school of

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32 Ibid., p. 7.

33 Ibid., p. 8.

34 Ibid., p. 11-12.
thought, as being an *indirect adaptation* to the poverty environment.\(^{35}\)

McKinley discussed the emergence of a subculture in his book *Social Class and Family Life*. Herein one can discern an explanation of the development of a subculture of poverty which agrees with the "*common value system*" orientation. McKinley says:

> Basic in understanding the emergence of subcultures is a recognition that each society has a dominant standard of evaluation and that this standard determines the placement at different levels of the society, of individuals, possessing different amounts of the attributes specified by the standard. These two factors result in strata of modes of adjustment (or subcultures).\(^{36}\)

**Autonomous value system.** The second school of thought, on the other hand, sees the development of a culture of poverty as a *direct adaptation* to the limitations of the environment, which is not influenced in its development by a dominant societal value system.\(^{37}\) According to this interpretation, society is seen as composed of a number of autonomous and conflicting subcultures,\(^{38}\) which develops a system of values and behaviors which are realistic and rational within their different situations.\(^{39}\)

Oscar Lewis is considered by many to be largely responsible for the popularity of the "*culture of poverty*" concept and is cited


\(^{37}\) Yancey, p. 12.


by Yancey as a representative of the autonomous subculture orientation. Lewis discusses the culture of poverty in the following manner:

To those who think the poor have no culture, the concept of a culture of poverty may seem like a contradiction in terms... In anthropological usage the term culture implies essentially, a design for living which is passed down from generation to generation. In applying this concept of culture to the understanding of poverty, I want to draw attention to the fact that poverty in modern nations is not only a state of economic deprivation, of disorganization, or the absence of something. It is also something positive in the sense that it has a structure, a rationale, and defense mechanisms without which the poor could hardly carry on. In short, it is a way of life, remarkably stable and persistent, passed down from generation to generation along family lines. The culture of poverty has its own modalities and distinctive social and psychological consequences for its members. It is a dynamic factor which affects participation in the larger national culture and becomes a subculture of its own.

The previous discussion has shown that one may believe that the value systems of the poor are derived from a commonly existing value system which results in the development of a subculture of poverty as an indirect adaptation to poverty living. Or, one may choose to believe that the value systems of the poor represent a number of autonomous value systems from many autonomous subcultures which have developed as a direct adaptation to poverty life. However, regardless of which orientation one chooses to adopt, there still exists a conceptual "mortar" which joins the previous viewpoints at

40 Ibid., p. 7.
their foundations, and which is found inherent in the culture of poverty concept. In all cases the conditions of a poverty environment are held as either directly or indirectly accountable for the characteristics of people in poverty.

A summary of the ideas presented thus far, and their bearing on the present study are found below.

Summary

Two purposes were stipulated for this chapter. The first purpose was to present the reader with an understanding of the origins and design of the Head Start program. The second purpose was to outline the meanings and principles of an orientation which may be perceived as permeating the design of the Head Start program. Thus, the review of Head Start was followed by a discussion of the "culture of poverty" concept, the principles of which are intended to serve as the conceptual orientation of this study. The reasons for adopting the principles of the culture of poverty concept as the framework for this study may be seen as relating to the discussion found in the introductory chapter of this study.

A theoretical thread is discernible in both the design of the Head Start program and in the culture of poverty concept. This common thread is an assumption which holds that inasmuch as the conditions of poverty may be perceived as similar, the characteristics resulting from these conditions may be perceived as similar also. The design of the Head Start program can be seen as reflecting
this orientation in that while attempts are made to treat each child individually, the structure of the program remains the same regardless of what differences may exist in the situations of the different classrooms. This observation is evidenced by the objectives and components of the program which were discussed previously, and which are held to be applicable to all classrooms in approaching the common problems of poverty children.

An essential question which arises in consideration of the previous discussion would ask whether, in fact, the "homogeneous" approach to people in poverty, and especially to poverty children, is valid. Therefore, in an attempt to arrive at some conclusion with respect to this question, and with a desire to provide information about families in Head Start which may be useful to persons working in the program or to those interested in further study of Head Start families, the objectives of this study were formulated.

These objectives were: (1) To determine the extent to which a sample of Head Start families possesses certain social and demographic characteristics which have been cited as common among families participating in the Head Start program, or among poverty families in general. (2) To assess parental attitudes, knowledge, and frequency of participation of a sample of Head Start families with respect to the Head Start program.

The remaining chapters are oriented to achieving the objectives of this study. Chapter III consists of a review of pertinent literature from which characteristics were selected for examination.
as they exist among the study sample. Chapter IV is devoted to reviewing the design of the study and the methodology employed to achieve the study objectives. Chapter V reviews the findings of this study. Chapter VI contains a summary of the study goals and the conclusions arrived at on the basis of the findings.
CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DESCRIPTIVE HYPOTHESES

Introduction

The following chapter is devoted to a review of literature pertinent to this study. The chapter is divided into three major parts. The first part is titled "Review of Literature Pertinent to Objective One." This part will review writings and research which characterizes poverty-type families.

The second part is titled "Review of Literature Pertinent to Objective Two." This part will review what little literature exists which is concerned with the attitudes and knowledge of Head Start parents, and their frequency of participation, with respect to the Head Start activities.

The third part, titled "Variables and Hypotheses," will include a summary of characteristics which were found in the two reviews of literature and which are selected as expectations to be found in this study. Then a general descriptive hypothesis is stated under which each of the previously mentioned expected characteristics is restated in the form of a sub-hypothesis.

However, before proceeding into the review of literature a short note of explanation is necessary. The review of literature for this part of the chapter is not intended to be comprehensive. The writings which are reviewed are selected from a plethora of literature that exists concerned with the subject of poverty. To be selective of
the literature to be reviewed was considered both appropriate and necessary for the following reasons. To begin with, this study is a part of a larger study which is discussed in Chapter IV under, "Background to the Present Study." The larger study was concerned with poverty and the reality of the "culture of poverty" concept. Consequently, many of the areas selected for examination by the larger study were also selected for examination in this study. However, the review of the literature for the larger study was of a general nature and could not be related to previous writings or research conducted on Head Start families as none was known to exist. Instead, selection of areas was guided by suggestions derived from discussions which involved the author and Norma Klinkel, the Director of Head Start programs for the Inter-Lakes Community Action Agency, and Ruth Kranzler, Associate Professor of Child Development at South Dakota State University and Head Start consultant. Suggestions were also obtained from numerous other Head Start workers and interested parties, as well as from Head Start information bulletins.

The "poverty" literature included in the following portion of this chapter is selective in that each of the writings reviewed will contain at least one of the characteristics which were selected for examination in this study. The reader will find that little attempt has been made to organize the discussion according to any integrating thread other than the fact that the literature reviewed presents characteristics of people in poverty.
It should be known that the author was able to locate only four articles concerning Head Start families. Only two of the articles provided any detailed information and the other two contained general statements about these families. Nonetheless, all of the articles generally had only passing reference to the characteristics of Head Start families—making obvious the need for more information about these families.

I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE PERTINENT TO OBJECTIVE ONE

General literature. Oscar Lewis provides an appropriate point to begin this discussion of poverty characteristics. Lewis suggests that there are notable similarities in family structure, interpersonal relations, time orientation, value systems, spending patterns, and the sense of community among lower-class people in London, Glasgow, Paris, Harlem, and Mexico City.¹ He goes on to list a number of traits which he contends are part of an international culture of poverty. Among them are the following: more persons in younger age groups; a higher number of gainfully employed; low levels of education; little integration into national institutions; low participation in labor unions, political parties, and national health programs; unemployment and under-employment; low wages; and a variety of unskilled occupations. Social and psychological traits as seen by Lewis include: crowded

living conditions, high incidence of alcoholism, a strong predisposition to authoritarianism, a strong present-time orientation with little ability to defer gratification and to plan for the future, a feeling of resignation and fatalism, critical attitudes toward some of the values and institutions of the dominant classes, hatred of police, and a mistrust of government and those in high positions.2

Lewis is not without support as can be seen when Ford attempts to explain the perpetuation of poverty among low-income people in Appalachia. His explanation is based on the observation that the values and beliefs which develop among the poor provide them with personal security in a chronically insecure environment. Another contention is that common circumstances and consequences of poverty lead to the adoption of similar values and beliefs even in different societies.3 Ford contends that the poor develop fatalistic beliefs as a consequence to their experience of subjugation and feelings of having little control over their own destiny.4 In addition, because the poor must constantly face the immediate threats to their existence, they develop present-oriented rather than future-oriented time perspectives.5

2 Ibid., 26-27.
4 Ibid., p. 37.
5 Ibid.
Ford also sees the values and beliefs which place a priority on the family and an obligation on the individual to the family as accounting for the characteristic lack of participation by the poor in formal organizations. Ford also sees the poor universally as seeking to enhance their perceptions of themselves and feelings of self-esteem. Thus, the values and beliefs surrounding the family develop as the family confers status on the individual, fatalistic attitudes allow the poor to avoid blaming themselves for their situation, and responsibility is avoided, as this removes the seeming inevitability of failure.

Reference to the psychological consequences of poverty is found in a paper presented by Gladwin. In it he points out two characteristics which he holds as likely places to begin implementing permanent change in the life styles of the poor. The first is the degree that the poor may feel they have any control over their own destiny, and the second refers to the orientation of the poor to the future. Gladwin goes on to contend that the major reason for focusing on change in these characteristics is that poverty families live in a generally disorganized environment.

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6 Ibid., pp. 38-39.
7 Ibid., pp. 40-41.
8 Thomas Gladwin, as quoted in Charles A. Valentine's, Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-Proposals, op. cit., p. 88.
9 Ibid., p. 89.
Douglas sees the groups most vulnerable to poverty as being children in large families, the aged, families with female heads, and families with an unemployed or low-paid head. In addition, low earnings were seen as characteristic of farm workers and unskilled laborers. Other groups which were noted among the poor were non-whites, large families, and those with low education.10

Epstein sees a family with an inadequate income as being without the proper foods, as living in overcrowded dwellings, as going without preventative health care, as having little chance for more than a high school education, as having a one-in-four chance of not having a father living at home, of having a working mother, and of having an unstable family life.11

Baum and Glasgow in their case study of a five-county region in south central Kentucky cite six characteristics which they perceive as usually associated with low-income rural areas. These are: (1) a population decline over the last two decades; (2) a high proportion of the labor force in agricultural employment; (3) a predominance of small farms; (4) comparatively low levels of educational attainment among the population; (5) a large percentage of the population residing


in dilapidated and deteriorating dwellings; and (6) family and per capita incomes far below state and national averages.\textsuperscript{12}

Two characteristics which Inman has found associated with rural poverty, which may be pertinent to this discussion, include high proportions of persons over forty-five or under nineteen years of age, and low levels of education.\textsuperscript{13}

Stine et al. conducted a case study of six central West Virginia counties in an attempt to determine what factors could be related to the persistence of unemployment and low-incomes in the areas.\textsuperscript{14}

Their findings strongly emphasize the lag in educational attainment among the counties' residents. In their area of study, Stine et al. found that the median educational attainment for persons over the age of twenty-five ranged from 8.2 to 8.7 years. These figures were


\textsuperscript{14}O. C. Stine, (consultant) and Staff of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, West Virginia State University, "A Case Study of Six Central West Virginia Counties of the Interrelationships of Factors Leading to the Persistence of Low-income and Unemployment in the Area," in Problems of Chronically Depressed Rural Areas (Asheville, North Carolina: Agricultural Policy Institute, North Carolina State University, in cooperation with the Tennessee Valley Authority, series 19, November, 1965), p. 177.
determined to be slightly below the education median of the state and substantially below the median for years of education for the nation.\(^{15}\)

Reissman verbally paints a picture of the poor and makes the following points: the poor are patriarchal, superstitious, somewhat religious, ineffective readers, poorly informed, suspicious of "talk" and new ideas, and traditional with respect to their beliefs about morality, punishment, custom, diet, education, sex roles, and intellectuals. Furthermore, they feel frustrated and alienated from society, are antagonistic towards societal institutions, hold the world responsible for their misfortunes and, consequently, do not tend to blame themselves for their predicament, and are more direct in their aggression. In addition, while desiring a better standard of living, the poor are not attracted to a middle-class way of life; they seek security in employment; they do not generally belong to too many organizations and do not vote frequently. They also tend to be pragmatic and practical so that education is desired for the opportunities it may provide but abstract speculation and ideas are not deemed useful with respect to the realities of everyday life. However, there remains an exaggerated respect for the ability of the learned so that the competency of a scholar in one field is generalized to all fields. On the other hand, they feel that life is a better teacher than books,

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 201.
and that theory is impractical, thus they tend to oppose intellec-
tualism. 16

More of an emphasis on the educational aspects of poverty may be found with Havighurst, who conducted a study designed to investi-
gate conditions which were productive of superior children. 17 Among his findings were that the lowest proportion of mentally superior children came from the lower social classes, and that the highest proportion of children whose I.Q. scores fell in the bottom quarter were of the lower classes. 18

Havighurst also considers the problem of underachievement. He cites the following among characteristics of able but under-
achieving students: (1) they tend to come from homes of lower socio-
economic status; (2) they tend to come from broken or emotionally inadequate homes; (3) they have poorer personal adjustment and see themselves as inadequate individuals; (4) they tend to dislike school; (5) they have lower aspirations; (6) they have narrower interests; and, (7) they have less clearly defined vocational goals. 19

Havighurst contends that the problem of gifted underachievers stems from the failure of effective processing by society. He says:


18 Ibid., p. 93.

19 Ibid., p. 97.
Inadequacy in the home environment leaves able underachievers personally maladjusted, with limited horizons and a lack of stimulation for using education for vocational achievement, even if they are personally well adjusted. An inadequate home environment fails to instill a need for achievement. The school and home in combination fail to instill an intrinsic love of learning in them. And, specifically, for females, the social roles of wife and mother is seen as taking precedence over the role of the student, with support coming from the home, school, and community which causes them to see a conflict between marriage and the duties of the home and continued educational achievement.20

Poor families. Concern with parents and their belief systems may be found with Stolz who was seeking to determine what factors seem to be operating which influence parents to adopt different practices with respect to child-rearing. She analyzed data from seventy-eight parents of thirty-nine American families of diverse backgrounds.21 The study families were varied with respect to the age of the parents, their length of marriage, the number, age and sex distributions of the children, national, religious and educational, occupational and social background of the parents, degree of social mobility and residence.22 Stolz found that fewer years of education, larger families, younger children, and lower family social position appeared to be related to differences in parental child-rearing behavior.23 Other variables

20 Ibid., p. 99.
22 Ibid., p. 10.
23 Ibid., pp. 297-299.
which were found to be strongly related to parental child-rearing behavioral differences were such things as the childhood experiences of the parents, the values and beliefs of the parents, the personal needs of the parents, characteristics and behavior of the child, as well as the setting and communication process. 24

Schaffer and Schaffer sought answers to questions dealing with families who used public welfare-type services. They compared two groups of Scottish families from the same socio-economic status whose children were given into care outside the family home when the mother was temporarily incapacitated by confinement in a hospital. One group of families (child care) gave their children into public care while private arrangements were made for the care of children of the second group (control group). 25

The goal of the authors was to attempt to determine what differences existed between families of the two groups which might account for the different arrangements made for the care of children during the mother's absence.

While Schaffer and Schaffer's study may appear to have more relevance to a reader from a country with a socialistic type of national health program, pertinent findings, relevant within the conceptual framework of the present study, were noted.

24 Ibid., p. 304.

The following list includes a number of the findings from Schaffer and Schaffer's study:

(1) Both groups tended to have large families.²⁶

(2) The child-care group had more preschool-aged children.²⁷

(3) Family disintegration was high in the child-care group.²⁸

(4) Child-care families tended to come from densely populated and decaying urban areas.²⁹

(5) Child-care families were considerably more geographically mobile.³⁰

(6) Child-care families were more socially isolated with respect to contact with kin.³¹

(7) Both groups were characterized by infrequent contact with neighbors.³²

(8) Both groups were characterized by infrequent participation in community organization.³³

(9) Both groups had a large proportion of fathers who had been unemployed at some time in the last three years.³⁴

²⁶Ibid., p. 21.
²⁷Ibid., p. 22.
²⁸Ibid., p. 22-23.
²⁹Ibid., p. 23.
³⁰Ibid., p. 28.
³¹Ibid., p. 45-46.
³²Ibid., p. 55-56.
³³Ibid., p. 62-63.
³⁴Ibid., p. 67-68.
In an information booklet entitled *Project Head Start: Daily Program I For a Child Development Center*, there were listed a number of characteristics which reflect the home environment and the socialization process of the poor child as seen by Head Start.

According to this booklet, children from poverty homes:

...tend to do poorly in language; they have small vocabularies and often seem unable to speak up and out;

They sometimes don't know the names of things, or even that things have names;

They may appear to feel uncertain of who they are, what they look like, how they fit into their world;

They often seem to be lacking in curiosity;

They often have never before seen or worked with pencils, paper, crayons, scissors, puzzles, blocks, or books; and frequently they do not know how to use them in play;

They often have difficulty with authority figures, so that having to do what the teacher expects and class discipline requires, seems at first incomprehensible to them;

They tend not to respond to the teacher until she proves herself trustworthy and sympathetic, and becomes the focal point for their school activities.35

Most germane to this study of a sample of Head Start families is a report published by the Office of Child Development, 36 United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and titled,


36 Hereafter, the report will be referred to as the "O.C.D. report."
Project Head Start 1965-1967: A Descriptive Report on Programs and Participants.37 This was the only article located by the author which specifically described a sample of Head Start families. The "...report is descriptive of the range of children, their families, and staff members who have participated in Project Head Start from its inception in the summer of 1965 through 1967."38 The O.C.D. report information was compiled from data which were prepared by the United States Bureau of the Census. The data were collected by use of mail questionnaires which were sent to a sample of Head Start centers and families who were randomly selected from six categories, stratified according to the size and geographic region of the center, in an attempt to achieve national representativeness. The result was a sampling which included about one percent of the children participating in the 1965, 1966, and 1967 summer programs, as well as about 6 percent of the children in the 1966 and 1967 full-year programs. The magnitude of the sample may be appreciated by the facts that the 1967 full-year sample included 950 Head Start centers involving 8,064 children, and the sample of 1967 summer program participants covered 505 centers serving 5,952 children.39 "Face" information was collected for sample children as well as medical and


38 Ibid., p. 1.

39 Ibid., pp. 2-3.
dental information. Forms asking about family demographic characteristics were sent to the families of sample children. Other forms, to be completed by the sample centers, and by regularly employed, paid or volunteer staff members at the sample centers, were also sent, collecting information of followup medical care, parental program activities, staff member information, and staff evaluations of the program components.

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It was pointed out in the report that compared to the average family in the United States, the Head Start sample families had more female household heads, were larger in size, had lower incomes, and had less access to telephones.

It was also shown that about two-fifths of the fathers present in the homes of the Head Start children had up to eight years of formal education and that slightly over one-quarter of the fathers had completed high school. Mothers of the Head Start sample families tended to show slightly more educational attainment with over one-quarter having up to eight years and slightly less than one-third having completed twelve years of formal education. From one-eighth to under one-sixth of the fathers reported being unemployed, while slightly over one-fifth said they either had not worked or were employed less than ten months of the previous year. Of the mothers almost one-fourth reported being employed but just about one-sixth had been employed for ten to twelve months of the previous year.

40 Ibid., p. 4-6.
About three-fourths of families reported an income under $5,000, and reported large families with a median size around six members. With respect to facilities of the home, around one-tenth reported no running water in the house whereas over one-eighth said they had no radio or television set, and about one-third did not have the use of a phone.⁴¹

A summarization of the numerous characteristics which have been previously mentioned and which were selected for consideration by this study is deferred until a later page. Attention will now be focused on literature which pertains to the second objective of this study. Following this part, the characteristics which were mentioned in either of the literature reviews, and which were selected for examination in this study will be listed. After presentation of this list a general descriptive hypothesis relating to the essential question of the study will be formulated. Finally, a number of sub-hypotheses will be stated corresponding to each of the characteristics mentioned previously.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE PERTINENT TO OBJECTIVE TWO

The second objective set for this study was to assess the attitudes, and knowledge that the study sample of Head Start parents had with respect to the program, and to determine patterns of participation in Head Start program activities. Although little

literature exists which directly relates to these items, some writings have been located and will be reviewed below.

**Parental attitudes toward the Head Start program.** A journal article by Williams and Evans discussed the events leading up to the controversial "Westinghouse Report," the report itself, and implications for future policies with respect to Project Head Start and programs of similar design. The "Westinghouse Report" was an evaluation of the Head Start program. The evaluation was contracted by the Office of Economic Opportunity with Westinghouse Learning Corporation and Ohio University. The goal of the study was to determine what effects participation in Head Start programs had on children's intellectual and social-personal development as compared to similar children who had not participated.

Among the major conclusions of the "Westinghouse Report" cited by Williams and Evans, is one which relates directly to the second objective of the present study. The authors explained that, according to the Westinghouse evaluation, "Parents of Head Start enrollees voiced strong approval of the program and its influence on their children." 45

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43 Ibid., p. 124.
44 Ibid., p. 125.
45 Ibid.
Reaffirmation for this conclusion by Williams and Evans was found in a newsletter distributed to Community Action agencies. In the letter it was noted that the Westinghouse study found that Head Start exerted a positive influence on parents. 46

The Lincoln Public Schools Head Start Program in Lincoln, Nebraska, conducted a research program which was basically designed to assess participant gains as a result of the use of different instructional approaches in the 1968-1969 Lincoln Public Schools Head Start Program. The research sample consisted of eight classrooms containing 168 Head Start pupils, which were divided into two experimental groups and one control group. The two experimental groups were then instructed following an approach emphasizing either the cognitive domain or the affective domain. The control group was instructed using the methods traditionally utilized by the Lincoln Public Schools Head Start Program. Data of effects on participating children were collected by Head Start classroom teachers who administered certain validated tests. Additional data were gathered from observational records kept on pupil behavior during pre and post testing periods. The report concluded that there were


no appreciable differences in achievement gains for children in the three groups. 48

Data on parental attitudes were also gathered from questionnaires which were sent home to be filled out and returned by the parents. A summarization of responses showed that 79 percent of the respondents expressed positive feelings when asked how they felt about the "total experience" in Head Start. When asked if they felt their children had gained from their participation in Head Start, 82 percent responded positively. 49

It may be concluded from the literature reviewed that the attitudes which Head Start parents hold with respect to the program tend to be quite favorable. Attention will now be directed to what appears to be a corollary expectation to positive attitudes.

Parental knowledge of the Head Start program. There has been nothing written to the author's awareness concerning the knowledge possessed by Head Start parents with respect to the Head Start program. However, justification for the study the extent of knowledge may be found in the relationship that exists between knowledge and attitudes. Brim points out that research on attitudes has produced


a distinction between two aspects of attitudes referred to as "content" and "intensity." Brim explains that "content refers to the directional aspect of attitudes, while intensity refers to the strength or conviction with which they are held."\(^5^0\) It is shown that a relationship exists between these two aspects which is U shaped. Thus, persons who are neutral with respect to the content of an attitude toward some object, show a low level of intensity as well. However, persons whose content approaches either the positive or negative extremes, will also show higher attitude intensity. Initial interpretation would lead one to assume that the neutral category would be composed of persons for whom the attitude referent was of little or no significance. Thus, a lack of motivation to assume either a positive or negative attitude position is understandable. It has been pointed out however, that while this interpretation may be true, the element of ignorance may also play a significant part in determining the attitude response of a person. Brim proposes that when a person is asked about something of which he knows or cares little about, the characteristic human response "is to throw... ([the response])...toward the middle,"\(^5^1\) or neutral category.

In consideration of the relationship that exists between attitudes and knowledge, it may be assumed that if the sample shows


\(^{51}\) Ibid., p. 518.
strong positive attitudes toward the Head Start program, it should also be quite knowledgeable of the program as well.

The discussion will now turn to the final aspect for consideration cited under the second objective—parental participation.

Parental participation in Head Start activities. Referring to the Williams and Evans article cited previously, it was mentioned that another finding of the "Westinghouse Report" was that the parents of Head Start children "... reported substantial participation in the activities of the centers."

But, review of the tables listed under section "F" of the Office of Child Development report showed that parental participation in Head Start adult, or classroom activities varied substantially with the type of program activity, and with whether there had been previous meetings. The highest rate of participation was in teacher initiated parent-teacher conferences where it was reported that over one-half of the parents attended one or more meetings. Other activities, such as formal parent meetings, were held a number of times but attendance figures showed fewer parent participants than at the parent-teacher conferences. Data reported in the O.C.D. report

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52 Williams and Evans, p. 125.
54 Ibid., p. 194.
showed figures for six formal parent meetings. Participation figures for the first meeting showed slightly fewer than one out of three parents in attendance with the participation percentage dropping consistently with each following meeting, until only one out of twenty parents was in attendance at the sixth meeting.\(^{55}\) The tables also show parental attendance percentages for a variety of other activities with similar results. Thus, it may be concluded from this report that parental participation is not as substantial as would be expected from the Williams and Evans article mentioned above, and that parental participation may be expected to vary according to the characteristics of the activity. Therefore, when viewed in a total perspective, expected patterns of parental participation would generally appear to be low.

The focus of the chapter will now be directed to a review of the characteristics which were mentioned in the literature previously reviewed, and which were selected for examination in this study. In addition, descriptive hypotheses will be formulated to facilitate the examination of the selected variables.

III. VARIABLES AND HYPOTHESES

It is evident from the literature previously reviewed that the influences of poverty may be broad and negative in their effects. It is also apparent that low-education is considered by many as a key

\(^{55}\)Ibid., p. 193.
factor in the perpetuation of poverty. Here may be seen, then, justification for the goals of the Head Start program as they attempt to prepare pre-school poverty children for their eventual experiences with the formal educational structure. However, it will be remembered that the essential query of this study focuses on the reality of the assumption inherent in the Head Start program which holds that the situations of poverty are common in their consequences for the families, and especially for the young children of the poor. Therefore, in seeking to answer this question, at least partially, the following characteristics have been selected from the preceding reviews of literature with the intent of examining them in more detail inasmuch as they relate to the study sample of Head Start families. Selection of these characteristics was guided by a desire to review those characteristics which first, appeared to be most conducive to generating an understanding of families in Head Start, and, second, seemed to have the greatest potential for influencing the development of Head Start children.

On the basis of the foregoing literature reviews and in consideration of the assumption of homogeneity among characteristics of families in poverty, or in the Head Start program, it is expected that the study sample of Head Start families will tend to have:

(1) A large family size.

(2) A low family income.

(3) A non-farm residence.
(4) A socially isolated family.

(5) An unstable family.

(6) A high proportion of female household heads.

(7) A majority of employed fathers.

(8) A high proportion of employed mothers.

(9) A majority of fathers between the ages of 21 and 54.

(10) A majority of mothers between the ages of 21 and 54.

(11) A high proportion of fathers with eight years or less education.

(12) A high proportion of mothers with more than eight years of education.

(13) Favorable parental attitudes toward education.

(14) Traditional parental attitudes toward family relations.

(15) A prevalence of anomie.

(16) A time perspective oriented to the present more than to the future.

(17) Strongly favorable attitudes toward the Head Start program.

(18) A high degree of knowledge with respect to the Head Start program.

(19) A low level of parental participation in Head Start program activities.

Statement of Hypotheses

On the basis of the foregoing reviews of literature pertinent to objectives one and two of this study, and in consideration of the assumption of homogeneity among characteristics of the poor which was
discussed in Chapter II, the following descriptive hypothesis was formulated:

Those selected characteristics which have been found to be commonly associated with persons in poverty, or with families participating in the Head Start program, will also be prevalent among this study's sample of South Dakota Head Start families.

From the descriptive hypothesis stated above are derived the following descriptive sub-hypotheses, each of which incorporates as a variable at least one of the characteristics which were listed previously:

Sub-hypothesis 1. The study families will tend to be large.

Sub-hypothesis 2. The study families will tend to have low income.

Sub-hypothesis 3. The study families will tend to be non-farm residents.

Sub-hypothesis 4. The study families will tend to be more socially isolated.

Sub-hypothesis 5. The study families will tend to be more unstable.

Sub-hypothesis 6. The study families will tend to have a sizeable proportion of female household heads.

Sub-hypothesis 7. The parents of the study families will be between twenty-one and fifty-four years of age.

Note: Phillips has distinguished between two types of hypotheses—"descriptive" and "relational." He notes that with descriptive hypotheses one is dealing "...with the distribution or occurrence of a given variable with no attempt to explore the relationships among variables." Bernard S. Phillips, Social Research: Strategy and Tactics (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 39.
Sub-hypothesis 8. The study families will tend to have a sizeable proportion of fathers who are unemployed or were at sometime in the previous twelve months.

Sub-hypothesis 9. The study families will tend to have a sizeable proportion of the mothers who are employed.

Sub-hypothesis 10. The fathers of the study families will tend to have completed less than eight years of formal education.

Sub-hypothesis 11. The mothers of the study families will tend to have completed more than eight years of formal education.

Sub-hypothesis 12. The parents of the study families will tend to show positive attitudes toward education.

Sub-hypothesis 13. The parents of the study families will tend to be more traditional with respect to their beliefs about family relationships.

Sub-hypothesis 14. The parents of the study families will tend to show high levels of anomie.

Sub-hypothesis 15. The parents of the study families will tend to be more present rather than future oriented with respect to their time perspective.

Sub-hypothesis 16. The parents of the study families will tend to have strongly favorable attitudes toward the Head Start program.

Sub-hypothesis 17. The parents of the study families will tend to be knowledgeable about the Head Start program.

Sub-hypothesis 18. The parents of the study families will tend to display low levels of participation in Head Start activities.

It may be seen that the general descriptive hypothesis of this study is directly derived from the questions which arose upon consideration of the conceptual orientation. Inasmuch as refined measuring
instruments were not employed in this study, statistical "testing" of the previous sub-hypotheses is not possible. However, a partial answer to the essential question of this study, and hence, tacit support or refutation for the principles of the culture of poverty concept, may be achieved by determination of the extent to which the study sample of Head Start families possess those characteristics included in the sub-hypotheses.

Thus, the following Chapter IV is devoted to an overview of the design of this study.
CHAPTER IV

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Introduction

It is the purpose of the present chapter to review the design of this study. Thus, the chapter is divided into six parts. The first part discusses the background of the study. The second part is devoted to the procedures used for selecting the respondents. The third part discusses the interview instrument and the fourth part deals with the procedures involved in the collection of the data, including the pretesting and the final administration of the instrument. Part five includes two sub-parts. The first operationally defines the demographic characteristics incorporated in the sub-hypotheses. The second operationally defines the social-psychological variables—such as attitudes, beliefs, and the like. Part six is divided into six sub-parts. Each sub-part is focused on the procedures employed for analysis of the sub-hypotheses, which were similarly analyzed.

I. BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT STUDY

This study was part of a larger research project conducted under joint sponsorship between the Inter-Lakes Region Community Action Office and South Dakota State University Experiment Station. The project, conducted by the Rural Sociology Department of South Dakota State University, was entitled "Characteristics of Low Income
Families in Eastern South Dakota." Three eastern South Dakota counties were selected for this project on the basis of their possessing the common characteristic of having United States Department of Agriculture food commodities administered by the Inter-Lakes Community Action Program. This agency distributes commodities to three types of families: families on public assistance; families on social security; and families who, while not fitting the previous categories, are classified simply as low-income families.

In the larger study it was decided to focus only on families of the third family type as described above. It was felt that these families would be more representative of complete family units and of the total age range of low-income families and, thus, be more conducive to the realization of the objectives of this larger project. Consequently, 126 low-income families were selected for interviewing. These families represented all low-income families who were receiving U. S. D. A. food commodities as of April 1, 1969, in Brookings, Moody, and Kingsbury counties, South Dakota, who were not on public assistance or receiving social security benefits.

It was also suggested that a second study should be undertaken, utilizing those families, included in the sample for the larger study, who were also involved in the Head Start program sponsored by the Inter-Lakes Community Action Office.
II. SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

The original study design was to compare two groups of Head Start families with respect to selected socio-demographic and psychological characteristics. It was felt that two types of families would be found to exist--families eligible to participate in the Head Start program who had participated, and families eligible for participation in the Head Start program but who had not participated. The goal of this study was to compare the two groups, as has been mentioned, in an attempt to determine what differences, if any, existed between them which would help in explaining why some families did not participate.

The respondents were selected on the basis of their meeting the following three criteria: (1) That a child between the ages of three and eight (the ages of eligibility for participation in either the summer or full-year Head Start program for the years in which the program was in operation in the area) was presently living in the home. (2) That, while the child was eligible for participation in the program, there was a Head Start program available to him, within reasonable distance. (3) That respondents should have completed both the Head Start "attitude" and "knowledge" sections of the interview schedule.

As a consequence, it became apparent that, while there remained two groups separated on the basis of participation in Head Start, the non-participating group could not fulfill all of the
three criteria stipulated above, especially the second. Thus, it was necessary to re-orient the goals of this study to incorporate objectives which would make the best possible use of the data available.

Ultimately, the families interviewed for this study resided in either Moody, Brookings, or Kingsbury counties. All the respondents were participating in the United States Department of Agriculture Food Commodities program administered by the Inter-Lakes Region Community Action Office, and were not on public assistance or receiving social security benefits, as of April 1, 1969. Two other criteria were also used in the determination of respondents to be utilized in this study: (1) That the family had at least one child who was a participant in the Head Start program; and (2) that the respondent should have completed both the Head Start "attitude" and "knowledge" sections of the interview schedule.

There remained 44 families who met these criteria.

III. THE INSTRUMENT

The interview schedule was composed of nine major sections. Section one consisted of questions designed to secure "face" information about the household and its members such as ages of members, relation to household head, education, marital status, facilities within the home, organizational membership, visiting patterns, and magazine and newspaper subscriptions.
The second and third sections related, respectively, to residential mobility patterns and occupational characteristics, such as mobility and recent history of employment status.

The fourth section dealt with information concerning the health of the family members covering the length and nature of any serious illnesses, plus what effect the illness may have had on their ability to contribute to the family income. In addition, questions concerning costs of medical and dental bills, plus insurance coverage and other sources of assistance with health expenses, were asked.

The fifth section dealt with values and attitudes of these people. Six areas of concern were covered. Included were scales designed to measure the extent of agreement with "middle-class" values, level of anomie, present/future orientation, attitudes toward the institution of education, and traditional family beliefs.

Section six focused on family stability and included questions which, when weighted, would give a measure of the degree of stability or instability of the family. Areas included were divorce or separation, problems with police, alcoholism, conflict with children, and conflict between parents.

The last three sections were designed specifically for use in this study and were answered only by those who felt they had some understanding of the Head Start program. Section seven attempted to measure the extent of knowledge the respondent had about the Head Start program. It included questions varying with respect to specificity and covering areas such as the availability of the
program, parental criterion for the child's participation, professions found among Head Start personnel, opportunities for parental participation and knowledge of the geographic breadth of the Head Start program.

Section eight was concerned simply with participation of the child in the Head Start program.

Section nine assessed attitudes the respondents had toward the Head Start program. Included in this final section were questions concerned with the perceived effects of Head Start on the participating child, the perceived effects of participation on the child's family, the administration of the program, the facilities of the program, and feelings of stigmatization resulting from association with the Head Start program. Following these were questions asking about the parents' participation patterns and questions asking about the primary sources of information about the program.

IV. DATA COLLECTION

Pre-Test

The interview schedule was pre-tested in both an urban and small rural community. Those urban residents interviewed were receiving commodities and were also receiving public assistance. Those interviewed in the small rural community were selected on the basis of the external appearance of the home. The pre-test rural community referred to was outside the planned study area, and those pretested urban respondents were not included in the
respondents selected for the final study (see Part II, Selection of Respondents).

The pre-test interview schedule consisted of the first eight sections as described in the previous section and a number of open-ended questions asking for responses with respect to a number of areas of Head Start.

The interviewing was conducted by five graduate students who had been familiarized to the project and the interview instrument previously. Ultimately, 26 interview schedules were completed and processed.

The Final Interview

After analysis of the pre-test schedules, corrections and revisions were made in the first eight sections. Also, from information gathered with respect to the Head Start program, section 9 was developed attempting to incorporate the ideas expressed on the pre-test, and other questions or areas which appeared important to the study. Face validity was then determined for this section.

The interviewers consisted of seven persons, five of whom were employed full-time by the Community Action agency as Outreach Personnel, another graduate student, and the author.

A familiarization session was conducted prior to the interviewers going into the field. At this time, the objectives of the combined studies were reviewed and the instrument was explained in detail with opportunities for questions to be asked and clarifications to be made.
At this time, each interviewer was handed a packet containing interview assignments for each county, maps of the counties with each assigned residence designated, introductory letters to be used in initiating the interview, and the numbered interview schedules.

Each evening the interviewers met at a pre-arranged location to turn in their completed schedules, which were then scrutinized to insure their having been clearly and fully completed.

The interviewers were instructed to interview only the household head, or where this was not possible, his spouse. If difficulty was encountered in securing permission for the interview, in approaching the residence, in locating the residence, or in finding the respondent at home, the interviewers were instructed to either return at a more convenient time, or, if that was not practical, to refer the interview to the interviewing leaders, whichever was appropriate. Consequently, 120 interviews were completed with six interviews remaining uncompleted due to problems encountered with the respondents.

V. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Introduction

It is imperative in any research that the reader and the researcher reach a consensus with respect to the interpretations of concepts used. Therefore, the following is devoted to operationally defining the concepts which are used in this study and which have been incorporated in the sub-hypotheses listed in the
previous chapter. Inasmuch as the hypotheses involve demographic and social-psychological characteristics it may be seen that this section is divided in two parts. The first part lists objective demographic concept definitions. The second part is more abstract. In the second part may be found definitions of such abstract concepts as attitudes, beliefs, values, and opinions. Followed by definitions which relate to the specific social-psychological characteristics which are to be examined.

Part 1 - Demographic Characteristics

The following are demographic characteristics which are incorporated in the sub-hypotheses of this study.

1. **Family size.** Family size is defined as the number of persons reported by the interviewee as being members of the household.

2. **Household head.** The household head is defined as the person who is regarded as the head by the respondent.

3. **Age.** Age is defined as the number of years of age for each person as reported by the respondent.

(4) **Family residence.** Report of family residence is based on whether the residence of the family is on a farm or in farm houses, in which case the family would be classified as "farm." Non-farm residence includes all places not included in the definition of farm residence.

(5) **Marital status.** Marital status refers to whether the person is reported as being single, married, divorced, widowed, or separated.

(6) **Employment status.** Employment status refers to whether the person is reported as presently holding a full-time or part-time job, or is unemployed.

(7) **Education.** Education refers to the number of years of completed formal education reported for the person.

(8) **Family income.** Family income is defined as the income reported to the Inter-Lakes Region Community Action Office in Madison, South Dakota, in accordance with the instructions found on the Head Start registration form which was discussed in Chapter II of this thesis.

**Part 2 - Social-Psychological Characteristics**

The social-psychological variables incorporated in the sub-hypotheses either explicitly or implicitly include such concepts as beliefs, attitudes, values, and opinions. Before attempting to operationally define these variables it is necessary to arrive at
some understanding with respect to the meanings of their inherent concepts.

Rokeach\(^2\) has been an active investigator into the dimensions of attitudes, values, beliefs, and opinions and it is his interpretations of these concepts which will be employed to fulfill the aims of this study.

Belief. According to Rokeach a belief may be interpreted as any simple proposition which may be inferred from what a person says or does, the content of which may be descriptive, evaluative, or prescriptive with reference to the belief object.\(^3\)

Attitude. Rokeach describes an attitude as "... a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner."\(^4\)

Value. Rokeach understands a value as an abstract ideal, positive or negative, not tied to any specific attitude, object or situation, representing a person's beliefs about the ideal modes of conduct and ideal terminal goals.\(^5\)

Opinion. An opinion, to Rokeach, is a verbal expression from which is inferred the underlying belief, attitude, or value.\(^6\)


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 113.

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 112.

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 124.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 125.
Difficulty has been encountered in the past over the use of the concept of attitude as it lies in relation to behavior. But, as Halloran points out, one factor that appears inherent in most definitions of the concept of attitude is that attitudes are inferred from behavior. By realizing that responding to a question on an interview schedule may be classified as verbal expression of some attitude, belief, or value, and that the act of responding is itself a form of behavior, for the purposes of our discussion, the attitudes, values, or belief toward general or specific objects, will be inferred from opinions expressed in terms of responses to questions the respondents are asked.

Family instability. Poverty families have been characterized as less stable families. Although occurrences of such things as divorce, legal separation, alcoholism, parental or sibling conflict between parents and their children may all be viewed as indicators of family instability, it is understood that none of them may be considered independently as a valid measure of this phenomenon. Therefore, in an attempt to develop some method of quantitatively assessing the extent of family instability among the study families, a system was devised which incorporated all of the above mentioned indicators. It was felt that these indicators would not be equal in terms of their abilities to assess the extent of family instability.

Consequently, the system was devised in such a way as to differentially weight the items so that those indicators which more strongly suggested family instability received a larger value. The procedure for development of this index is discussed in the following portion of this chapter titled "Procedure for Analysis."

Thus, family instability is here defined as that which is determined by the score received from the index of family instability employed by this study.

**Family isolation.** It was indicated in the literature reviewed that families in poverty tend to be more socially isolated. In this study, such things as family visiting patterns, membership in formal organizations, instruments of communication, or of the mass media, in the home, were all incorporated in a cumulative isolation index. Thus, a higher total score was indicative of fewer of those items which would indicate isolation of the family. A detailed description of the isolation index and the scoring system employed for determination of the extent of family isolation may be found under the chapter portion, "Procedure for Analysis."

Thus, family isolation is defined as that which is determined by the score received from the family isolation index employed by this study.

**Traditional family beliefs.** It was pointed out that persons in poverty frequently hold traditional beliefs with respect to family relations. McKinley has said that due to feelings of greater
external restraint and greater frustration in material comfort and
in feelings of self-esteem, an individual of lower social status
will tend to compensate in his roles as father and husband. Thus,
aggression derived from the work situation or society where his
power and status are low, is displaced to the family where he is less
vulnerable because of his position of power. McKinley's explanation
may be seen as a partial explanation for the contention discussed
by Duvall that these types of families adhere to the tradition and
display of patriarchal dominance. It is this type of family belief
system which Cavan refers to as a strongly paternal family which was
fostered by an agrarian economy such as was the United States' in its
more recent past and which is interpreted as a "traditional" type
family for the purposes of this study. Traditional family beliefs
may be seen in contrast with more "democratic" family beliefs, or
what Cavan refers to as "equalitarian" beliefs, where there exist
less differences in role-dominance of the husband-father and wife-
mother.

8 Donald G. McKinley, Social Class and Family Life, op. cit., pp. 80-81.


11 Ibid.
The method employed to measure family beliefs consisted of a brief attitude scale which was designed to yield scores by which respondents could be classified as either "more democratic" or "less democratic" with respect to their beliefs about family relationships. The details of this scale are included in the "Procedure for Analysis" section of this chapter.

Thus, traditional family beliefs are interpreted as those propositions held toward family relations as determined by the score received from the family beliefs attitude scale employed in this study.

Attitudes toward education. It was inferred from the literature review that families in poverty tend to view education favorably. To assess the degree of favorableness toward education among the study sample of Head Start families, a scale was constructed which incorporated a number of questions concerned with a variety of aspects of education. The aspects included were the importance of the areas which are emphasized in education, and the potential role of education in improving the quality of one's life, facilitating employment, and enhancing independence. A detailed account of the scoring for this scale may be found in the "Procedures for Analysis" portion of this chapter.

Thus, attitudes toward education are defined as the organization of beliefs which predisposes a person to respond in some preferential manner toward questions dealing with the concept of
education. These attitudes were determined by the score received from the scale incorporated in this study to measure attitudes toward education.

Anomie. It was stated that persons in poverty tend to develop anomie as a consequence to the frustrations of poverty life.

The concept of anomie may be traced back many centuries, but its introduction into the popular vocabulary of sociology is usually credited to Emile Durkheim. As Robert Merton points out:

As initially developed by Durkheim, the concept of anomie referred to a condition of relative normlessness in a society or group. Durkheim made it clear that this concept referred to a property of the social and cultural structure, not to a property of individuals confronting that structure, nevertheless, as the utility of the concept for understanding diverse forms of deviant behavior became evident, it was extended to refer to a condition of individuals rather than their environment.12

As Merton has developed the concept, anomie is conceived of as a breakdown in the cultural structure of the individuals environment. To Merton, a person's environment consists of a cultural structure, which is viewed as an organized set of behavior-governing normative values, which are common to members of a society or group members may be variously implicated.

Thus, when there exists a disjunction between the goals, which derive from the cultural structure, and the capacities for group

members to act in accord with them, as influenced by the social structure, anomie is the likely result.\textsuperscript{13}

Therefore, anomie, as employed in this study, is defined as that which is determined by the scale utilized in this study to measure anomie.

**Present/future orientation.** People in poverty have been depicted as intent upon immediate gratification of their desires. The time perspective of the poor is perceived as oriented to the present with little concern for saving or planning for the future. Therefore, in an attempt to measure the extent of this perspective, a scale, including questions dealing with saving and planning for the future, justification of immediate gratification, the role of luck, and the inevitability of remaining poor, was employed. Details of the scale and its scoring procedure may be found in the "Procedure for Analysis" section of the present chapter.

Present or future time orientation is here defined as that which is determined by the score received from the scale employed in this study to measure the respondents tendency toward either a present or future-oriented time perspective.

**Attitudes toward the Head Start program.** It was determined that parents with children participating in the Head Start program tend to be strongly in favor of the program. To measure parental

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 216.
attitudes of the study sample of Head Start families toward the program a scale was constructed which covered five aspects of concern, and which is discussed in more detail in the section of this chapter dealing with the procedures for analysis. Attitudes toward the Head Start program are here defined as the organization of beliefs which predisposes a person to respond in some preferential manner to questions dealing with a variety of aspects of the Head Start program. These attitudes were determined by the score received from the scale employed by this study to assess attitudes toward the Head Start program.

Knowledge of the Head Start program. It was determined that parents with participating children in Head Start who were favorably disposed to the program should also be knowledgeable of the program. A detailed discussion of this scale may be found in the "Procedure for Analysis" section of this chapter. Knowledge of the Head Start program is understood to be that which is determined by the score received from the scale utilized in this study to assess the extent of knowledge parents had with respect to the Head Start program.

Participation patterns in Head Start activities. It was concluded that parents with children in the Head Start program did not tend to participate often in Head Start activities. A discussion of this question may be found in the following chapter section which discusses the procedure for analysis of the study variables. Therefore, participation patterns in Head Start activities are defined
by the category into which each person places himself in response to a question asking about general parental frequency of participation in Head Start activities.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR ANALYSIS

This part of the chapter describes the procedures utilized by this study for examination of the sub-hypotheses listed previously. Due to similarities and differences in the analysis of the data this part will be divided into six sections under which will be found identification of the sub-hypotheses and the means employed for their analysis and/or presentation.

1. This section relates to sub-hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, concerning family size, family income, family residence, the sex of the household head, the employment statuses of the parents, the ages of the parents, and the parent's education, respectively. Analysis of the respective data consisted of accumulation of case frequencies into relevant categories and computation of group medians and means, if appropriate. It will be noted here, and in regard to the remaining sub-sections, that presentation of data in Chapter V, Findings of the Study, involves citation of categorical case frequencies only. In this respect the author is following Blalock's suggestion that one should "...never compute a percentage unless the number of cases on which the percentage is based is in the neighborhood of 50 or more."  

2. This section is relevant to sub-hypothesis 4, which states that, "The study families will tend to be more socially isolated." Determination of the extent of a family's isolation was computed on the basis of a differentially weighted index covering a number of arbitrarily selected areas. The areas were: family visiting patterns—including the frequency of visiting with kin, or with friends and neighbors; membership in organizations; contact with mass media—including possession of a radio or of a television set, the number of magazines subscribed to, whether a daily, bi-weekly, or weekly newspaper was received; and the presence of a telephone in the home.

The scoring system employed consisted of assigning scores in accordance to the implication of isolation made by the response. Therefore, those responses which would indicate that the family was isolated, with respect to each of the aspects listed previously, would receive a lower score than would those responses indicating less isolation. An isolation score was computed which included all of the scores received from each of the items. Thus, the lower the total score, the greater the isolation.

Table 2 demonstrates the categories included and the points the respondent would receive if he could be placed in that category. The procedure for determination of the tabular categories may be found included in the discussion of the table in the following chapter.
Table 2. Family Social Isolation Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isolation category</th>
<th>Points received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Family visits with friends and neighbors more frequently than with relatives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family visits with relatives more often than with friends.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family visits infrequent (1/month or less) or not at all.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Participation in more than five organizations.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in three to five organizations.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in none to two organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Own a television set.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own a radio.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive more than five magazines.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscribe to a daily newspaper.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive from three to five magazines.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscribe to a weekly or bi-weekly newspaper.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not own a television set.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not own a radio.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive from none to two magazines.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscribe to no newspaper.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Presence of a phone in the home.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No phone in the home.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum - 21, Minimum - 7.
3. The sub-hypothesis to which the present section pertains states that "The study families will tend to be more unstable."

Determination of family instability proceeded on the basis of the total score received from a differentially weighted index. The weighting system was developed by presenting a list of terms and situations to a class of 20 students who were enrolled in a sociology "Family" class the summer session of 1969, at South Dakota State University. The class was asked to rank the items presented to them in terms of which, in their opinions, were the stronger indicators of family instability. Frequency distributions of the responses were computed for the various items. Then different values were assigned to the items on the basis that the item most frequently cited as an indication of family instability be given the highest value. Of the areas included in the list, divorce, marital conflict, separation, and alcoholism, in that order, were the most frequently cited indicators of marital instability. Following these were children in conflict with the law, friction between parents, conflict and friction between children and parents, and parents in conflict with the law.

With the exception of divorce or legal separation, which were assigned scores of five, the response alternatives were constructed so as to allow for some estimation of frequency of occurrence for the areas previously mentioned. Thus, for the questions dealing with separation, and alcoholism, a value of five was assigned for a check under the "Often" alternative. A value of four and three were assigned to the "Occasionally" and "A few times" alternatives,
respectively. A score of zero was assigned to the "Never" alternative for these and the rest of the questions. The questions dealing with children in conflict with the law, conflict between parents and children, and friction between parents, had a score of four assigned to the "Often" response, three to the "Occasionally" response, and two to the "A few times" response. The remainder of the questions were scored three, two and one for the above mentioned alternatives.

Determination of tabular categories employed are discussed in the relevant portion in Chapter V, Findings of the Study.

4. This section is relevant to five of the sub-hypotheses—those concerning attitudes toward education, traditional family beliefs, anomie, time orientation, and attitudes toward the Head Start program. For all of these sub-hypotheses the same type of scaling technique was employed to yield a composite score relative to each sub-hypothesis. The scale form was of a summated rating type, frequently referred to as a "Likert type" summated rating scale. The scale provided each respondent with five answer alternatives. The alternatives were: "strongly agree," "mildly agree," "mildly disagree," "strongly disagree," and "no response." At the appropriate time during the interview the respondent was handed a card upon which the first four of the five alternatives cited above were typed, and from which the respondent was to select his answer alternative. The reason for not including the "no response" alternative on the respondent's card was to avoid a common difficulty which occurs with its use or with the use of similar type alternatives.
It has been found that if a respondent does not feel completely comfortable in an interview situation, or feels somewhat threatened, he will tend to use a "no response" type alternative as a means of protection. It was decided that this opportunity would not be presented by not including it on the card, but that if the respondent was not able to answer the question using the responses presented to him, then the "no response" alternative could be checked on the schedule and the interview could proceed.\footnote{15}

Scoring of the scale items was accomplished by the assignment of decreasing values to the different responses with the greatest value assigned to the most affirmative response on positively stated items and to the least affirmative responses on negatively stated items.

Thus, for a positively worded question to which the respondent selected the "strongly agree" alternative, a score of four was assigned. The "mildly agree," "mildly disagree," and "strongly disagree" alternatives were scored three, two, or one, respectively. If the respondent failed to respond to a question on any of the scales, no score was received and his response scores were eliminated from the sample computations. The reason for eliminating a respondent from consideration in the computation of sample scores was due to the fact that to assign any score to an unanswered question and

\footnote{15}{The reasoning behind the discussion above is based upon Kerlinger's explanation of summated rating scales and his discussion of forced-choice items and scales, as found in: Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavior Research (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964), pp. 484-485 and 496-497.}
include the composite score in the sample computations would bias the respondent's score as well as the sample score toward the middle or toward either extreme.

The determination of respondent scores into tabular categories proceeded on the basis of the "theoretical scores" of the different scales. Kerlinger has pointed out that one of the characteristics of a summated rating scale is that all of the attitude items "... are considered of approximately equal attitude value, ..." Thus, groups were determined by dividing the range of possible scores by the number of alternatives available to the respondent which resulted in four group categories into which respondents with complete scales were placed, and a fifth category which included those who were eliminated due to a "no response" alternative. In cases where the score range was not conducive to determining equal intra-category ranges, the "cutting points" were placed in such a way so as not to bias either of the extreme categories. (A schematic diagram of the study attitude scale scoring system may be found in Appendix B.)

Inasmuch as the scales were not equal in size, the number of items included in the separate scales is cited in the discussion of findings relevant to each variable.

5. This section pertains to sub-hypothesis 17 which states, "The parents of the study families will tend to be knowledgeable about the Head Start program."

---

Multiple-choice questions were utilized to determine the knowledge the respondents had relevant to different aspects of the Head Start program. All items consisted of incomplete statements which the respondent would complete by expressing agreement with one of a number of alternative statements. Scoring was based upon the total number of correct responses to each alternative. Thus, a person would receive a score of one, if he answered "agree" to an alternative that incorrectly completed the partial statement. He would also receive a score of one for an "agree" response to an alternative which correctly completed the incomplete statement. The respondent received no score if he selected the incorrect response to the alternative, or indicated that he did not know which response was correct. Table 3 shows the workings of this procedure.

Table 3. Example of Questions Assessing Parental Knowledge of the Head Start Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Please read before each statement: The Head Start program is open to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A. Only grade school children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>B. Only preschool children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C. Preschool children and some kindergarten children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D. Only kindergarten children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses underlined are correct responses, each of which, if selected, would receive a score of one. Selection of other than the responses underlined was assumed to indicate no knowledge and received no score.
There were twenty-one possible correct alternative responses. Consequently, scores could range from a minimum of zero, if a respondent selected none of the correct responses, to a maximum of twenty-one for a person who selected all of the correct responses. Determination of the tabular categories is discussed in the relevant portion of Chapter V, Findings of the Study.

6. This section pertains to the analysis procedure utilized for sub-hypothesis 18, dealing with the participation of parents in Head Start activities. The method employed to assess parental participation patterns consisted of asking one question to which the interviewee was instructed to respond by placing himself in one of three categories. The question asked: "How often would you estimate you as a parent do, or did, participate in the Head Start program?" The response alternatives provided were: "often," "sometimes," "seldom or none." The tabular categories found in Chapter V, Findings of the Study, were determined by the number of respondents selecting each of the above mentioned alternatives.

Chapter Summary

The preceding chapter was designed to provide the reader with an understanding of the design of the study. Included in this chapter were six major parts covering the background of the study, the selection of the respondents, the structure of the interview instrument, the collection of the data, definitions of study concepts and characteristics, and the procedures employed in the analysis of the variables incorporated in the eighteen sub-hypotheses.
Attention will now be placed on Chapter V, Findings of the Study. Herein will be found a discussion of the findings of this investigation relevant to each of the previously mentioned sub-hypotheses.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the present chapter is to present the findings of this study with respect to the sub-hypotheses developed to facilitate the attainment of the two objectives of the study. Thus, the findings will be presented in three parts. The first part will discuss the extent to which the study sample possesses selected characteristics of poverty, in accordance with the first study objective which was, "To determine the extent to which a sample of Head Start families possess certain social and demographic characteristics which have been cited as common among families participating in the Head Start program, or among poverty families in general." The second part is devoted to fulfilling the second study objective which was, "To assess parental attitudes, knowledge, and frequency of participation of a sample of Head Start families with respect to the Head Start program." The third part is a summary presentation of all the findings with respect to their consistency, or lack of consistency, with the study sub-hypotheses.¹

I. FINDINGS PERTINENT TO OBJECTIVE ONE

It was pointed out in previous chapters that the objectives and design of the Head Start program appear to be based upon a

¹A list of the questions used in the interview schedule for the study variables may be found in Appendix A, "The Interview Schedule."
a conception which views people in poverty as members of a culture or subculture of poverty. It was also shown that a corollary to this conception is the assumption that persons in poverty should tend to possess similar characteristics due to the similarity of their environments. Then literature which described persons in poverty was reviewed, after which, certain selected characteristics were listed. Those characteristics will now be examined in terms of their frequency of occurrence among the study sample of South Dakota Head Start families.

**Family size.** The review of literature revealed that families in poverty tend to be large in size. This was also found to be the case with the study sample of South Dakota Head Start families (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of members</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 or less</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.95</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interesting contrasts may be made with these data. A report of the Bureau of Census which listed selected characteristics of
persons and families as of March, 1969, stated that the mean size of households in the United States was 3.19 persons.\(^2\) Also, a report by the Office of Child Development, gave the average family size for a nationally representative sample of Head Start families as six family members.\(^3\) However, for the study sample, the average family size was eight. It may also be noted that fewer than one out of seven sample families had less than five family members, while slightly more than one out of three families had seven or fewer persons, and almost half the sample reported nine or more family members.

The observed differences in statistics on family size between the study sample, the sample of the population of the United States, and the national sample of Head Start families may be partially accounted for on the basis of differences in sampling procedures used by the different studies. The Census Bureau statistics were on the average size of households in the United States. This description includes single persons living separately, as well as parents and children. The O.C.D. report referred to a sample of all Head Start families which includes fatherless families


living on welfare as well as other low-income families. As was noted previously, the sample used in this study included only families who were receiving U.S.D.A. food commodities and who were not on Public Assistance or receiving Social Security benefits.

With these limitations in mind, the findings may be seen, then, as being consistent with the expectations of sub-hypothesis one.

**Family income.** In every definition of poverty reviewed by this author, low-family income has been included as a major criterion. The Bureau of the Census reported that the median family income of a sample of the United States population in 1968 was $8,600, an adjusted increase of 4 percent over the previous year.\(^4\) The O.C.D. report on Head Start families across the nation in the 1967 summer program stated that about three-fourths of the sample families earned less than $5,000 per year,\(^5\) and showed the median family income to be between $3,000 and $3,999.\(^6\)

It was found that all but one of this study's sample families reported less than $5,000 annual family income, but that four-fifths of these families had incomes over $1,999, as can be seen in the following table.

---


\(^6\) *Ibid.*
### Table 5. Annual Family Income of Study Sample, 1968-1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual income</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,999 or less</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000 - 2,999</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000 - 3,999</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000 - 4,999</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000 or more</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The median family income for the South Dakota sample of Head Start families was found to be $3,000, which tends to be consistent with the median family income of the national sample of Head Start families. Consequently, it may be concluded that the findings of this study, in relation to family income, are consistent with the expectations of sub-hypothesis two.

**Farm or non-farm residence.** Rural residency was cited as a characteristic of poverty families. However, this does not appear to be the case either with this study's sample, or with the 1967 national sample of summer program Head Start families. The O.C.D. report showed that nine out of ten families reported non-farm residency. While such dramatic proportions were not found with this study's sample, over two-thirds reported that they did not reside on a farm as seen in the following table.

Table 6. Farm or Non-farm Residency of the Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-farm</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference in proportions of families living on farms between the O.C.D. sample and the present study sample is likely a reflection of the rural nature of the study sample state. Nonetheless, the finding of this study in relation to the residence of the South Dakota sample of Head Start families is consistent with the expectations of sub-hypothesis three.

Family isolation. As was mentioned in the review of literature, poverty families tend to be out of contact with other people. Judged in terms of a differentially weighted scale, including visiting patterns, organizational membership, and the presence of a radio, television, telephone, or magazines and newspapers, it was found that the South Dakota sample of Head Start families did not tend to strongly fit the expected pattern. The scoring system utilized yielded a lower score for more isolated families. The dichotomy indicating more or less isolation was made on the basis of the total range of points possible. With a minimum possible score of seven, and a maximum possible score of twenty-one, it was decided that those families who
received a score of fourteen or less would be considered more isolated, while those scoring fifteen or above would be considered, for the purposes of this study, as less isolated. The findings are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7. Extent of Family Isolation of Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of isolation</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More isolated</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less isolated</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that almost two-thirds of the sample families were classified as less isolated. However, it must be noted that almost three-fourths of the scores fell within two points above or below the mid-point of 14.5. This fact may be a reflection of the adequacy of a scale based upon objective data, or the inadequacy of the scoring system employed. It may be concluded, however, that the sample did not tend to display a trend toward family isolation as was anticipated, thus, the findings are not consistent with the expectations of sub-hypothesis four.

Family instability. The literature on poverty indicated that poor families are often unstable families. Thus, a measure of family

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8 The items used for determination of family instability are found in Appendix A, section VIII, items 42-49.
instability was designed which included, and differentially weighted, such items as divorce or legal separation, parents leaving home due to marital conflict, alcoholism, children or parents in conflict with the law, friction between parents, and friction between parents and children. The scoring system employed yielded higher scores for the more unstable families and lower scores for the less unstable families. Separation of scores into the "more" or "less" categories was determined by the mid-point of the range of the possible points. Thus, with a maximum possible score of thirty-three points, and a minimum possible score of zero points, a score of seventeen or more was considered, for this study, to be indicating more family instability, while a score of sixteen or less was considered as indicating less family instability. The findings are shown in the following table.

Table 8. Extent of Family Instability in Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of family instability</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More family instability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less family instability</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One-tenth of the study families indicated more family instability, and of those the highest score received was twenty. It was also found that about four-fifths of the families received scores of
ten or less indicating that the families, at least as measured by this index, were generally quite stable. It is felt that biases may have been inherent in the scale, however, in that the type of questions asked of the respondents tended to be of a personal nature. Thus, any tendency for the interviewee to respond in a manner which would not reflect negatively upon himself may have become an intervening variable which would have been reflected in the total score. With these qualifications in mind, it may be concluded that the findings of this study were not consistent with the expectations of sub-hypothesis five.

Sex of household head. It has been stated that the chances for a family to be poor increase if the household head is female. The O.C.D. report for Head Start families participating in the 1967 summer program showed that better than one out of five families of their sample had a female household head. However, a disproportionate number of female household heads was not found among this study's sample of Head Start families, (Table 9).

The proportion of study families with a female household head is about one-half that cited in the O.C.D. report. Fewer than one out of nine families in the South Dakota sample reported a female as the household head. This may be partially explained by the method employed to select the sample of families which eliminated

families on Public Assistance. Thus, the study sample did not contain fatherless families with dependent children which were receiving welfare payments.

Table 9. Sex of Household Head of Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of household head</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Male</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Female</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be concluded, then, that the finding of this study related to the sex of the household head was not consistent with the expectations of sub-hypothesis six.

Employment characteristics of the parents. It was indicated in the literature reviewed that unemployment is a characteristic problem among families in poverty. Statistics from the O.C.D. report, however, do not provide strong evidence for this contention, at least in relation to Head Start families. Only about one-eighth of the national sample reported an unemployed father among the summer 1967 program families.\(^{10}\) However, two-thirds of the fathers were

employed the full twelve months of the previous year and seven-eighths were employed seven months or more of the preceding year.  

Considering the fathers in the South Dakota sample, it was found that all were employed at the time of the study. It was also determined that well over four-fifths were employed in full-time jobs, while one-tenth had part-time jobs only, and one father reported being employed in both a full-time and a part-time job as well. However, the South Dakota fathers were also not immune to problems of unemployment. It was found that more than one-fifth had been unemployed at some time during the preceding twelve months. But, the number of fathers in the South Dakota sample who said they were employed seven months or more of the previous year was thirty-seven out of thirty-nine reporting (Table 10).

Table 10. Employment Characteristics of Fathers in Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Sample fathers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time only</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time only</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both part-time and full-time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Ibid.
It was also stated in the literature that there were generally more persons who were gainfully employed among poverty family members. Looking at the employment status of mothers among the O.C.D. Head Start sample, it was found that over one-fourth of the mothers were employed. The same category for this study’s sample showed that almost two-fifths of these mothers reported having a job. Of these job-holding mothers, the majority (two-thirds) were employed part-time (Table 11).

Table 11. Employment Characteristics of Mothers in Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Sample mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In consideration of the employment status of the fathers and of the mothers, it may be concluded that these findings are not consistent with the expectations.

12 Ibid., p. 40.
Age of parents. It was indicated in the literature review that the propensity for poverty increased for those families with a very young or old household head. However, while this may be characteristic for all poverty families, differences in age may be expected to exist when dealing with a sample of families with children in the Head Start program. Head Start is designed primarily for preschool children. In consideration of the assumption that the younger the age of the child the younger will be the age of his parents, it seems reasonable to conclude that parents in the older age categories would be an exception. This conclusion is borne out by figures found in the national sample of Head Start families. The O.C.D. report for the families in the 1967 summer Head Start program showed that over ninety-five out of every one-hundred fathers reported their ages to be between twenty and fifty-five. Likewise, the age of the fathers in the South Dakota sample was not found to vary at all from the proportion found in the O.C.D. sample. The study sample had thirty-seven out of its thirty-nine fathers falling in the twenty-one to fifty-four years age category with the remaining two fathers in the fifty-five to sixty-four age category (Table 12).

In regard to the age of Head Start mothers across the nation, the O.C.D. report showed a proportion which was greater than that of the national sample of Head Start fathers. Fewer than one out of

---


14 Ibid., p. 39.
every one-hundred mothers reported their age to be in any category other than the twenty-one to fifty-four year category. Again, the South Dakota sample tended to concur, almost exactly, with the 1967 national sample. All of the South Dakota Head Start mothers reported their ages to be in the twenty-one to fifty-four age category (Table 12).

Table 12. Ages of Parents in Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of perhaps greater interest is that while more than one-third of the fathers were found to be under thirty-five years of age, over one-half of the mothers were in this category. In fact almost nine-tenths of the mothers were in the child-bearing years under forty-five (Table 12).

It may also be noted that a difference exists between the median ages of the fathers and mothers. On the average the mothers were married to men who were seven years older than themselves.
Nonetheless with respect to the age distributions anticipated, the
findings tend to be consistent with the expectations inherent in sub-hypothesis seven.

**Education of parents.** It has constantly been emphasized that education appears to be a primary determinant in whether a family will be poor. Stress is placed on findings which show proportionately more people in poverty completing fewer years of school. It is frequently pointed out that many persons in poverty have not completed more than eight years of school.

It was reported in a United States Census bulletin on a sample of the United States population taken March, 1969, that the median years of school completed for persons between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-five, was slightly over twelve years. The O.C.D. report presented figures on the proportion of its national sample of Head Start fathers and mothers in the 1967 summer program who had completed eight years or less of formal education. Here, well over two-fifths of the fathers, and well under one-third of the mothers had completed eight or less years in school. Almost one-half of these fathers and two-thirds of the mothers had

---


completed nine to twelve years of education, and about one in thirteen of the fathers, \(^{20}\) as compared to one in seventeen of the mothers, \(^{21}\) had completed thirteen or more years of school.

The findings for the South Dakota sample did show some differences in education for mothers and fathers as compared to the O.C.D. report. Almost one-half of the fathers in the South Dakota sample had completed eight years or less of school, while less than two-fifths had completed from nine to twelve years of education. However, the proportion increases to over one-half when including those with completed education beyond twelve years (Table 13).

Table 13. Formal Education of the Parents in Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education in years</th>
<th>Father frequency</th>
<th>Mother frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 - 12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the sample of South Dakota mothers, about one-quarter had completed eight years of school, or less. About the same proportion of the South Dakota Head Start mothers, as in the O.C.D.

\(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 37.

\(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 39.
sample of mothers, had completed from nine to twelve years of education, with two-thirds of the study sample mothers falling in this group. In addition, about one-tenth of the mothers of the South Dakota sample had completed their education beyond the high school level (Table 13).

It is apparent that the mothers in the South Dakota sample of Head Start families tend to be better educated than the sample fathers. The median education level for fathers was determined to be eight and one-half years, while the median for the mothers was found to be eleven years. The mothers median is slightly below that of the national average.

Thus, it may be concluded that the findings related to the formal education of the fathers and mothers of the study sample of Head Start families tend to be consistent with respect to the expectations from sub-hypothesis ten as concerns the sample fathers, and sub-hypothesis eleven concerning the sample mothers.

Attitudes toward education. It was pointed out in the review of literature that people in poverty generally tend to view education favorably due possibly to the occupational advantages it may offer. Thus, a scale was employed to assess the extent of

---

22 The items used in assessing attitudes toward education may be found in Appendix A, question 40, items 24-32.
favorableness toward education among the parents of the South Dakota sample of Head Start families.\textsuperscript{23}

The scale consisted of nine questions which dealt with the value placed on education. A person receiving a higher score would be considered to perceive the value of education in a more strongly favorable way. Table 14 displays the frequencies of cases found within the different categories.

Table 14. Attitudes Toward Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly favorable</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly favorable</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly unfavorable</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The South Dakota group of Head Start families tend to show strongly favorable attitudes toward education with only two out of forty-four scoring into an unfavorable category (Table 14). However, caution is advised in the interpretation of the table in that there

\textsuperscript{23}A discussion of the procedure for determining the tabular categories for all of the attitude scales employed in this study may be found in the preceding chapter under "Procedure for Analysis." In addition, the reader is referred to Appendix B which contains a detailed step-wise presentation of the scoring system.
were one-fourth of the respondents classified in the "no response" category. Also, when looking only at those whose response scores placed them in the "strongly agree" category, it may be seen that slightly more than half of the respondents were included here. Thus, while it is possible to say that the respondents tended to view education favorably, it would be unwise to conclude their favorableness is strong in intensity. Nonetheless, the findings tend to show consistency with the expectations in sub-hypothesis twelve.

Traditional family beliefs. Another characterization of the poor which was found in the literature reviewed was their more traditional beliefs about family life. On the basis of the relevant sub-hypothesis it would be expected that the South Dakota sample of low-income Head Start families would also display more traditional attitudes toward family relationships.

To measure beliefs with respect to family relationships a scale was constructed consisting of four questions. All of the questions were worded in such a way that agreement would indicate the presence of traditional family beliefs. Thus, a respondent receiving a higher cumulative score on this scale was considered to have more traditional family beliefs whereas a person receiving a lower score was considered to be holding more democratic family beliefs.

The items used to assess family beliefs may be found in Appendix A, question 40, items 33-36.
Table 15. Beliefs About Family Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly traditional</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly traditional</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly democratic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly democratic</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is apparent, from examination of Table 15, that the sample does tend to hold more traditional beliefs with respect to family relations. About two-fifths of the respondents' scores fell in the "strongly traditional" category and almost one-half of the respondents fell in the "mildly traditional" category. Looking at the categories indicating more democratic beliefs, it may be seen that two response scores fell in the "mildly democratic" category while none were found in the "Strongly democratic" category. Over nine-tenths of the respondents displayed some degree of traditional beliefs with respect to their family relationships. Thus, it may be concluded that the majority of the South Dakota sample of Head Start families do show traditional family beliefs with a definite tendency toward strong traditional beliefs, which is consistent with the expectations derived from sub-hypothesis thirteen.
Extent of anomie. In the review of literature, a number of authors were cited as saying that the poor, as a consequence of their poverty situation, tend to be demoralized, and fatalistic in their outlook on life, or, as some contend, the poor tend toward anomie. A scale consisting of five questions was employed to measure anomie. The wording of the questions was such that agreement would indicate anomie. Thus, a higher total score was considered to indicate more anomie. Table 16 displays the response patterns of this study’s sample.

Table 16. Extent of Anomie

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of anomie</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong anomie</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild anomie</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak anomie</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or no anomie</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation of the above table indicates that the study sample of Head Start families does possess some anomic attitudes. Almost one-tenth of the sample scores indicated the presence of strong anomie, and one-fourth of the scores indicated the presence of mild anomie. However, almost one-third of the sample cases were found in

25 The items utilized to assess the extent of anomie may be found in Appendix A, Question 40, items 12-16.
the "weak anomic" category, and another one-fourth of the respondent's scores indicated the presence of little or no anomic attitudes.

When the table is viewed grouping all but the "little anomic" or "no response" categories, it may be seen that two-thirds of the respondents indicated the presence of anomic attitudes to some degree. Thus, it may be concluded that while the anomic scale used in this study did indicate the presence of anomic attitudes among the South Dakota sample of Head Start families, the extent of anomie displayed by the majority of the families tended to be from weak to mild which is not consistent with the expectations from sub-hypothesis fourteen.

*Time orientation.*

In the previously reviewed literature it was found that the poor tend to develop a time perspective which is oriented to immediate gratification of present needs or desires when dealing with a life situation which makes planning for the future either impractical or impossible.

There were seven questions utilized to indicate the time orientation of the respondents. The scoring was such that a higher score was interpreted as indicating a tendency toward a present time orientation and a lower score as indicating a more future orientation. A strong present time orientation was not found among the study sample of Head Start families (Table 17).

26 The items used to determine time orientation may be found in Appendix A, Question 40, items 17-23.
Table 17. Present/Future Time Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time orientation</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly present</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly present</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly future</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly future</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be seen that there was no indication among the respondents of a strong present time orientation, and that fewer than one-fifth of the respondents indicated a mild present time orientation. The tendency was, instead, to a future time perspective. Almost two-fifths of the respondents indicated a mild future orientation and almost one-half displayed a strong future orientation. Thus, it may be concluded that the South Dakota sample of Head Start families show a time perspective oriented to the future which is not consistent with the expectations deriving from sub-hypothesis fifteen.

Summary of Part One

It has been the purpose of the previous section to present the findings in relation to the general descriptive hypothesis which was derived from the conceptual orientation and constructed to fulfill the first objective of this study. In summary, then, it was found that the study sample tended to have unusually large families living
on a low family income, residing in non-farm dwellings. The families were less socially isolated than expected and showed a strong tendency toward family stability. A majority of the households were headed by a male who was employed full-time and had been for the previous twelve months, while about a quarter of the mothers were employed on a part-time basis.

Almost all of the parents were between twenty-one and fifty-four years of age, and the mothers tended to have completed almost three years more school than the father's eight and one-half years.

Most of the respondents tended to be strongly favorable toward education, showed a tendency to hold strong traditional beliefs with respect to family relationships, displayed a weak to mild tendency for anomie, and tended toward a strong future orientation with respect to their time perspectives.  

Attention will now turn to part two of this chapter, dealing with the attitudes, knowledge, and patterns of participation of the study sample with respect to the Head Start program.

II. PARENTAL ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE, AND PARTICIPATION PATTERNS

Introduction

It was stipulated in the introductory chapter that the second objective of this study was to assess parental attitudes and knowledge.

27 The reader is referred to Appendix C wherein he will find detailed tables which compare percentages between the O.C.D. report 1967 summer program participants, and the South Dakota sample of 1969 Head Start families, on a variety of variables.
with respect to the Head Start program, as well as parental participation patterns in program activities.

The literature reviewed, pertinent to this objective, suggested that attitudes toward Head Start as well as knowledge of the program should be high. It was also indicated that general participation patterns of the parents should be low. The following part of the present chapter will deal with the sub-hypotheses related to the second study objective.

**Attitudes Toward the Head Start Program**

It was hypothesized that "the study sample of Head Start parents will tend to hold positive attitudes toward the Head Start program." As may be seen in the definition of "attitude," found in the previous chapter, a general attitude may be comprised of a number of components including more specific beliefs, attitudes, or values. Thus, it is possible that a person could express a generally favorable attitude toward the Head Start program, but reveal, upon more detailed examination, that there are certain of the components with which he is not in favor. Thus, realizing this possibility, the scale employed to measure parental attitudes toward the Head Start program consisted of five sections. These sections were concerned with parental attitudes toward the effects of Head Start on their participating child, the effects of the child's participation on the rest of the family, the administration of the program, the facilities of the classrooms, and stigmatization from association
with the Head Start program. Each of the five sections will be discussed separately below. At the end of the discussion of the five sections a brief summary will reiterate the findings which will then be interpreted in an attempt to determine the overall attitude of the study sample toward the Head Start program.

Williams and Evans stated in their discussion of the Westinghouse report that Head Start parents tended to be favorable with respect to the influence of Head Start on their child. This conclusion is supported by the findings of this study (Table 18).

Table 18. Attitudes Toward Head Start: Effects on the Child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly favorable</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly favorable</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly unfavorable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of the respondents were found to hold favorable attitudes toward the effect of the Head Start program on their child.

The items used in assessing attitudes toward the effect of Head Start on the participating child may be found in Appendix A, section XI, Items 1-10, 12, 13.

In fact, nearly six out of ten of those parents responding held strongly favorable attitudes toward this effect of the program. Only one respondent indicated an unfavorable attitude toward this effect of the program which was mildly unfavorable. Six of those parents interviewed did not respond to all of these questions and were classified as "no response." Even if all of these six parents hold negative attitudes toward this aspect of the program, those with unfavorable attitudes would be less than one-fifth of the respondents.

**Effects of child's participation on the family.**

It was hypothesized that parents with children in Head Start would be favorable toward the program. Consequently, it was expected that the study sample of Head Start parents would be favorably disposed to the effects of their child's participation in Head Start on the rest of the family.

The findings of this study lend strong support for this expectation (Table 19). It can be seen in the table that four-fifths of the respondents scored into the strongly favorable category, and more than nine-tenths of the respondents scored favorably when both the strongly and mildly favorable categories were considered together.

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30 The items used in assessing attitudes toward the effects of the child's participation on the family are located in Appendix A, section XI, items 11, 14, 15, 16.
Table 19. Attitudes Toward Head Start: Effects on the Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly favorable</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly favorable</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitudes toward the administration of Head Start. If, as has been indicated, parents are favorably disposed toward the Head Start program, it may be expected that they would also be favorable toward the administration of the program. This was generally found to be true among the study sample (Table 20).

Table 20. Attitudes Toward the Administration of the Head Start Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly favorable</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly favorable</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 The items used for determining attitudes toward the administration of the program are found in Appendix A, section XI, items 17-21, 27.
While the trend was not as strongly favorable as was found in the scale referring to the effects on the family, strongly favorable attitudes were still more frequently found. One-half of the respondents fell into the strongly favorable category while slightly more than two-fifths scored into the mildly favorable group. Nonetheless, over nine-tenths of the respondents were favorably disposed to the administration of Head Start, and no one was found to be unfavorable to any degree.

Attitudes toward the facilities of the Head Start classroom. 

It was indicated from the review of literature that Head Start parents strongly approve of the Head Start program. Consequently, one could expect strong favorableness with respect to questions regarding the adequacy of facilities in the Head Start classrooms. Table 21 shows the distribution of respondents by type of attitude held toward classroom facilities.

Table 21. Attitudes Toward the Facilities of the Head Start Classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly favorable</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly favorable</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly unfavorable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly unfavorable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The items used to assess attitudes toward the classroom facilities are located in Appendix A, section XI, items 23-26.
It is apparent that this sample of Head Start parents tends to be favorable with respect to the facilities of the program classroom. More than one-half of the respondents fell in the "strongly favorable" category, while fewer than one-third were in the "mildly favorable" category. One respondent was found in the "mildly unfavorable" category.

**Stigmatization from association with the Head Start program.**

If, as has been pointed out previously, parents of children in Head Start strongly favor the program, then a scale designed to assess feelings the parents have about the degree of stigma which may result from association with the program should show that the parents feel little or no stigma from associating with the program.

**Table 22. Stigmatization from Association with the Head Start Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stigma</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little or no stigma</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak stigma</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild stigma</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong stigma</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33The items used for assessing stigmatization from association are found in Appendix A, section XI, items, 28-30.
It can be seen that a majority of the respondents indicated that they felt little or no stigmatization from their association in Head Start (Table 22). However, it may be noted that less than one-half of the respondents were found here. Over one-third indicated they felt weak stigmatization from participation in Head Start, and two of the respondents indicated feeling they were mildly stigmatized.

**Findings Summary of Attitudes Toward the Head Start Program**

It was shown in the review of literature that according to what few writings or studies exist which pertain to the attitudes that Head Start parents hold toward the program, the tendency is for parents to be strongly in favor of Head Start.

In an attempt to determine what attitudes the South Dakota sample of Head Start families held toward the program, twenty-nine questions were asked of each respondent. These questions covered five areas of concern which were selected on the basis of their potential influence on parental attitudes toward Head Start. The five areas of concern were: (1) the effects of Head Start on the child; (2) the effects of the child's participation on his family; (3) the administration of the program; (4) the classroom facilities; and, (5) stigmatization from association with the Head Start program.

Inasmuch as nearly all of those responding either directly or indirectly reflected from a mildly to a strongly favorable attitude on the component scales (with a majority indicating strong
favorableness on all the scales) it may be concluded that the South Dakota sample of Head Start parents holds a favorable general attitude, which tends to be strong in intensity, toward the Head Start program. In fact it was the overall favorable attitude held by the sample toward the program which obviated any examination of parents who were dissatisfied with the aspects of the program or with the program in general.

Thus, the findings of this study are consistent with sub-hypotheses sixteen which states: "The study sample of Head Start parents will tend to hold positive attitudes toward the Head Start program."

**Parental Knowledge About the Head Start Program**

It was hypothesized that the parents of Head Start children would tend to be knowledgeable about selected areas of the Head Start program. To measure the extent of parental knowledge about the program, a number of questions were designed which covered a variety of areas. The questions varied with respect to the amount of knowledge which would be necessary for a correct response. The areas included were: (1) child and parental criteria used to determine eligibility for participation in Head Start; (2) professional personnel associated with the program; (3) opportunities for parental participation in various administrative capacities, and in Head Start sponsored adult activities; and, (4) the general availability of Head Start programs.

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34 The items used as a measure of parental knowledge are located in Appendix A, section IX, items 2-6.
A total knowledge score was determined for each respondent. The range of possible scores was then divided into the lower, middle, and upper thirds, which yielded three categories labeled "high knowledge," "moderate knowledge," and "low or no knowledge."

Table 23. Parental Knowledge of the Head Start Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High knowledge</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate knowledge</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low or no knowledge</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be seen that the sample tended to be quite knowledgeable about the Head Start program (Table 23). Over four-fifths of the respondents fell into the "high knowledge" category, and the mean sample score was seventeen--four points under the maximum number of points possible. In addition, over a quarter of the sample selected all, or all but one, of the correct responses, and over one-half of the respondents were correct on eighteen or more of their responses.

It may be concluded that the South Dakota sample of Head Start families are highly knowledgeable concerning the program. Also, when considered together, the findings related to the parental attitudes toward Head Start and the findings related to the parents' extent of knowledge about the program suggest support for the contention that
intensity of attitude and extent of knowledge may be related. However, caution is necessarily inherent in this conclusion due to the small sample size and the lack of a sample which could serve for comparison or control.

Nevertheless, the findings are consistent with sub-hypothesis seventeen which states: "The study sample will tend to be knowledgeable of selected aspects of the Head Start program."

Frequency of Parental Participation in Head Start Activities

It was indicated in the review of literature that parents of children in the Head Start program generally participate infrequently in program activities. The numbers of the respondents in the study sample who estimated their frequency of participation in Head Start activities as "often," "sometimes," or, "seldom or none," are found in Table 24.

Table 24. Frequency of Parental Participation in Head Start Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Sample frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom or none</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35 The item used for indicating the frequency of parent participation is found in Appendix A, section XI, item 31.
It may be seen that the study sample does not precisely fit the expected pattern, at least by the method employed to assess frequency of participation in this study. More than one quarter of the respondents indicated that they participate "often" in Head Start activities, almost two-fifths said they participate "sometimes," and slightly better than one-third indicated their participation frequency was "seldom or none." It appears that a larger proportion of the study sample does participate more often in Head Start activities than would be expected on the basis of the statistics from the O.C.D. report, cited in the previous chapter. This finding is not consistent with the expectations from sub-hypothesis eighteen.

Summary of Part Two

It was the purpose of the previous part to review the study findings in relation to the second objective which was, "To assess parental attitudes, knowledge, and frequency of participation of a sample of Head Start families with respect to the Head Start program."

In summary, it was found that the study sample tended to hold strongly favorable attitudes toward the program. They also tended to possess a high level of knowledge about the program but they indicated that they participated in Head Start activities to a greater extent than was expected.
III. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FINDINGS

The findings of the chapter may be summarized according to their consistencies with respect to the various sub-hypotheses derived from Chapter IV, Review of Literature, and relevant to the objectives of the study.

The findings of the study are considered to show consistency with expectations from the following sub-hypotheses:

Sub-hypothesis 1. The study families will tend to be large.
Sub-hypothesis 2. The study families will tend to have low income.
Sub-hypothesis 3. The study families will tend to live in non-farm residence.
Sub-hypothesis 7. The parents of the study families will be between twenty-one and fifty-four years of age.
Sub-hypothesis 10. The fathers of the study sample families will tend to have completed less than eight years of formal education.
Sub-hypothesis 11. The mothers of the study sample families will tend to have completed more than eight years of formal education.
Sub-hypothesis 12. The parents of the study families will tend to show positive attitudes toward education.
Sub-hypothesis 13. The parents of the study families will tend to be more traditional with respect to their beliefs about family relationships.
Sub-hypothesis 16. The parents of the study families will tend to have strongly favorable attitudes toward the Head Start program.
Sub-hypothesis 17. The parents of the study families will tend to be knowledgeable about the Head Start program.

The findings of the study are considered to not show consistency with expectations from the following sub-hypotheses:

Sub-hypothesis 4. The study families will tend to be more socially isolated.

Sub-hypothesis 5. The study families will tend to be more unstable.

Sub-hypothesis 6. The study families will tend to have a sizeable proportion of female household heads.

Sub-hypothesis 8. The study families will tend to have a sizeable proportion of fathers who are unemployed or were at some time in the previous twelve months.

Sub-hypothesis 9. The study families will tend to have a sizeable proportion of the mothers who are employed.

Sub-hypothesis 14. The parents of the study families will tend to show high levels of anomie.

Sub-hypothesis 15. The parents of the study families will tend to be more present rather than future oriented with respect to their time perspective.

Sub-hypothesis 18. The parents of the study families will tend to display low levels of participation in Head Start activities.

The relevance of the previously reviewed findings to the study objectives and to the essential question of the study will be discussed in the Summary and Conclusions, Chapter VI, which
follows the present chapter. The following chapter will also include a discussion of the limitations of this study, the perceived needs for further research, and what implications the study may have for concerned groups, agencies, or policies.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

This study was a part of a larger project which was conducted under joint sponsorship between the Inter-Lakes Region Community Action Office, and the South Dakota State University Agricultural Experiment Station. The purpose of the larger study was to explore characteristics of low-income United States Department of Agriculture food commodities recipients in three counties under the administration of the Inter-Lakes Region Community Action Office out of Madison, South Dakota. The purpose of the present study was to provide more information about commodities recipients who also had children participating in the Head Start program.

In the introductory chapter to this study it was pointed out that Head Start was created, along with a number of other anti-poverty programs, out of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. It was also shown that the purpose of Head Start was to provide for the needs and deficiencies of preschool poverty children. Attention then turned to a discussion of some of the problems which have been encountered whenever attempts have been made to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Here, it was stated that almost all evaluations of the program have focused primarily upon improvements in the child and that few studies even mentioned the family backgrounds of the children.
It was felt that in consideration of the many theoretical and empirical conclusions which emphasize the influential role of the family and home environment in the socialization of the child, that inattentiveness to the family backgrounds was not justified.

The second chapter examined the origins and design of the Head Start program, and also discussed what appears to be a closely related conception which contends that poor people exist in a culture or sub-culture of poverty. It was determined that both the design of the Head Start program and the concept of "culture of poverty" shared a common theoretical foundation. This foundation was shown to be an assumption which held that one consequence to the situation of poverty was the development of similar characteristics among poor persons or families. It was with these considerations in mind together with a desire to fill some of the voids existing in our present knowledge of Head Start families that culminated in the creation of the study objectives. These were: (1) To determine the extent to which a sample of Head Start families possesses certain social and demographic characteristics which have been cited as common among families participating in the Head Start program, or among poverty families in general; and (2) To assess parental attitudes, knowledge, and frequency of participation of a sample of Head Start families with respect to the Head Start program.

Chapter three included two reviews of literature. The first was a selective review focusing on literature which characterized persons or families in poverty or participating in the Head Start
program. The second reviewed the scant literature which was located dealing with previous assessments of parental attitudes and patterns of participation with respect to the Head Start program, as well as literature dealing with knowledge as it relates to attitudes.

The last part of the third chapter included a general descriptive hypothesis under which were listed eighteen descriptive sub-hypotheses. The sub-hypotheses all contained one of the characteristics which were derived from the literature reviewed and which were selected for examination in this study. The selected characteristics were: the size of the families, the incomes of the families, the farm or non-farm residences of the families, the extent of social isolation of the families, the extent of instability among the families, the sex of the household heads of the families, the employment characteristics of the parents of the families, the ages of the parents, the amounts of parental formal education, parental attitudes toward education, parental beliefs about family relations, the prevalence of anomie among the parents, whether the parents held present or future oriented time perspectives, parental attitudes toward the Head Start program, parental knowledge about the Head Start program, and, frequency of parental participation in Head Start program activities.

The fourth chapter discussed the design of the present study. Included in this chapter were the background of the study, the criteria used for the selection of the respondents, the design of the interview instrument, the collection of the data, and, the
operationalization of concepts and characteristics, with a detailed account of the different procedures employed for analysis of the characteristics.

Chapter five then presented the findings of the study with respect to the variables relevant to the two study objectives. The final part of this chapter was a listing of the sub-hypotheses with which the findings were consistent, and a listing of the sub-hypotheses with which the findings were not consistent.

Subject to the qualifications of interpretation made necessary by the limitations of the study discussed below, the findings of this study, with respect to the characteristics examined are:

(1) The families in the study sample are unusually large, with a median family size of eight.

(2) The study sample families have low-income, with a median family income of $3,000 per year.

(3) The study sample families live predominantly in non-farm residences.

(4) The study sample families do not tend to be socially isolated.

(5) The study sample families tend to be stable families.

(6) The study sample families predominantly have a male as the household head.

(7) The parents of the study sample families are almost exclusively between the ages of twenty and fifty-five.

(8) The fathers of the study sample families were all employed with most being employed for all of the preceding twelve months in full-time jobs.
(9) The mothers of the study sample families tended to not be employed, but those who were employed tended to be employed on a part-time basis only.

(10) The fathers of the study sample families tended to have a low amount of formal education, with the median years of school being little more than eight years.

(11) The mothers of the study sample families tended to be better educated than the fathers, with the median years of education of about eleven years.

(12) The parents of the study sample families tended to hold positive attitudes toward education.

(13) The parents of the study sample families tended to display strongly traditional beliefs with respect to family relations.

(14) The parents of the study sample families did not show a strong prevalence of anomie.

(15) The parents of the study sample families tended to be oriented to the future in their time perspective.

(16) The parents of the study sample families tended to be strongly favorable toward the Head Start program.

(17) The parents of the study sample families were highly knowledgeable about the Head Start program.

(18) The parents of the study sample families indicated a moderate rate of participation in Head Start activities.

Attention will now be directed to a discussion of the conclusions, limitations, and implications of the study as well as needs for further research which have been perceived by the author.
II. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusions

It may be concluded that this study has contributed to the knowledge of Head Start families in a number of ways. First, light has been shed upon selected characteristics of a sample of Head Start families which may serve to increase understanding of this type of family.

Second, it has also been determined that parents of the Head Start children are favorably disposed toward the program, and are also knowledgeable of the program. These findings may be seen as suggesting support for those who would prefer to see an increase in the part played by the parents in the development of their children, by way of the Head Start program.

Finally, with respect to the essential question of this study, while admittedly the design and limitations of this study preclude directly relating the findings of this study to the conceptual orientation inherent in the culture of poverty concept, it appears that qualified, tentative conclusions may be tacitly drawn from the findings to the essential question of the study. The essential question dealt with the validity of the underlying assumption of homogeneity in the possession of characteristics among poverty families. It may be seen that the findings tended to be consistent with six out of ten of the hypotheses which included objective, or demographic variables, and with four out of eight of the hypotheses which included the
measurement of abstract concepts or subjective variables. The question arises as to whether objective data may provide more realistic indicators or suggestions than would more subjective data, with respect to the development of a basis for the validation of the assumption of homogeneity among characteristics of families in poverty. It is possible that some means is necessary to differentially weight the variables to provide a more substantial foundation for these types of conclusions. Nonetheless, and given the limitations of this study, it appears suggestive that out of eighteen variables examined by this study, the findings were consistent with more than one-half. However, the author does not wish to generate support for any conceptual model of the poor by exaggerating or overemphasizing similarities that must remain speculative at best. Therefore, it is possible and necessary to conclude only that the findings of this study suggest support for anyone interested in the concept culture of poverty and its possible relation to Head Start families.

Limitations of the Study

In considering the limitations of this study, a number of items are apparent of which it is necessary that all should be aware. First, the procedure used for the selection of the sample was of a non-random nature. When randomization is not employed in the selection of respondents, generalization of the findings to other similar groups is then not possible because it would be methodologically
invalid. Thus, a study which could have valid implications for agencies and interested groups must be couched in qualifying terminology with respect to its limited generalizability.

Second, the validity and reliability of the scales utilized in the study were not known. Inasmuch as the study was exploratory in nature, due to the dearth of previous research on the subject, many of the variables requiring the employment of scales for their measurement were without scaling precedence. Also due to the exploratory nature of the study, the scales which were employed were intended to provide suggestions as to the presence of the variables being measured and were not intended as more absolute measures. Nonetheless, the findings of this study must be further qualified by the question of scaling or interpretive validity and reliability.

A third limitation is one which is common to many studies—that of the stringency of time and money. Due to the limitations of money and time, as well as the lack of previous relevant research, the variables selected for discussion in this study were, for the most part, limited to those which were of more immediate concern to the objectives of the larger study. Ideally, if time and money had permitted, this study would have been independent with respect to the selection of its respondents and its variables. In this way a random sample of all of the South Dakota Head Start families could have been studied with respect to additional variables which may have been more relevant to their situations.
A fourth limitation of this study is the statistical analysis necessarily employed by the study. Again, if situations had been ideal, there would have been a larger number of study sample families as well as a sample of families to be used for the purpose of comparisons. The only groups which could have been used for comparative purposes were the national sample of Head Start families, included in the report by the Office of Child Development which was discussed in Chapter three of this study, or a group comprised of similar families living in the sample area of this study. However, use of the O.C.D. report sample was obviated first, by the non-random procedure of selection of the respondents in the present study, and second, by the fact that the O.C.D. report listed only percentages and the size of the South Dakota sample prevented statistical comparison of percentages. Also, as was mentioned in Chapter four, the fact that a sample of eligible but non-participating families for comparison was not found, as had been originally anticipated, obviated statistical comparisons of differences between the two samples.

Implications of the Study

What significance the findings of this study may have to groups or agencies dealing with the poor, must necessarily be few in light of the limitations discussed previously. However, attention may be called to the two findings as regard the median family size and the age of the majority of the mothers. It was shown that
the median family size was eight members, and that the majority of
the mothers were still within the child-bearin g years of life. The
implication appears to be that the families already tend to be quite
large and that the potential for more children remains as well.
When this fact is coupled with the finding that the median income of
the sample families was $3,000 per year it may be seen that there is
a definite possibility for the poverty situation to become worse in
terms of scarcity of income. Along this same line it may be noted
that the O.C.D. sample of Head Start families had a median income
somewhere between $3,000 to $3,999 per year, with a family size
median of six. When the median family size is divided into the
annual family income, it may be seen that the O.C.D. sample of Head
Start families had a per capita income of from $500 to over $650 per
year. However, when the same computations are performed upon the
findings for the South Dakota sample of Head Start families it is
found that the per capita income drops to $375 per year. In addition,
it will be remembered that the majority of the study sample were non-
farm residents which reduces the possibilities of their supplementing
their diet by frow ing many of their foods, as farm families may do—
thereby reducing the drain on the already low family income.

Finally, during recent discussions with Norma Klinkel, the
Director of Head Start programs for the Inter-Lakes Region Community
Action Office, the topic of parental participation was raised. The
author was informed that efforts are being made in all Head Start
programs across the nation to involve the parents of the Head Start participants to a greater extent. It is this author's opinion, supplemented by the findings related to parental attitudes and knowledge about the Head Start program, that these efforts, possibly more than anything else which has been attempted, offer a tremendous potential for the realization of benefits for both the children and the parents, which is the primary goal of Project Head Start.

Need for Further Research

Through the course of this study, areas of need for further research have become apparent to the author, a few of which are cited as questions below:

(1) Precisely what relations exist between family characteristics and those deficiencies which are perceived among poverty children, which the Head Start program is attempting to counter?

(2) What influence does parental participation have on the benefits the child may derive from participation in the Head Start program?

(3) Why do Head Start parents tend to express strongly favorable attitudes about the program? That is, do they view the program favorably because of the services it provides, or because it provides an opportunity to, temporarily at least, remove one child from an already overcrowded house, or are their attitudes a result of a combination of these factors?

(4) What role does underemployment play with respect to the economic difficulties of Head Start and poverty families? Do the primary wage-earners prefer a low-paying job that they like to a better paying job that they don't like?
(5) To what degree do such things as pride and self-concept enter into decisions which serve to maintain a family at or below the poverty level? That is, do poverty families feel it is a public declaration of failure to participate in anti-poverty programs?

(6) Given that education may play an important role in determining whether a family may be poor, would providing opportunities for the completion of their education through high school be sufficient for a poor wage-earner to secure better employment, or are there also certain attitudinal variables which would prevent this from happening?

(7) In what ways do the attitudes and possible stereotypes held by prospective employers toward the poor or under-educated, influence their decisions with respect to hiring practices of these people? That is, considering the employment problems of the aged, and of certain racial or ethnic groups, is it possible that an employer would see an under-educated, unskilled poor father as a poor employment risk in terms of his potential productivity and his effect on the rest of the workers?
LIST OF REFERENCES

Books


Articles in Collections


Public Documents


Reports, Periodicals, and Bulletins


Unpublished Material


APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
Schedule No. ____________________________

Date ____________________________

Interviewer ____________________________

Location of residence

______________________________

(Be specific in direction)

Type of dwelling:

___ Single family HH

___ Multiple family HH

___ Trailer house

State of repair:

___ good ___ fair ___ poor

COMMUNITY ACTION AREA SURVEY

The information gathered in this survey is a part of an area study conducted jointly by the Community Action Office and the Department of Rural Sociology at South Dakota State University.

The information received will be confidential. The study is concerned only with general characteristics of the area residents and not with specific individuals or families.

I. Household Characteristics

1. Interviewee is: Male ______ Female ______

HHH ______ Spouse of HHH ______

Other ____________________________

(indicate)

2. Residence: Farm ______ Nonfarm ______ Urban ______

If farm; how many acres: ___ owned ___

rented ___

5. We would like to ask you some questions about members of your family and household.

1Only those questions are included in this appendix which were used in the present study. For those readers interested in reviewing the complete interview schedule, see James L. Satterlee's Characteristics of Low-Income Families in Eastern South Dakota: An Examination of the Culture of Poverty Concept, unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Department of Rural Sociology, South Dakota State University, 1970.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to HH</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Age at first marriage</th>
<th>Highest grade of school completed</th>
<th>Occupation*</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Head</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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Additional: (S) single *If multiple job holdings, list
(M) married If part-time indicate with a (P)
(D) divorced If full-time indicate with an (F)
(W) widowed
(Sep) separated

I would like to ask you a few questions about your household facilities.

I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THE FACT THAT THIS INFORMATION IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND IS IN NO WAY GOING TO BE USED TO CHECK UP ON YOU.

7. Do you have: a telephone
   television set
   _no., _B/W, _color
   radio
   _no., _portable, _console
   Yes ___ No
   Yes ___ No
   Yes ___ No
   Yes ___ No
6. Does your family take a newspaper?  
   ___ Yes  ___ No
   ___ weekly, ___ biweekly, ___ daily

   Name of the paper: __________________________________________

9. How many magazines does your family subscribe to? __________

   Please list: ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

10. In what organizations does your family participate: (ex: church membership, PTA, extension clubs, farm organizations, service organizations, 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.)

   Please list:
   HHH: __________________________________________
   Spouse: __________________________________________
   Children: _________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

11. Do you and your spouse attend church?  ___ Yes  ___ No

   If yes, what church: (Be specific) _______________________

13. When you and your spouse go visiting, who do you usually visit and how often?

   ___ Relatives  ___ Times per week  ___ Distance
   ___ Friends  ___ Times per week  ___ Distance
   ___ Neighbors  ___ Times per week  ___ Distance

26. What jobs have you and your spouse held before and after marriage in order from beginning to present?
### HUSBAND'S OCCUPATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main occupation (specific, include military service)</th>
<th>Part or Full-time (P) or (F)</th>
<th>If any other occupations at same time (specific)</th>
<th>Part or Full-time (P) or (F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### WIFE'S OCCUPATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main occupation (specific)</th>
<th>Part or Full-time (P) or (F)</th>
<th>If any other occupations at same time (specific)</th>
<th>Part or Full-time (F) or (P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. Have you (HHH) been unemployed at any time within the last year?  
   _______Yes _______No

If yes: Why?  
For how long?  

---
20. If one is born poor he might as well accept it since there is no getting out. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

21. When one has money he might as well spend it since tomorrow it will be gone. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

22. Every man has the right to enjoy and take life easy, and therefore to go into debt to get those items which will reduce his work and give enjoyment, is justified. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

23. One can never really predict what tomorrow might bring therefore we must live for today and not worry about tomorrow. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

24. Young people today are getting too much education. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

25. Education only makes a person discontented. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

26. School training is of little help in meeting the problems of real life. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD

27. Education is more valuable than most people think. NR  SA  MA  MD  SD
40. I would like for you to indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. (HAND RESPONDENT THE CARD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Mildly</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>resp.</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. There is little chance of finding real happiness in life today.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

13. These days a person doesn't really know whom he can count on.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

14. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow care for itself.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

15. In spite of what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

16. Most people don't really care what happens to the next fellow.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

17. It is very important to save for tomorrow.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

18. Planning only makes a person unhappy since his plans hardly ever work out anyway.  
   NR SA MA MD SD

19. Luck plays an important part in what happens to people.  
   NR SA MA MD SD
No Strongly Mildly Mildly Strongly
resp. agree agree disagree disagree

28. A young man is foolish to keep going to school if he can get a good job.
   NR SA MA MD SD

29. Too much time and money is being spent on unimportant things in education today.
   NR SA MA MD SD

30. Education enables us to make the best possible use of our lives.
   NR SA MA MD SD

31. Schools today encourage a person to think for himself.
   NR SA MA MD SD

32. Education is of no real help in getting a job today.
   NR SA MA MD SD

33. A child should not be allowed to talk back to his parents, or he will lose respect for them.
   NR SA MA MD SD

34. A person should feel a great love, gratitude, and respect for his parents.
   NR SA MA MD SD

35. Some equality in a marriage is a good thing, but by and large the husband ought to have the main say so in family matters.
   NR SA MA MD SD

36. It goes against nature to place a woman in a position of authority over men.
   NR SA MA MD SD
VIII. Family Information

The following are problems found among many American families. I would appreciate your answers as to whether or not you consider these to be problems in your family, and if so, to what extent.

42. Have you or your spouse ever been divorced from another person?
   ___Yes ___No

43. How often, if at all, have you or your spouse left home (separated from each other) due to some marital conflict? (check one)
   _____often _____occasionally _____a few times in marriage
   _____never

44. To what extent, if at all, have any of your children ever been in trouble with the law? (delinquency, truancy, traffic violations, etc.)
   _____often _____occasionally _____a few times _____never

45. To what extent has alcoholism ever been a problem in your household?
   _____often _____occasionally _____a few times _____never

46. To what extent, if at all, have any of your children left home due to conflict or fights with his parents?
   _____often _____occasionally _____a few times _____never

47. To what extent, if at all, have you or your spouse been in trouble with the law? (ex. bad checks, traffic violations, etc.)
   _____often _____occasionally _____a few times _____never

48. How often, if at all, does friction between you and your spouse occur?
   _____often _____occasionally _____a few times _____never
49. How often, if at all, does friction occur between your children and you as parents.

_____ often _____ occasionally _____ a few times. _____ never

IX. HEAD START FAMILIARITY

We are attempting to find out how familiar people in this area are with some of the Community Action programs.

I would like to ask you some questions about the Head Start program.

1. Do you know anything at all about the Head Start program?

_____ Yes _____ No

If Yes, go on to question 2.

If No, have you heard any rumors about the program?

Positive: ____________________________________________________________

Negative: __________________________________________________________

In view of what you've heard about the program, are you in favor of such a program? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

Do you have any children 8 years of age or under? _____ Yes _____ No

If Yes, go on to question 9, page 12.

If No, go on to question 33, page 15.

2. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Read before each statement: THE HEAD START PROGRAM IS OPEN TO:

a. Only grade school children

b. Only preschool children
THE HEAD START PROGRAM IS OPEN TO:

c. Preschool children and some kindergarten children
d. Only kindergarten children

3. In regard to the income of the parents of children who may enroll in the Head Start Program, which of the following statements would you agree with? (circle)

Don't know Agree Disagree

DK A D
a. The parents income has nothing to do with determining who gets into the Head Start program.

DK A D
b. Only those children whose parents' income is below a certain level are allowed into the program.

DK A D
c. About 10 percent of the children may come from families whose income is above a certain level while the rest come from families whose income is below that level.

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Read: Other personnel whom the Head Start program may call upon for their services are:

Don't know Agree Disagree

DK A D
(a) nutritionists

DK A D
(b) cooks

DK A D
(c) drivers

DK A D
(d) nurses

DK A D
(e) psychologists

DK A D
(f) doctors

DK A D
(g) dentists
5. In regard to participation of parents in the Head Start program, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Read: Parents of Head Start children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) have the opportunity to learn new skills to help themselves and their families.

(b) have the opportunity to participate in the program as aides in the classroom.

(c) may have the opportunity to participate in the program by serving on committees.

(d) have no opportunity to participate in the local program.

6. In regard to the agencies that service the Head Start program, would you indicate whether you agree with the following statements.

Read: The Head Start program is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) found only in this area.

(b) found only in South Dakota.

(c) found throughout the United States.

7. Is there a Head Start program in your area?  ____Yes  ____No  ____Don't know

If yes: (a) Is it a ____summer or ____year-round program?

(b) In what county and town are the Head Start classes held? _______________________________
**X. HEAD START PARTICIPATION**

8. Do you have any children 8 years of age or under? ___Yes ___No
   
   If Yes: continue with question 9.
   If No: go on to question 33, page 15.

9. Would you be kind enough to answer a few questions concerning those children 8 years of age and under in your family.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s first name</th>
<th>Sex only M-F</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Has this child ever been enrolled in the Head Start Program?</th>
<th>In what year and what program”</th>
<th>If presently eligible and not enrolled, do you plan to enroll them?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. If child is between ages of 6 and 8 and was never enrolled in Head Start, why not? ____________________________

11. If child is between ages of 3 and 5 and will not be enrolled in the Head Start program, why not? ____________________________

12. If you have had children in Head Start in the past, did they complete the entire session? ___YES ___NO
    If no; why not? ____________________________
13. If you presently have children in Head Start, do you think they will complete the entire session?  ___ Yes  ____ No
If no; why not?  ____________________________________________________________

XI. FEELINGS ABOUT HEAD START

We are interested in evaluating the Head Start program so that it might better serve the purposes for which it was designed. To do this it is necessary to find out what suggestions and opinions people might have about the program.

With respect to the effects of the Head Start program on the child and the family, would you please indicate the extent of disagreement or agreement you might feel with the following statements.

Begin each statement with: The Head Start program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Mildly</th>
<th>Mildly</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>res.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|          |        |        |          |     |
|          |        |        |          |     |
|          |        |        |          |     |
|          |        |        |          |     |
|          |        |        |          |     |
|          |        |        |          |     |

1. Helps the child get along better with his parents.
2. Helps the child get along better with children outside the family.
3. Helps the child get along better with his brothers and/or sisters.
4. May be of little benefit to a young child.
5. Helps prepare the child for kindergarten.
6. Helps make the child happier in the home.
7. Helps make the child less demanding on his parents.
8. Helps the child so he will be happier in school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Mildly</th>
<th>Mildly</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>res.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 9. Helps the child be a happier person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 10. Tends to encourage the child to be a 'smart aleck.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 11. Makes it more difficult to discipline the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 12. Helps the child to develop a greater interest in the world around him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 13. Does little in preparing the child for the 'real' problems in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 14. Tends to give children undesirable ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 15. Doesn't seem to be getting at the real needs of the children in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 16. Tends to create conflict in the family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 17. Is run in an organized manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 18. Is run quite efficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 19. Is a well-planned program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 20. Seems to be misguided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 21. Should be controlled more by parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 22. Is well organized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 23. Has excellent teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 24. Has adequate classroom facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 25.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 27.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In respect to the way other people react to children and families in the Head Start program, would you indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Mildly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 28.</td>
<td>People tend to look down on families who have their children in the Head Start program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 29.</td>
<td>Other children tend to look down on a child who is or was in the Head Start program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>NR 30.</td>
<td>Teachers seem to pick on a child who has been in Head Start.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. How often would you estimate you, as a parent, do or did, participate in the Head Start program? (circle)
   (a) often  (b) sometimes   (c) seldom or none  (d) not applicable

32. If you do, or did not participate as much as you feel you would like to, what are the reasons?  Not applicable
APPENDIX B

ATTITUDE SCALE SCORING SYSTEM
ATTITUDE SCALE SCORING SYSTEM

1. **Response Alternatives** | **Assigned Scores**
--- | ---
a) Strongly favorable  | 4  
b) Mildly favorable  | 3  
c) Mildly unfavorable  | 2  
d) Strongly unfavorable  | 1  
e) No response  | none

2. **Number of scale items**  | 9

3. **Maximum number of points possible per respondent**  | 36

4. **Minimum number of points possible per respondent**  | 9

5. **Range of possible points for total scale per respondent**  | 27

6. **Number of alternatives**  | 4

7. **Range of possible points for total scale, divided by number of alternatives (rounded to nearest whole number)**  | 7

8. **Table categories** | **Range of scores within each category**
--- | ---
a) Strongly favorable  | 30-36  
b) Mildly favorable  | 23-29  
c) Mildly unfavorable  | 16-22  
d) Strongly unfavorable  | 9-15  
e) No response  | none
APPENDIX C

COMPARATIVE TABLES

The 1967 National Sample of Head Start Families and the Study Sample of South Dakota Head Start Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table number</th>
<th>National Sample* 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-farm</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Age of Father

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than</th>
<th>National Sample* 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-54</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 or older</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Education of Father

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Sample* 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-8</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Current employment status of HHH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Sample* 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Months employed past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Sample* 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mo. or less</td>
<td>.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did not work</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table number</td>
<td>National Sample*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1967 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Age of Mother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-54</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-65</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 or older</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Education of Mother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sex of HHH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Family Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Not reported</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table 10. Family Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>National Sample 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $1000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-1999</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2999</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000-3999</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000-4999</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000-5999</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000-7999</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8000-9999</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 or more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Table 11. No. of children under 6 years of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of children</th>
<th>National Sample 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Table 12. No. of children 6-15 years of age

<table>
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<th>No. of children</th>
<th>National Sample 1967</th>
<th>South Dakota 1969</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 or more</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table number</td>
<td>National Sample*</td>
<td>South Dakota 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1967 %</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. No. of children 16-21 years of age</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 or more</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>64</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Running water in the home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>86</td>
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<tr>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Use of Radio</td>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Use of Television</td>
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<tr>
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<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Table number</td>
<td>National Sample* 1967 %</td>
<td>South Dakota 1969 Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Use of Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Receive newspapers</td>
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</tr>
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<td>70</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a1) daily</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total percentages may not total 100 due to rounding of numbers.