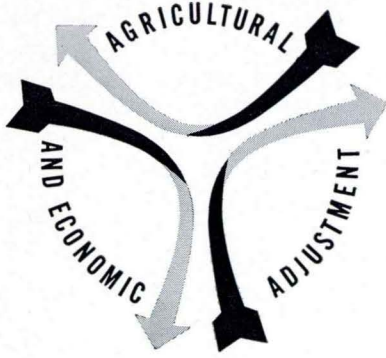# Factors Related to Employment of Wives in a Rural Iowa County

by Lee G. Burchinal

Department of Economics and Sociology

Center for Agricultural and Economic Adjustment

cooperating

AGRICULTURAL AND HOME ECONOMICS EXPERIMENT STATION
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY of Science and Technology

CONTENTS

SUMMARY

A greater proportion of married women are now in the labor force than at any previous time. However, research on relationships between the employment status of wives and family- and social-relationship variables has begun only recently. Furthermore, most of the research on family and community correlates of employment of wives has been limited to urban samples. This report is based on a sample of 111 farm and 175 nonfarm families living in Greene County, Iowa. The data from these families should contribute to the understanding of factors related to employment of wives from rural and small town families.

Two problems were investigated: (1) What factors are related to the employment decisions of wives? (2) What relationships exist between the employment of wives and selected family- and social-relationship variables? Employment decisions were studied in relation to three periods of employment: premarital employment, continuation of employment after marriage and employment during the past year.

Employment rates among farm wives were significantly lower than among nonfarm wives during each of the three periods of employment. The mean length of employment before marriage was greater among the women who married men in nonfarm occupations. For all three periods, employment rates were significantly greater among women with a high school or post high school education than among those who failed to complete high school.

Other variables were tested in relation to the employment status of the nonfarm women during the past year. The employed women more frequently had no children and less frequently had preschool children. There was no significant difference between the sizes of the households for the two samples of nonfarm families. The employed wives were about 4 years younger, on the average, than the nonemployed wives. This significant age difference between the two samples of nonfarm wives was due to the larger proportion of middle-aged women in the employed sample and the larger proportion of more elderly women in the nonemployed sample.

Several controls were imposed on the samples before correlations were calculated for the relationships between various family- and social-relationship variables and the employment status of the wives. Only nonfarm families consisting of both husbands and wives, but with no preschool children, and limited to couples where the wives were 62 years of age or younger were used in the subsequent analyses. Application of these controls and deletion of some cases because of missing data on some family- and social-relationship variables reduced the employed sample to 34 cases and the nonemployed sample to 77 cases.

Employment of wives was related to greater household task performance by husbands but was unrelated to the degree of husband or wife performance of family purchasing tasks. Employment of wives also was related to the husbands' and wives' separate reports of greater dominance by wives in family purchasing decisions. Employment of wives was related to greater dominance by their husbands in social activity decisions. Husbands' and wives' reports of husband-wife dominance in decisions related to major family changes were not associated with the employment status of wives.

The employment status of wives was unrelated to any of the measures of marital discord used in the investigation. Measures of marital discord included three measures of marital strain, two measures of congruence of images and four measures of accuracy of spousal role-taking. Nonsignificant relations also were observed between the wives' employment status and five measures of visiting patterns and four self or spousal ratings on emotional characteristics. Significant negative relationships were found between the employment of wives and the husbands' and wives' participation in formal social organizations.

Factors Related to Employment of Wives in a Rural Iowa County[1]

by Lee G. Burchinal[2]

Married women continue to be the major source of labor force growth in the United States. During the decade from April 1949 to March 1960, labor force participation rates of married women living with their husbands increased from approximately 22 percent to 31 percent.[3] Behavioral scientists, family-life educators and journalists have not been oblivious to the implications associated with the emerging dual roles of married women in American society. Two bodies of sociological research literature related to employment of married women have been developing mainly in the past 5 years.

In one group of studies, employment of mothers has been used as an independent variable for studying relationships between this variable and parent-child relationships or child-socialization variables. The other group of studies has focused mainly upon relations between employment of wives and other family relationships, particularly husband-wife variables. Available studies in both of these areas have been reviewed in detail in a previous bulletin.[4]

While most of these studies were based upon samples from large urban areas, several studies have been based exclusively upon rural samples. One study reported attitudes of rural and small town wives toward the employment of married women. Another study reported two types of data: one described attitudes toward employment of rural wives; the other, findings related to tests of differences in family relations and child-socialization variables for rural families in which mothers were and were not employed. In a third study, relationships between maternal employment and adolescent roles were compared for a sample of rural and urban families.[5]

The Problem

Because present data on factors relating to relations among employment of married women and family-relationship variables are based almost entirely upon urban families, research is needed on similar relationships for rural and small-town families. The purpose of the present investigation was to develop some knowledge related to employment of married women in a rural and small-town sample of families in Greene County, Iowa.

Objectives

The present investigation sought to provide information related to two main objectives: (1) What relationships exist between selected factors and employment of married women in the population studied? (2) What relationships exist between employment of married women and certain family-relationship and community-related variables?

Data on these questions are important at a scientific level for testing hypotheses related to changes in role patterns for married women and for assessing the probable impact of such employment on family- and community-relationship variables. Research on these questions also is important from an applied frame of reference. Presently, about one-third of the married women living with their husbands are employed. About 42 percent of the married women living with their husbands were engaged in some employment outside of the home at some time during 1959.[6] Some of these women and their husbands may be concerned about possible changes in family and community roles of spouses associated with the employment of wives. There are no grounds for expecting a decline in employment rates among married women. If anything, a continual increase in these employment rates is expected. Family-education specialists are now being asked and, in the future, will be asked more frequently to discuss some of the probable "consequences" arising from the employment of wives. Data from this investigation should be useful in helping to make decisions regarding employment of wives.

METHOD

Sample Design

The data in this investigation were derived from a sample of all dwelling units in Greene County, Iowa,

[1]Project 1370, Iowa Agricultural and Home Economics Experiment Station, Center for Agricultural and Economic Adjustment cooperating.

[2]Associate professor of sociology, Iowa State University.

[3]U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Special labor force reports No. 13. Marital and family characteristics of workers, March, 1960. Monthly Labor Review. April 1961. p. A-7.

[4]Lee G. Burchinal. Maternal employment, family relations and selected personality, school-related and social-development characteristics of children. Iowa Agr. and Home Econ. Exp. Sta. Res. Bul. 497. 1961.

[5]Hortense M. Glenn. Attitudes of women regarding gainful employment of married women. Jour. Home Econ. 51:247-252. 1959; Francena L. Nolan and Dawn H. Tuttle. Certain practices, satisfactions, and difficulties in families with employed homemakers. Penn. Agr. Exp. Sta. Res. Bul. 665. 1959; and Prodipto Roy. Maternal employment and adolescent roles: rural-urban differentials. Marriage and Family Living 23:340-349. 1961.

[6]U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Special Labor Force Report No. 7. Family characteristics of workers, 1959. Monthly Labor Rev. August 1960. p. 832.

during May and June 1958. Three strata were used: open country, the several rural places and Jefferson, the single urban place. A single-stage cluster sample design was employed. Blocks in the urban and rural-place strata and count units in the open-county stratum first were selected at random probabilities proportional to the numbers of dwelling units in the strata. Within each block or count unit, an equal-sized segment of five households was drawn by randomly selecting a starting point. The households in the segments constituted the sample. An 8-percent sampling rate was used. Arrangements were provided for random substitution in cases where interviews were not obtained. Further details of the sample design used in the present investigation are available in another source.[7]

Schedules were obtained for 364 households which included conjugal families, single persons, divorced or separated married persons with or without children, and nonrelated persons. Since the present investigation focused on employment of married women, only households containing conjugal families were selected. Controls for husband and wife living together reduced the sample to 286 families—111 farm and 175 nonfarm families.

Trained interviewers were used to conduct home interviews with the husbands and wives included in the sample.

Definitions of the Employment Variables

Data are reported for four questions pertaining to the employment of the wife: (1) Before you were married, did you ever work for pay? (2) How many years did you work? (3) Did you continue to work after your marriage? (4) During the past year, have you been employed for pay?

In the section on the findings related to employment decisions, responses to these four questions are treated as dependent variables. These analyses represent attempts to determine what factors may be related to decisions to enter the labor force before marriage, to continue in the labor force after marriage or to have been employed during the past year.

For relations between employment of wives and family- and social-relationship variables, employment during the past year is used as the independent variable. The various dependent variables used in the latter analyses are discussed later in this report.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS

Theoretical Framework

Traditionally, norms for linkages between the family and the economic system have specified that the male head should be principally or solely responsible for the economic livelihood of the family. The wife could, and frequently was expected to, contribute to the economic livelihood of her family by assisting in home and family-related means of production. Generally, her contributions

did not include work away from home. This was true in urban as well as rural communities.

Developments associated with industrialization and urbanization have provided employment opportunities for women. These developments also have contributed to changes in the role expectations for married women. However, it is unlikely that changes in role expectations for married women have occurred uniformly throughout various segments of American society. Some groups probably adhere more strongly to the traditional norms for male-female division of labor after marriage, while other groups provide greater freedom and encouragement for women to explore dual homemaking and wage-earning roles.

The social groupings which influence a person's orientation toward events and people may be called one's reference groups. Wives derive ideas of the desirability or undesirability of employment from various social groups with which the women identify and, hence, from which they develop a frame of reference for perceiving and evaluating norms used to guide behavior. On this basis, the general hypothesis for factors related to the employment decisions of the wives becomes: Employment rates of wives vary directly with the degree to which the norms in their reference groups permit or encourage the employment of married women. Put differently, employment rates of wives vary inversely with the saliency of norms in their reference groups against the employment of married women.

In the hypotheses which follow, several variables are used as situational measures of present and past reference groups which may have influenced the wives' employment decisions.

Hypotheses

Present residence was taken as a measure of farm and nonfarm reference groups. The comparison was limited to a farm-nonfarm comparison since only one urban community, Jefferson, was included in the sample. Open-county, nonfarm families were combined with those in the rural places and Jefferson to make up the nonfarm sample. Urban or rural nonfarm reference groups were expected to provide greater freedom or encouragement for employment of wives than farm reference groups. More favorable urban attitudes toward employment of wives might be expected because employment opportunities for single or married women have been concentrated in urban areas. Urban wives as contrasted to farm wives would be more likely to know other wives who were or had been employed. As a result, norms in the reference groups of the urban wives should tend to provide more encouragement or less resistance to employment of wives.

In addition, farm wives frequently help with the farm work. Nonfarm wives have fewer such demands on their time and are freer to consider outside employment as their means of making an economic contribution to their families.

This hypothesis was tested for the three employment periods, although it is precisely appropriate only for employment during the past year. Several assumptions were made to use the farm-nonfarm index of reference group experience in relation to employment before marriage or continuing employment after marriage. It was

[7]Elmer Wilbur Bock. Correlates of the accuracy of role-taking and the congruence of self-other images among married couples. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. Iowa State University Library, Ames, Iowa. 1961.

assumed that current farm wives had a farm socialization experience and current nonfarm wives had a nonfarm socialization experience. Also, it was assumed that, at the time of employment, before marriage or continuing after marriage, the current farm and nonfarm wives were influenced by farm and nonfarm reference groups, respectively.

The second hypothesis, also tested for the three periods, was based upon the educational levels of the wives. Since few women continue formal education after marriage, this hypothesis may be safely tested for premarital employment, for continuation of employment after marriage and for employment during the past year.

Education beyond high school generally requires mobility, results in exposure to a variety of normative orientations and probably increases one's awareness of changes in behavioral patterns in the general society. These kinds of experiences probably are associated with increased tolerance for flexible male-female roles, less authoritarian value and normative patterns and greater willingness to break with previously held normative orientations. Also, the acquisition of useful skills, desire to use these skills and motivations associated with nonmonetary rewards of employment probably provide additional reasons for better-educated married women to enter the labor force.

The second hypothesis, therefore, is that employment of married women is related directly to the educational achievement of the women. Educational achievement is defined by years of formal education.

Rates of employment before marriage and continuation of employment after marriage also were expected to be directly related to the women's educational levels.

Additional variables were available to develop hypotheses for employment during the past year. These variables included the stage of family life cycle, the number of persons in the household and the ages of the wives. The norm saliency concept was used in formulating all hypotheses to provide conceptual unity among the hypotheses.

Views against gainful employment of married women are strongest when preschool children are present, less strong when school-age children are present and least strong when no children are at home.[8] In most reference groups, it is assumed that the saliency of norms against employment of married women would be related to the presence and ages of children. Therefore, the third hypothesis of the study is that employment of wives is associated with the absence of preschool or school-aged children.

The fourth hypothesis is related to the preceding one. Household sizes are smaller in families in which the wives are employed than in families in which the wives are not employed.

Ages of wives probably are related to their employment status. The younger wives probably have associated and are currently associating with groups which place less stress on adherence to the traditional roles for married women. The fact that the norms are in a state of change also suggests that the younger adult members of the community would be over-represented among the innovators in defining dual role patterns for married women. Therefore, the final hypothesis becomes: Employment rates of married women are inversely related to their ages.

FACTORS RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS OF WIVES

Farm-Nonfarm Residence and Educational Levels of Wives

Percentages for employment status of wives during the past year are given in table 1; for premarital employment, in table 3; and for continuation of employment after marriage, in table 5. The farm-nonfarm residence dichotomy and an educational trichotomy are maintained in each table. Chi-square analyses were used to test first for the over-all significance between the observed and expected frequencies in the six cells of each table. All of the over-all chi-squares were significant. Therefore, independent chi-square tests were calculated for the residence and the educational classifications. Because of the disproportionate subclass numbers involved in the comparisons, proportions were used to derive the observed and expected frequencies used in the independent chi-squares based on residence and educational levels. The procedure used in these calculations followed a method described by Kimball.[9] Chi-squares and degrees of freedom for the sources of variation associated with the residence and educational variables were pooled and subtracted from the total chi-square to obtain the residual chi-square. The residual chi-square represented the interaction effect of the residence and educational variables with the employment variable. One-tailed tests were used in interpreting the significance levels for the residence and educational tests. Two-tailed tests were used for the total and residual tests.

The over-all chi-square for employment during the past year was highly significant, but the residual test was nonsignificant. This means that the variations producing the over-all significance were associated separately with either or both of the residence and educational classifications, but not with the interaction of the two variables. As shown in table 2, the chi-squares for both the educational test and the residence test were significant. Among both farm and nonfarm wives, the percentages for employment listed in table 1 increased

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[8]Glenn, op. cit.

[9]A. W. Kimball. Short-cut formulas for the exact partition of X^2 in contingency tables. Biometrics 10:452-458. 1954.

Table 1. Employment status of farm and nonfarm wives during the past year, by their educational levels.

Years of education	Employed No.	Percent	Nonemployed No.	Percent	Total No.	Percent
11 or less						
Farm	1	2.8	35	97.2	36	100.0
Nonfarm	12	19.0	51	81.0	63	100.0
Total	13	13.1	86	86.9	99	100.0
12						
Farm	4	8.0	46	92.0	50	100.0
Nonfarm	22	30.6	50	69.4	72	100.0
Total	26	21.3	96	78.7	122	100.0
13 or more						
Farm	5	20.8	19	79.2	24	100.0
Nonfarm	11	28.9	27	71.1	38	100.0
Total	16	25.8	46	74.2	62	100.0
Total						
Farm	10	9.1	100	90.9	110	100.0
Nonfarm	45	26.0	128	74.0	173	100.0
Total	55	19.4	228	80.6	283	100.0

Table 2. Results of chi-square analyses for employment status of farm and nonfarm wives during the past year, by their educational levels.

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	X²	P
Farm-nonfarm residence	1	12.082	<0.001[a]
Educational level	2	6.049	<0.05
Residual	2	1.923	>0.05
Total	5	20.054[b]	<0.01

[a]Residence and educational level analyses are based on one-tailed tests; residual and total analyses are based on two-tailed tests.
[b]The partition of the X² reported in this table was based on procedures for correcting for disproportionate subclass frequencies. See: A. W. Kimball. Short-cut formulas for the exact partition of X² in contingency tables. Biometrics 10: 452-458. 1954.

with higher levels of education. In all three educational levels, higher proportions of nonfarm than of farm wives were employed at some time during 1957. About 9 percent of all farm wives in the sample and 26 percent of all nonfarm wives had been employed sometime during 1957. Employment rate differences based on the farm-nonfarm dichotomy were considerably greater than those based on the educational classification.

The over-all test of variations in premarital employment rates listed in table 3 was highly significant. Since the residual chi-square was nonsignificant, as shown in table 4, variations associated with the residence and educational classifications were the apparent sources of the significant variation. Null hypotheses were rejected for the relationships between premarital employment rates and the present residence or the educational levels of the wives. In each of the three educational levels and for the total sample comparisons, permarital employment rates were greater among the nonfarm wives. And, among both the farm and nonfarm wives, higher rates of premarital employment were associated with higher educational levels. Level of education appeared to have a greater association with premarital employment rates than did current farm or nonfarm residence.

Length of premarital employment was greater among the present nonfarm wives than the farm wives. The nonfarm wives had worked an average of 4.5 years before their marriages, whereas the farm wives had worked 3.8 years before marriage on the average; t = 1.70, P <0.05, for a one-tailed test.

Continuation of employment after marriage was highly related to the residence and educational classifications, as shown by the chi-square results in table 6, but not to the residual effects of both variables upon the post-marriage employment rates.

Continuation of employment after marriage was considerably greater among the women who married men in nonfarm occupations than among women who married farm operators. Approximately 27 percent of the current farm wives compared with 56 percent of the current nonfarm wives who were employed before marriage reported that they continued to work after marriage. As shown in table 5, greater proportions of nonfarm than farm wives in each of the three educational levels continued their employment after marriage.

Among nonfarm wives, rates for continuation of employment after marriage increased directly with the educational levels of the women. The proportion of farm wives who continued working after marriage was greater among those who graduated from high school or had some post high school education than among those who did not graduate from high school. However, a smaller proportion of the farm wives with some education beyond high school continued working after marriage than of those who terminated their education at the completion of high school. The residence classification appeared to be associated more closely with continuation of employment after marriage.

The differences in employment rates between farm and nonfarm wives were highly significant and consistent for the three periods of employment. The dif-

Table 3. Premarital employment status of current farm and nonfarm wives, by their educational levels.

Years of education	Employed wives		Nonemployed wives		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
11 or less						
Farm	11	30.6	25	69.4	36	100.0
Nonfarm	36	57.1	27	42.9	63	100.0
Total	47	47.5	52	52.5	99	100.0
12						
Farm	41	82.0	9	18.0	50	100.0
Nonfarm	64	88.9	8	11.1	72	100.0
Total	105	86.1	17	13.9	122	100.0
13 or more						
Farm	21	87.5	3	12.5	24	100.0
Nonfarm	35	92.1	3	7.9	38	100.0
Total	56	90.3	6	9.7	62	100.0
Total						
Farm	73	66.4	37	33.6	110	100.0
Nonfarm	135	78.0	38	22.0	173	100.0
Total	208	73.5	75	26.5	283	100.0

Table 4. Results of the chi-square analyses for the premarital employment status of wives and their current farm or nonfarm residence and educational levels.

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	X²	P
Farm-nonfarm residence	1	5.085	<0.05[a]
Educational level	2	54.363	<0.001
Residual	2	3.057	>0.05
Total	5	62.505[b]	<0.001

[a]Residence and educational level analyses are based on one-tailed tests; residual and total analyses are based on two-tailed tests.
[b]See table 1, footnote b for the method used in partitioning the total X².

Table 5. Continuation of employment after marriage of current farm and nonfarm wives, by their educational levels.

Years of education	Continued to work after marriage		Did not continue to work after marriage		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
11 or less						
Farm	0	0.0	11	100.0	11	100.0
Nonfarm	14	38.9	22	61.1	36	100.0
Total	14	29.8	33	70.2	47	100.0
12						
Farm	14	34.1	27	65.9	41	100.0
Nonfarm	38	59.4	26	40.6	64	100.0
Total	52	49.5	53	50.5	105	100.0
13 or more						
Farm	6	28.6	15	71.4	21	100.0
Nonfarm	23	65.7	12	34.3	35	100.0
Total	29	51.8	27	48.2	56	100.0
Total						
Farm	20	27.4	53	72.6	73	100.0
Nonfarm	75	55.6	60	44.4	135	100.0
Total	95	45.7	113	54.3	208	100.0

Table 6. Results of the chi-square analyses for the continuation of employment after marriage of current farm and nonfarm wives by their educational levels.

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	X²	P
Farm-nonfarm residence	1	15.314	<0.001[a]
Educational level	2	9.602	<0.01
Residual	2	0.451	>0.05
Total	5	25.367[b]	<0.001

[a]Residence and educational level analyses are based on one-tailed tests; residual and total analyses are based on two-tailed tests.
[b]See table 1, footnote b for the method used in partitioning the total X².

ferences were observed within each of the three educational levels. The hypothesis that farm wives would be employed less frequently than nonfarm wives was supported very strongly.

Additional data available from a survey in Case County, Iowa, agreed with the Greene County results for farm-nonfarm employment rates of wives. Only about 9 percent of the wives in a random sample of 123 farm families having children in school were employed compared with 31 percent of the 173 nonfarm wives having children in school; $X^2 = 18.71$, $P < 0.01$.[10]

The farm-nonfarm measure of norm saliency against employment of married women provided clearer and stronger support for the general conceptual hypothesis than the reference group index based on educational attainment.

Hypotheses also were developed for the relationships between other family and spousal variables and the employment status of the wives during the past year. For two reasons, tests of these hypotheses were limited to the **nonfarm** sample only. One, the low rate of employment among the farm wives precluded separate analyses for these wives. Two, it was considered unsound to combine the farm and nonfarm samples into one total sample, especially when employment rates differed significantly between the two samples. Other factors correlated with attitudes or values associated with participation of wives in the labor force might be different between the two groups of families. If they existed, these differences would confound the results of tests of additional factors associated with the employment of wives.

Family Life Cycle

The hypothesis that employment of wives would be associated with the absence of preschool or school-aged children was partially supported by the results presented in table 7. The percentage of employed wives who never had children, 28.3, was greater than that for the nonemployed wives, 20.9. The percentage of employed wives who had preschool children was less than half of that for the nonemployed wives. In terms of the direction of difference, these results supported the hypothesis. The difference in percentages of wives in the employed and nonemployed categories who had school-aged children differed only slightly but in the opposite direction from the hypothesis.

A greater percentage of the employed wives reported that all of their children had finished school and were still at home, but there was no appreciable difference between the percentages of families in either employment category whose children had all left home.

Size of Household

Because of the sample definition, all households included at least two persons, the husband and the wife. However, it was expected that employment of wives would be associated with smaller households. The mean difference in household size was in this direction. The

Table 7. Percentages of nonfarm wives who were employed during the past year, by the life cycle of their families.

Family life cycle	Employed	Nonemployed
Number of families	46	129
Childless	28.3	20.9
Any preschool-age children	10.9	26.4
Any school-age children	23.8	21.7
Post school-age children	10.9	3.1
Children departed	26.1	27.9
Total	100.0	100.0

household sizes of employed and nonemployed wives were 3.0 and 3.2 persons, respectively, but the difference was so slight that no statistical test was conducted. For this comparison, the null hypothesis was retained.

Age of Wife

The hypothesis that employed wives would be younger than the nonemployed wives was supported. The mean age for the employed wives was 44.7 compared with 49.0 for the nonemployed wives; t = 1.74, $P < 0.05$, based on a one-tailed test of significance. The age distributions, shown in percentage form in table 8, are more informative than the mean comparisons. The proportion of the wives who were under 39 years of age was smaller for the employed sample than for the nonemployed sample. The reverse was true for wives who were between 40 and 59 years of age. The percentage of employed wives who were 60 or older was considerably smaller than the comparable percentage for the nonemployed wives.

The characteristics of the two age distributions limit interpretation of the statistically significant mean age differences between the two samples of wives. The younger mean age for the employed wives was due to the combination of a greater proportion of middle-aged wives in the employed category and a considerably greater proportion of the oldest wives in the nonemployed category.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES RELATED TO THE ASSOCIATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT OF WIVES WITH FAMILY- AND SOCIAL-RELATIONSHIP VARIABLES

Theoretical Framework

Employment of wives outside the home represents a major role innovation for married women. The findings reported in the previous section support the generalization that employment of wives is apparently associated with reference group experiences which serve to weaken adherence to the traditional norms for male-female division of labor.

[10]Lee G. Burchinal. Report on the health education survey in Cass County, Iowa, 1959. (Unpublished manuscript written for the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers.) March 1961.

Table 8. Percentages of nonfarm wives who were employed during the past year, by the ages of the wives.

Ages of wives	Employed N=46	Nonemployed N=129
29 or less	17.4	20.2
30-39	10.9	15.5
40-49	32.6	17.0
50-59	30.4	14.0
60 or older	8.7	33.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Mean age	44.7	49.0

Employment of married women also may be related to other alterations in husband-wife roles. For instance, employment of wives should be associated with a decline in patriarchal authority patterns and with the emergence of equalitarian authority patterns. Changes in the reciprocal husband-wife family roles, household or child-care tasks might also be associated with employment of wives and mothers.

These hypotheses are based in part on the fact that the employed wives have less time available for home-making roles. If the home and family tasks which the wife did before her employment are done in as thorough a manner after her employment, she must expend more effort, become more efficient in these activities, do them less competently, receive greater assistance from other family members than she had received before her employment or hire assistance.

Employment of wives generally increases family incomes. The increased economic contribution of the employed wife to her family may alter her status and power relations with her spouse. In turn, spousal-status changes may influence many spousal-interaction patterns.

Redefinition of husband and wife status positions and family roles may be associated with increased spousal and intrapersonality conflict. Major role innovations are frequently accompanied by ambiguity and conflict when new and old role definitions clash. Employment of wives represents a deviation from one aspect of the traditional husband-wife division of labor. It is not surprising that women look more favorably upon role innovations associated with their employment than do men.[11] Differences in views between men and women regarding employment of wives may be related to greater conflict in families where wives are employed.

These data indicate possible bases for husband-wife conflict over the employment of the wife. Further spousal discord may be developed as adjustments in family roles and spousal status relations are required because of the employment of the wife.

Also, adjustment of internal family roles as a function of the employment of the wife may also be related to changes in participation in formal social organizations and to changes in informal visiting patterns.

Hypotheses

Four general hypotheses were implicit in the foregoing discussion. Specific subhypotheses derived from each general hypothesis are used to guide the analyses.

The first hypothesis is that employment of wives is associated with alterations in family roles. Two operational hypotheses derived from this general hypothesis are: (1) Employed wives participate less in household tasks and their husbands participate more than do corresponding spouses in families in which the wives have not been employed. (2) Employed wives participate more in family economic purchasing roles and their husbands participate less than do corresponding spouses in families in which the wives have not been employed.

Participation in household tasks and family purchasing roles was measured by the wives' responses to seven

household task items and to five family purchasing items. Household task questions included: who gets breakfast, does the dishes after the main meal, cleans the house, does the family wash, picks up and puts away clothes, plans the meals and fixes broken appliances and toys. The family purchasing items included: who buys the groceries, pays the family bills, shops for and buys small household appliances, shops for and buys large appliances, such as a stove, and shops for and buys large furniture. Responses to each item were coded from 1 point, if the husband only did the task, to 5 points if the wife only completed the task. The intermediate responses were husband mostly, share equally and wife mostly. These responses were coded as 2, 3 and 4, in that order.

The second general hypothesis dealt with the husband-wife decision-making process. It was expected that employment of wives would be associated with increased decision-making authority on the part on the wife. Three subhypotheses were developed: (1) Employment of wives is related to greater dominance by wives in family purchasing decisions. (2) Employment of wives is related to greater dominance by wives in family change decisions. (3) Employment of wives is related to greater dominance by wives in social activity decisions.

Scores based on seven questions were used to measure the degree of dominance displayed by the husbands or wives in relation to family purchasing decisions. These items included: who generally decided about how much money should be spent on food, on new furniture, on small appliances, on life insurance; what changes or redecorations should be made in the home; how much money should be given to the church or charities; and whether or not (or how) money should be borrowed. The major family change scores were based on the following items: who generally decided about whether or not to move, if you move what farm, house or apartment to buy or rent, the husband changing his job, and whether or not the wife should be employed. The social activities decision-making scores were based on five items. These items included who decided about visiting friends, going out somewhere such as to a movie, where to go on a vacation, visiting the wife's relatives, and visiting the husband's relatives. Each item was followed by five responses: from wife always, wife more than husband, wife and husband about equally, husband more than wife and husband always. The responses were weighted from 1 to 5, in that order.

The decision-making items were asked of both husbands and wives. Hence, the three hypotheses developed above were tested for the responses of both sets of spouses.

The third general hypothesis is that employment of wives is related to greater marital discord. Three sets of variables, marital strain, congruence of images and spousal role-taking accuracy, were used to test this general hypothesis. The subhypotheses were: (1) Employment of wives is positively related to marital-strain scores. (2) Employment of wives is negatively related to spousal congruence of images. (3) Employment of wives is negatively related to spousal accuracy of role taking.

Three marital-strain scores were developed by comparing the husbands' and wives' responses to the sets

[11]See Burchinal, Maternal employment, family relations and selected personality, school-related and social development characteristics of children, op. cit.; and Nolan and Tuttle, op. cit.

of items related to the purchasing decisions, the change decisions and the social activity decisions. Absolute differences between the spouses' responses for each of the three sets of items were obtained, squared to remove negative signs and to increase the larger differences, and added for each decision-making area. Tests of the reliability of the three measures of marital strain are available elsewhere.[12]

Higher marital-strain scores represented greater discrepancies between husbands and wives in the several decision-making areas. These scores were taken as indexes of poorer spousal communication and greater disagreement over the processes of decision-making than the lower scores.

Spousal congruence of images is defined as the agreement between a measure of one's self-image and a similar measure of one's spouse's perception of one's self-image. Two congruence-of-images measures were developed. The first was the agreement of the self-ratings of wives on selected personality characteristics with ratings which their husbands provided for them on those characteristics (represented symbolically as W-W to H-W). The second measure of congruency of images was the agreement of the self-ratings of the husbands on the same characteristics with ratings which the wives provided for them on those characteristics (represented symbolically as H-H to W-H).

The self and spouse ratings were based on nine emotional characteristics selected from the factor analysis studies reported by Burgess and Wallin.[13] The characteristics included: angers easily, stubborn, selfish, irritable, easily hurt, moody, easily depressed, easily excited and jealous. For each characteristic, respondents were asked to rate themselves and their spouses as having the characteristic very much, considerably, somewhat, a little or not at all. These responses were coded from 0, for very much, to 4, for not at all. Discrepancies between husbands' or wives' self ratings and the ratings of their spouses for them on each characteristic were obtained, squared and then added to derive the two congruence-of-images scores.[14]

Higher scores were indicative of lower congruence of images. Higher scores were assumed to reflect poorer communication between the spouses and greater marital conflict or tension than the lower scores reflected.

Role-taking accuracy was defined as learning to take the role of the other and building a conceptual system of self-other expectancies so that each person could project himself or herself into the role of his or her spouse. In sociology, this ability is referred to as taking the role of the other. In psychology, it has been known by various terms, but it most frequently has been described as empathic ability. Four measures of accuracy of role taking were developed. Each measure involved, as one of its components, the self or spousal ratings already described in the development of the congruency-of-images scores. In addition to their self and spousal

ratings, however, respondents were asked to provide two additional ratings for each emotional characteristic. These were: (1) to indicate their idea of how their spouse would rate his or her own feelings and (2) to indicate their idea of how their spouse would rate the respondents' self-feelings. With these data, it was possible to develop four scores used as measures of accuracy of role taking. These measures are represented symbolically as: (1) H-W to W-H-W, or the husbands rating of his wife with the wife's concept of how she thinks he rates her. (2) W-H to H-W-H, or the wife's rating of her husband with the husband's concept of how he thinks she rates him. (3) W-W to H-W-W, or the wife's self-rating with the husband's concept of her self-rating. (4) H-H to W-H-H, or the husband's self-rating with the wife's concept of his self-rating.

Each of the four role-taking accuracy scores represent estimates of how well one spouse can take the role of the other in predicting his or her ratings of emotional characteristics. Each score was derived from discrepancies between husbands' and wives' responses to the nine sets of emotionality ratings. The discrepancies were squared and then added to obtain the appropriate score. Higher scores indicate less accuracy in role taking.

The fourth general hypothesis is that employment of wives would be associated with less active participation in formal community organizations and in informal visiting patterns. The specific hypotheses derived from this general hypothesis are: (1) Employment of wives is negatively related to the formal social-activity scores of wives. (2) Employment of wives is also negatively related to the formal social-activity scores of the husbands of the employed wives. (3) Employment of wives is related to less frequent informal visiting patterns with nonrelatives.

Nonrelatives were specified in the last hypothesis because employment of the wife probably would have less relationship with visiting patterns with relatives than with nonrelatives. Also, in any analyses in which relatives were used, controls should be placed on the number of relatives who lived within some defined distance from the family home. The present sample included too few cases to permit these refined, though necessary, analyses. However, all families have the opportunity for establishing friendship and visiting patterns with nonrelatives. Therefore, only the frequency of visiting with nonrelatives was used as the index of informal social participation.

Method of Analysis

In the foregoing hypotheses, employment was assumed to be the independent variable, and the various family- and social-relationship variables were assumed to be the dependent variables. Employment status was treated as a dichotomy with employment coded as 1 and nonemployment coded as 0. The other variables were measured in continuous form. Correlation analysis was used to describe the association between the employment variable and the various dependent variables.

Some data were available for variables other than those cited in the various hypotheses. These data were included in the correlation analyses to permit exploratory analyses of relationships with the employment variable.

[12]See Bock, op. cit.

[13]Ernest W. Burgess and Paul Wallin. Engagement and marriage. Lippincott. Chicago. 1953. p. 502.

[14]See Bock, op. cit. for tests of the reliability of the congruency-of-images scores.

DEVELOPMENT OF SEMIMATCHED GROUPS FOR THE STUDY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT OF WIVES WITH FAMILY- AND SOCIAL-RELATIONSHIP VARIABLES

The hypotheses for relationships between the employment status of the wives and selected family- and social-relationship variables could have been tested for all couples included in the sample. Previous analyses indicated, however, that the families of employed and nonemployed wives differed in relation to characteristics which also may influence their family relationships and social-participation patterns.

Because these differences were known to exist between the two samples of families, it seemed necessary to match the two samples more closely before testing the hypotheses related to the employment of wives and the family- and social-relationship variables.

As in all previous analyses, only families with both husband and wife present were used. Because of the low rate of employment in the farm family sample, only data from the nonfarm families were analyzed. The proportion of families having preschool children differed considerably between the two samples. Therefore, all families in either sample who had preschool children were deleted. Finally, an attempt was made to reduce the differences in the age distributions of the wives in the two categories by deleting all wives who were over 62 years of age.

When these controls were applied, the families with employed and nonemployed wives were identically matched in being nonfarm families, having husbands and wives present, having no preschool children and limited to couples where the wives' ages did not exceed 62 years. Application of these controls reduced the number of cases of employed wives to 41 and the number of nonemployed wives to 88.

Use of correlation analysis resulted in a further reduction in sample sizes. All cases for which data were missing for any family- or social-relationship variable were deleted from the analyses. Thus, the employed-wife sample was further reduced to 34 cases and the nonemployed-wife sample to 77 cases.

The two newly developed samples of families were compared again for the several variables previously tested for association with the employment status of wives. These variables included the presence and ages of children, sizes of the households, ages of the wives and their educational levels. Chi-square tests for comparison of the presence and ages of children and for the educational levels of the two samples of wives were nonsignificant. The differences between the mean sizes of households or between the mean ages of the wives in the two samples were also nonsignificant. The two samples of families were assumed to be relatively well matched on the characteristics tested.

EMPLOYMENT OF WIVES AND FAMILY- AND SOCIAL-RELATIONSHIP VARIABLES

Correlations among 31 variables are presented in table 9. One-tailed significance levels were used in assessing correlation coefficients used in testing the hy-

potheses. Two-tailed tests were used in determining the statistical significance of all other correlation coefficients.

Employment Status of Wives and Specified Family- and Social-Relationship Variables

One of the two tests of the relationships between the wives' employment status and spousal task-performance scores was significant. The low negative correlation, $r = -0.19$, between wives' employment status and performance of household tasks supported the hypothesis. Employment was coded as 1 and nonemployment, as 0. Higher scores on household task performance indicated greater participation by wives. Hence, the negative correlation indicated that employed wives participated less actively in household tasks and their husbands participated more actively than comparable spouses in families with nonemployed wives. The correlation for the relationship between the employment status of wives and the degree of husband or wife participation in family purchasing roles was nonsignificant.

Relationships between the wives' employment status and husband-wife decision-making patterns were measured by six correlation coefficients. Three were based on responses by wives and a similar number on responses by husbands. Three of the correlation coefficients were significant: -0.16 and -0.21 for husbands' and wives' reports for who made decisions regarding family purchases, and 0.16 for the husbands' reports for who made social activity decisions. The low negative correlations between employment status of wives and spouses' responses for family purchasing decision-making patterns supported the two hypotheses being tested. Lower scores on the decision-making patterns indicated greater authority on the part of the wives, whereas higher scores on the employment-status variable represented employment. The significant positive relationship between the employment variable and the husband's reports of spousal decision-making regarding social activities was contrary to the hypothesis. The positive sign indicated that husbands of employed wives reported greater dominance of social activity decisions than husbands whose wives were not employed. The comparable relationship involving wives' reports of the spouses' social activity decision-making patterns also was positive, but not significant, $r = 0.13$. Both correlations for relationships between wives' employment status and spousal reports on decisions regarding major family changes were nonsignificant.

Nine correlations were available for testing relationships between employment of wives and measures of marital discord. None of the correlations based on the three measures of marital strain, the two measures of congruence of images or the four measures of accuracy of spousal role-taking was significantly related to the employment-status variable.

All four tests of the relationship between employment of wives and the participation by wives and husbands in formal social organizations were statistically significant. Employment of wives was significantly associated with fewer memberships in formal social organizations by both husbands and wives, and with less active participation by both spouses in the organizations to which they did belong.

The intercorrelations among the spouses' formal

Table 9. Intercorrelations among the employment-of-wife variable and family- and community-relationship variables.

Family- and community-relationship variables	Variable number	Family- and community-relationship variables (See the left hand margin for the names of the variables)																													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Employment of wives	1																														
Household tasks	2	19*																													
Family purchasing tasks	3	06	08																												
Wives' reports on purchasing decisions	4	16*	10	37*																											
Wives' reports on family change decisions	5	04	02	07	19*																										
Wives' reports on social activity decisions	6	13	15	06	18*	05																									
Husbands' reports on purchasing decisions	7	21*	00	57*	42*	19*	21*																								
Husbands' reports on family change decisions	8	12	10	04	21*	48*	04	20*																							
Husbands' reports on social activity decisions	9	16*	11	12	10	11	35*	23*	03																						
Marital strain on purchasing decisions	10	11	02	37*	06	01	07	40*	02	08																					
Marital strain on family change decisions	11	00	03	12	08	18*	24*	16	29*	22*	30*																				
Marital strain on social activity decisions	12	09	01	12	09	05	02	22*	02	48*	18*	18*																			
Congruence of images: W-W to H-W	13	02	01	04	11	08	14	01	05	05	16	08	05																		
Congruence of images: H-H to W-H	14	04	03	02	09	15	17	02	16	01	02	25*	09	21*																	
Role-taking: H-W to W-H-W	15	04	00	04	10	06	13	06	01	05	06	06	05	72*	25*																
Role-taking: W-H to H-W-H	16	03	01	00	11	21*	21*	07	02	12	11	25*	13	24*	67*	33*															
Role-taking: W-W to H-W-W	17	10	18*	02	14	18*	21*	07	10	00	16	05	09	64*	29*	54*	27*														
Role-taking: H-H to W-H-H	18	10	01	05	09	20*	26*	03	14	09	09	06	00	25*	47*	32*	49*	37*													
Number of organizations husbands belong to	19	25*	10	08	19*	02	01	09	02	10	11	01	03	01	04	03	00	04	15												
Husbands' social activity scores	20	25*	11	08	20*	00	02	12	01	12	10	04	04	02	02	06	02	06	14	98*											
Number of organizations wives belong to	21	15*	14	09	10	07	04	02	01	09	10	10	03	07	06	01	07	11	14	71*	66*										
Wives' social activity scores	22	16*	11	09	10	05	03	03	01	11	10	07	03	05	03	02	09	09	14	72*	69*	98*									
Number of families or individuals visited	23	10	03	00	05	02	08	02	02	34*	12	08	24*	00	05	02	11	00	01	08	09	14	15								
Number of relatives visited	24	02	17	13	04	07	06	03	10	17	20*	16	23*	02	13	01	14	10	09	13	11	15	13	50*							
Frequency of visiting with relatives	25	07	08	03	06	06	06	04	02	20*	08	04	28*	05	09	06	04	00	04	19*	16	18*	17	27*	64*						
Frequency of visiting with nonrelatives	26	06	06	10	04	01	07	07	02	11	03	05	12	05	06	10	15	00	02	02	03	05	02	46*	22*	15					
Frequency of total visiting	27	01	02	08	06	04	10	04	01	21*	07	07	26*	08	00	06	12	00	00	12	11	05	07	57*	14	40*	85*				
Wives' self emotionality ratings	28	03	02	05	03	00	10	05	07	12	16	20*	22*	48*	31*	48*	34*	42*	33*	02	02	12	13	08	01	00	04	04			
Wives' emotionality ratings of their husbands	29	00	09	13	17	08	17	12	08	15	13	19*	22*	26*	52*	21*	41*	22*	35*	12	14	01	03	11	00	08	02	06	48*		
Husbands' self emotionality ratings	30	17	16	07	10	01	14	04	03	07	09	12	22*	06	27*	10	33*	01	36*	10	11	04	06	01	04	04	01	01	30*	33*	
Husbands' emotionality ratings of their wives	31	01	00	08	02	16	15	00	05	09	06	17	22*	42*	29*	38*	34*	26*	29*	09	06	00	00	05	10	08	00	04	48*	34*	46*

*N = 111, df = 109; for a one-tailed test, r≥0.15, P≤0.05; for a two-tailed test, r≥0.18, P≤0.05. Decimal points are omitted. Significance levels for tests involving the dependent variable included in hypotheses are based on one-tailed tests. All other significance notations indicated by an asterisk, are based on two-tailed tests.

social participation scores ranged from 0.66 to 0.98. Since the four social participation scores were highly interrelated, an estimate was obtained of the relationship between the pooled social participation scores for both spouses and the employment status variable. This correlation was —0.22 which indicated a slight negative association between employment of wives and participation by them and their husbands in formal social activities.

The frequency of visiting with nonrelatives was not significantly related to the employment-status variable. Also, none of the other four informal social relationship variables was related to the employment of wives.

The self and spouse emotionality ratings which were used in developing the various measures of marital discord were also tested for association with the employment status of the wives. On the basis of two-tailed tests, none of the four relationships between self or spousal emotionality ratings and the employment status of wives was statistically significant.

In summary, it appeared that employment of wives was related to:

1. Less active household task performance by employed wives, and more active household task performance by the husbands of the employed wives.

2. Reports by wives of their greater dominance in family purchasing decisions.

3. Reports by husbands of greater dominance by wives in family purchasing decisions.

4. Reports by husbands of their greater dominance in social activity decisions. (This was the only finding which was contrary to any hypothesis.)

5. Less active participation by both husbands and wives in formal social organizations.

Employment of wives did not appear to be related to:

1. Wives' reports on family purchasing task performance.

2. Husbands' or wives' reports of husband or wife dominance in major family change decisions.

3. Wives' reports of husband or wife dominance in social activity decisions.

4. Any of the three measures of marital strain.

5. Either of the two measures of congruence of images.

6. Any of the four measures of accuracy of role taking.

7. Any of the measures of visiting patterns.

8. How husbands or wives rated themselves and their spouses on selected emotional characteristics.

Relationships Among the Family- and Social-Relationship Variables

Most of the correlation coefficients in table 9 were not used in testing previous hypotheses. These data provide additional information about relationships among family- and community-relationship variables for a sample of rural nonfarm and small-town Iowa families. Since these relationships go beyond the major focus of the present investigation, only a brief summary of the findings is presented. Directions of coding various variables, which determined the direction of the sign for the relationship tested, are ignored, and only the informative value of relationships is specified.

The most meaningful relationships among the family- and social-relationship variables include the following:

(1) There was no relationship between household task and purchasing task scores or between household task scores and other family- and social-relationship variables.

(2) Moderate positive relationships existed between dominance by either husbands or wives in purchasing decisions and greater participation by the same spouses in purchasing roles. Wives tended to dominate in both areas.

(3) Greater participation by husbands in purchasing roles was related to greater discrepancies between husbands' and wives' reports of relative spousal dominance in purchasing decisions.

(4) Low or nonsignificant relationships were observed among the decision-making scores based on responses from either husbands or wives and among these scores and household or purchasing task scores. These low or nonsignificant relationships suggested that the colleague model of family organization probably has greater validity than the companionate model for conceptualizing the family organization of the families included in the present study.

(5) The three marital strain scores were relatively independent of one another.

(6) Greater marital strain associated with change decisions was related to dominance by husbands in these decisions and was related to greater dominance by wives in social activity decisions. Otherwise, decision-making scores for either husbands or wives were related to several other, but not similar, family- and social-relationship variables.

(7) Lower marital strain scores were related to less negative, or more positive, self and spousal emotionality rating.

(8) Discrepancies between husbands' and wives' reports pertaining to social activity decision-making were directly related to frequency of visiting, especially with relatives.

(9) Congruence-of-images and accuracy of role-taking scores were positively related. A weak relation-

ship was observed between the two congruence-of-image scores. Role-taking scores were moderately interrelated.

(10) Greater congruence-of-images and greater accuracy of role-taking scores also were related to less negative, or more positive, self and spousal emotional ratings.

(11) The numbers of organizations to which the husbands or wives belonged were negatively related to their reported frequency of visiting relatives.

(12) Measures of visiting relationships were positively interrelated except for the negative relationships between frequency of visiting relatives and nonrelatives.

(13) Self and spousal emotional ratings were moderately interrelated.

IMPLICATIONS

Implications are considered only for some of the most clearly established or most theoretically meaningful relationships between the employment-status variable and the family- and social-relationship variables. Among the factors tested, the farm-nonfarm residential dichotomy produced the largest differences in employment rates among the wives included in the sample. The apparent farm-nonfarm difference in norm saliency against gainful employment of married women is an important finding. Many sociologists argue that rural-urban or farm-nonfarm differences are generally nonexistent or, if still observed, are rapidly in the process of disappearing. The employment rate difference between the farm and nonfarm wives in Greene and Cass counties, Iowa, clearly indicates that large and probably theoretically important differences related to the roles of married women exist between the two populations.

Differences in employment rates between farm and nonfarm wives represent, at least in part, survivals of previous normative patterns. However, there are reasons for expecting a convergence of normative patterns for roles of married farm and nonfarm women. Some of these reasons include the increasing levels of education among rural women, increasing opportunities for employment of women in rural areas and the expectations of low income rural families to acquire a higher level of living. These trends will probably contribute to an increase in employment rates among farm women.

Most of the relationships between employment of wives and other variables were nonsignificant. There are reasons for not expecting high relationships between employment status of wives and the various family- and social-relationship variables included in the present study. Decisions by wives to enter the labor force are the products of the interaction of numerous factors, only a few of which were tested in the present study. Also, the relationships between the employment status of wives and other family- and social-relationship variables are functions of the normative orientations and personality characteristics of the spouses, apart from the employment of the wife. Yet, the assumption of employment status by wives represents a change in the wives' role systems within their families. The wive's role system is interrelated with the role systems of other family members. It was expected, therefore, that role changes associated with her employment would be related to other role changes in the family system. However, these changes are mediated through and are influenced by numerous factors which affect family organization. Because of the complexity of linkages among the family variables which may be altered by a change in the wife's role system, any statistically significant relationship, regardless of its magnitude, was accepted as suggesting possible family role changes associated with employment.

The general lack of significant relationships between the wives' employment status and the various family- and social-relationship variables suggests that alterations in the wives' roles as represented by their employment were only weakly related to alterations in other family- and social-relationship roles. The general lack of marked relationships between the employment status of wives and the other variables included in the study may reflect flexible organization of husband-wife roles and relatively equalitarian decision-making processes. The absence of marked relationships among the family-task and decision-making scores suggests that the organization of the families included in the present study reflected the colleague pattern more than the widely known companionate model.[15] The colleague pattern may be more conducive to the employment of wives. In turn, this colleague pattern of family organization may be associated with less disruption in other family- and social-relationship roles after the wife is employed.

Several significant relationships were observed between employment of wives and other variables. Causal relationships are not implied between the variables. The present data permit only the assertion of relationships. Knowledge of these relationships may suggest possible consequences of employment of wives if the usual "other things" are equal. The probability of increased family income derived from the employment of wives generally is anticipated. Other possible results of her employment suggested in the present study may not be contemplated by husbands or wives. The present data suggest that possible consequences of the wives' employment may include increased activity by husbands in household roles, greater dominance by wives in purchasing decisions, less active participation by both husbands and wives in formal community organizations and greater dominance by husbands in social activity decisions. Possible alterations in marital roles and social relationships associated with employment of wives apparently are not related to the couples' general marital adjustment or their family visiting patterns.

The negative relationships between employment of wives and the formal social participation patterns of husbands and wives have implications for leaders of social organizations. The social activities scores were based on being a member, attending or having leadership roles in church, school, fraternal, civic and other com-

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[15]See Daniel R. Miller and Guy E. Swanson. The changing American parent. Wiley, New York. 1958. Random relationships between family power structure and task allocation have been reported for a sample of urban families; see: Martin Gold and Carol Slater. Office, factory, store and family: a study of integration setting. American Sociol. Rev. 23:64-74. 1958. These data suggest that "traditional," "rural" or "companionate" family types often discussed in the family literature do not represent the facts of the current rural or urban scene.

munity or work-related organizations. Employment of wives may be greater among women and their husbands who generally are less active in these organizations. Or, it may be that, given employment, the women and their husbands encounter additional obstacles to participation in community organizations and curtail their participation.

The present data represent only a partial view of possible relationships between employment of wives and family- and social-relationship variables for a sample of rural and small-town families living in a west-central Iowa county. Interpretation of the present results is limited by the small samples available for analysis. Further research is needed to retest the hypotheses of the present study as well as to test additional hypotheses. Such research should be helpful in providing guidance for the increasing numbers of married women who will be entering the labor force in the near future.