A Study of Child Rearing Attitudes of Mothers of Gifted Children

Kemme Lynne Caldwell
Central Washington University

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A STUDY OF CHILD REARING ATTITUDES OF
MOTHERS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Kemme Lynn Caldwell
APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

_________________________________
Hyrum S. Henderson, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

_________________________________
Dohn A. Miller

_________________________________
Daryl Basler
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Hyrum S. Henderson, committee chairman, for his interest and most helpful advice. His sense of humor helped me through some turbulent times. I would also like to thank Dr. Daryl Basler and Dr. Dohn Miller for their assistance in the preparation of the final draft. Their time and efforts are greatly appreciated.

I would like to express my thanks to my parents for instilling in me at an early age the desire to obtain as much education as possible. I doubt if they ever thought I'd take them quite so seriously!

I am most indebted to my lack of luck at love. Due to this factor, I have had the time and the motivation to complete this endeavor!
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to examine some of the factors that may contribute to a child's giftedness. The area given the primary attention was that of maternal attitudes toward child-rearing and family life of mothers who have children that have been identified as gifted and who are attending classes in the public schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not any differences exist between the attitudes toward child rearing and family life of mothers of gifted children and the attitudes toward child rearing and family life of mothers of non-gifted children of the same age, living in the same community, and attending the same schools. As used in this study, the term "gifted" refers to those children attending regular classes who have been identified by the school district as having IQ scores of 130 or higher based on results from the Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test. The term "non-gifted" as used in this study refers to those children who were attending regular public school classes and were not identified as gifted according to test results.
Hypothesis

Research has indicated that there is a relationship between parental attitudes and child behavior. Using the operational definitions of "gifted" and "non-gifted" as stated earlier, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. When comparing attitudes toward child rearing and family life of mothers having children designated as gifted with a group of mothers of non-gifted children, no statistically significant differences would be found in responses given on any of the subtests of the Parental Attitudes Research Inventory. The subtests are:
   a. suppression of sex
   b. comradeship and sharing
   c. encouraging verbalization
   d. seclusion of the mother
   e. dependency of the mother
   f. fear of harming the baby
   g. fostering dependency
   h. marital conflict
   i. irritability
   j. excluding outside influences
   k. rejection of the homemaking role
   l. avoidance of communication
   m. ascendency of the mother
   n. inconsiderateness of the husband

2. No statistically significant differences would be found between the educational level of the mothers of gifted children and the educational level of the mothers of non-gifted children.
3. No statistically significant differences would be found between the total number of children in the families of the mothers of gifted children and the total number of children in the families of the mothers of non-gifted children.

4. No statistically significant differences would be found between the ages of the mothers of gifted children and the ages of the mothers of the non-gifted children relative to the birth of their first child.

Related Research

An important concern of our educational system during the last few decades has been the identification of mentally gifted children. One of the main problems in identifying giftedness is the selection of criteria to be used. As Getzels and Jackson (1958) point out, frequently giftedness has merely been equated with a score on an intelligence test. In recent years, however, more recognition has been given to specific aptitudes, measured by valid tests appropriately designated, or as evidenced through remarkable insights and skills in particular areas of knowledge or human endeavor (Ward, 1965). The studies of Terman (1925) and Hollingworth (1926) are good examples of the few early studies which gave consideration to both general intelligence and specific aptitudes or talents. Recent studies which have taken multidimensional
approaches to giftedness are those by Brumbaugh and Roscho (1959) and Getzels and Jackson (1960).

An important part of the general identification process involves specific characteristics of the children who have been identified as gifted. The gifted group has been shown to be superior physically to non-gifted groups (Hollingworth, 1942; Terman and Oden, 1947; Barbe, 1965). Various studies have thoroughly discussed the emotional and social characteristics of gifted children as a group (Hildreth, 1938; Mensh, 1950; Gallagher and Crowder, 1957; Witty and Lehman, 1965). There has been strong evidence that serious adjustment problems and perhaps even estrangement exist in some gifted children (Thom and Newell, 1945; Grotberg, 1965; Torrance, 1965).

There has also been extensive research into the educational programs that must be developed to meet the special needs of children identified as gifted. Enrichment in the classroom has not been effective in most situations because frequently schools cannot meet the difficult criteria for an adequate enrichment program (Kough, 1962; Gallagher, 1964). In reviewing studies pertaining to ability grouping for the gifted, Ekstrom (1959) found that thirteen studies favored ability grouping, fifteen found no advantages, and five studies gave confused results. In general, when ability grouping is taken as a preliminary step in providing the proper setting for special methods and contents, it then seems to be an
effective method. If done merely for its own sake, the results are less satisfactory. A third type of educational program for the gifted is acceleration. Until recently it has been a rejected practice in most schools due to the chronological age "lockstep" (Ward, 1965). That acceleration is one of the best methods for educating the gifted is supported by Witty and Wilkins (1965) and Pressey (1965).

From the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that there is a great amount of interest in the gifted child. To date, however, there have been no comprehensive studies made pertaining to the child-rearing attitudes of mothers of gifted children and the effect of such attitudes upon the behavior of these children. That parental attitudes are of immense importance in shaping the behavior of children has been supported repeatedly in attitudinal studies involving the parents of many different types of children.

Sears (1961) found that parental attitudes towards child rearing and attitudes towards aggression when children were five years of age were related to patterns of aggressive behavior and attitudes towards aggression expressed by children at age twelve. The manner of expressing aggression was seen to be a function of specific familial attitudes. Research involving parents of grossly abnormal children appeared to implicate child-rearing attitudes as a variable related to the child's psychopathology (Madoff, 1959). In a similar manner, Finney (1961)
found that there is a positive relationship among dependency, anxiety, and pessimism as rated in children, and between nurturance, rigidity, overprotection, and firmness in the mothers. Abbe (1958) found that mothers of disturbed children showed more restrictive, lax, and over-indulgent attitudes than mothers of normally adjusted children.

Many studies have been done pertaining to the relationship of parental attitudes and achievement in school. D'Heurle, Mellinger, and Haggard (1959) suggest that achievers as young as eight years of age show acceptance of adult values and a striving to live up to adult expectations along with a strongly motivated need for approval, respect, and status from adults. Biglin (1965) found that dominant and disinterested parental attitudes were generally found to be related to children receiving lower grades in areas in which the grading was based upon social maturity, creativity, and intellectual and emotional maturity. It appears that personality problems when present in parents might be related to the adoption of attitudes toward family living which may contribute to adjustment difficulties for the child. Such difficulties have an effect upon achievement in school (Brown, 1965). Della-Piana (1966) found that maternal pressure or aspiration for the extent of the child's schooling is associated with reading performance as is the degree of verbalization allowed the child in the home. It has also been suggested that the mothers of high achievers are more authoritarian and restrictive in the treatment of their children than
the mothers of low achievers (Drews and Teahan, 1957; Pierce and Bowman, 1960).

In studies of family interaction patterns, Strodtbeck (1958) found that among Jewish and Italian residents of an eastern city a positive relationship existed between a relatively powerful mother and achievement values. McClelland (1953) established positive correlations between early independence training in the home and an individual's need to achieve as measured by projective tests.

It has been found that there is a relationship between parental attitudes and socio-economic status (Garfield and Helper, 1962). Ratchick (1953) found that among his high achievers in the eleventh and twelfth grades that significantly more of the mothers had graduated from college than among the underachievers. When the college aspirations of lower class boys of high intellectual ability were studied by Kahl (1953), he found that when the father was satisfied with "getting by" the son was less apt to consider continuing his education after high school than the son in families where college was considered a valuable experience necessary to "get ahead."
CHAPTER II

METHOD

This study was conducted during the 1967-68 school year in the Renton School District, located at the southern tip of Lake Washington in Western Washington. At the time of the study, the district had one high school, three junior high schools, and seventeen elementary schools. The sample included mothers of children attending all seventeen elementary schools.

The principle method used for gathering data was the Parental Attitude Research Inventory (PARI), developed and published by Schaefer and Bell in 1958. In addition, a questionnaire was sent to each subject to obtain information about the mother, her family, and her home. (Instrument and questionnaire appear in Appendix A.)

Subjects

The subjects for this study were classified into two groups, the gifted group and the non-gifted group. The gifted group was composed of thirty-five mothers of children who had been identified as gifted. The non-gifted group was composed of thirty-nine mothers of children not identified as gifted living in the same geographical area as the gifted group.
A list of gifted children was provided by the Renton Director of Research for the study. A list of randomly selected non-gifted children was obtained from the cumulative records in the district office. The children selected as non-gifted were screened to eliminate any who were currently or had been enrolled in any special education program.

A letter of transmittal was mailed to both groups of mothers. To maintain objectivity, the letter indicated no procedures of grouping or identification of particular subjects. To give the respondent a greater feeling of anonymity, she was requested by the letter not to sign her name to the questionnaire. The questionnaires were coded in such a way that the appropriate group could be identified. (Letter of transmittal appears in Appendix A.)

Instrument

The Parental Attitude Research Instrument was developed and published by Schaefer and Bell in 1958 as a result of their studies at the National Institute of Mental Health. In a review of the literature they felt there was potential value to questionnaire approaches to attitude study, but there was a growing need for an instrument based on a more comprehensive conceptualization of parent attitudes and better quantitative procedures than those previously used. They began their effort to develop a better instrument with a conceptual analysis of the domain of parental attitudes. They had three psychologists sort items from previous
studies by Mark (1953) and Shoben (1949) into subscales which seemed psychologically homogeneous. Through conferences, a common conceptual scheme was agreed upon and all items were placed into a category. Next examined was the percentage of items in each category which had shown significant discrimination in the studies by Mark and Shoben. Items expressing attitudes generally approved by psychologists were found to be poor discriminators since nearly everyone endorsed them. As a result, development of the more differentiating scales was begun. These scales had items typically phrased in the "bad" direction. To make the test-taking task more acceptable to parents, however, some positively phrased "rapport" scales were also added.

Expansion of the coverage of attitudes was the next step attempted by Schaefer and Bell (1958). This was done by consideration of theory and writings of others and by trying to write items that would reflect new constructs. This step was followed by a series of test runs to find items revealing variations in attitudes and showing internal consistency with the other items in the subscale. At this point they had a number of subscales with eight to ten items in each. These subscales were administered to samples of sixty to a hundred primiparae (parents with only one child), multiparae (multiple child parents), and student nurses to further evaluate internal-consistency reliability. Finally, a set of twenty-three five-item scales was selected and tested for internal-consistency reliability. Except for the "Rapport" scales, which had
low variance, the internal-consistency coefficients exceed .50 for both primiparae and multiparae.

To examine test-retest reliability, sixty student nurses were administered the test after a three-month time interval. The actual reliabilities were not reported; however, apparently enough retest reliability was present to encourage Schaefer and Bell to publish their instrument (Becker & Krug, 1965).

The Parental Attitude Research Instrument is similar in format to the scales of Schoben, Mark, and others. It involves the use of rather generalized third-person statements about child rearing such as: "Children would be happier and better behaved if parents would show an interest in their affairs"; "Most young mothers are bothered more by the feeling of being shut up in the home than by anything else." Four response alternatives are permitted: A (strongly agree), a (agree), d (disagree), and D (strongly disagree).

Each response is weighted on a 1 to 4 scale in scoring the questions given in the subtests. The number 4 is assigned to the most acceptable response, which may be either A or D, depending on the question. In most questions D is the most acceptable response, but in cases where A is the most acceptable, the scoring pattern is reversed in order to give the A response the four-point score. The scoring of each specific statement is shown in Appendix B.
The Encouraging Verbalization and the Avoidance of Communication subtests were designed to determine whether the parent would permit or encourage the child to talk about his anxieties, conflicts, hostilities, and disagreements with parental policies. Questionnaire items used in the Encouraging Verbalization subtest were items 1, 24, 47, 70, and 93. Questionnaire items used in the Avoidance of Communication subtest were Items 16, 39, 62, 85, and 108.

The subtest Fostering Dependency was designed to measure overprotection or overpossessiveness of the parent toward the child. Question items used in this subtest included items 2, 25, 48, 71, and 94. Seclusion of the Mother was designed to measure the social adjustment of the mother. The items indicate that "a mother's place is in the home," and that a good mother cannot combine family life with social activities. Questionnaire items 3, 26, 49, 72, and 95 were used in the subtest. The Fear of Harming the Baby subtest was designed as a measure of the amount of confidence and self-assurance maintained by the mothers in handling and caring for the child. Items 6, 29, 52, 75, and 98 were used in this subtest.

The Marital Conflict section contains items which were intended to indirectly reveal any marital tensions of the respondent by questions pertaining to the degree of quarreling and strife to be expected in marriage. Questionnaire items 7, 30, 53, 76, and 99 were used in this
subtest. The Irritability subtest was developed around items which indicate that children "get on a woman's nerves" and that any woman would view raising children as a "nerve-wracking job." Items 9, 32, 55, 78, and 101 were used. The subtest of Excluding Outside Influences was designed to measure parental control and authoritarian attitudes. Questionnaire items 10, 33, 56, 79, and 102 were used in this subtest.

Rejection of the Homemaking Role contains items which indicate that being "shut up in a home" is cause for great unhappiness and that the homemaking role in general is a dull, unrewarding one. Items comprising this subtest are 13, 36, 59, 82, and 105. The Inconsiderateness of Husband subtest contains items which state how inconsiderate husbands in general are perceived by the mother. Items considered are 17, 40, 63, 86, and 109. The Suppression of Sex subtest contains items that indicate that the mother views sex as evil and wishes to avoid the topic with her children. Questionnaire items 18, 41, 64, 87, and 110 were used.

The Ascendancy of the Mother subtest attempts to measure the extent to which the woman does or would like to dominate the family. Items in this subtest are 19, 42, 65, 88, and 111. The Comradship and Sharing subtest is included to measure the amount of "togetherness" the mother and child experience. The items indicate that the more the parents and children do together, the closer the overall relationship. Items 21, 44, 67, 90, and 113 were used. The Dependency of Mother subtest is
an attempt to determine the extent of dependency of the mother upon others for security and support in raising her children. Items included are 23, 46, 69, 92, and 115.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

There was a significant difference between the mothers of the non-gifted group and the mothers of the gifted group as to excluding outside influences. Mothers of the non-gifted group exert more parental control and have more authoritarian attitudes than the mothers of the gifted group. The $t$ value between the two groups was significant at the .05 level.

There was a significant difference between the mothers of the non-gifted group and the mothers of the gifted group as to rejection of the homemaking role. Mothers of the gifted group feel more tied down as homemakers than do the mothers of the non-gifted group. The $t$ value between the two groups was significant at the .01 level.

There was a significant difference between the mothers of the non-gifted males and the mothers of the gifted males as to rejection of the homemaking role. Mothers of the gifted males feel more tied down by the homemaking role. The $t$ value between the two groups was significant at the .01 level.

There was a significant difference between the mothers of the non-gifted males and the mothers of the non-gifted females as to
comradeship and sharing. The mothers of the non-gifted females appear to have a closer parent-child relationship than do the mothers of the non-gifted males. The \( t \) value between the two groups was significant at the .05 level.

There was a significant difference between the mothers of the gifted males and the mothers of the gifted females as to the age at which they gave birth to their first child. The mothers of the gifted males were older. The \( t \) value between the two groups was significant at the .05 level.

The mean scores, standard deviations, and the \( t \) value for each comparison appear in Appendix C.
The study showed that there were many attitudes towards child rearing shared by the two groups. The differences that were found to exist, however, were extremely important ones.

Mothers of the non-gifted group were found to exert more parental control and have more authoritarian attitudes than the mothers of the gifted group. This by no means implies that the mothers of gifted children put few or no limitations and restrictions upon their children. It does seem to indicate that these mothers are willing to allow their children to be exposed to as many facets of life as possible, even though such exposure might hold some threat to other mothers.

It has been suggested that the occupational level of the family of a gifted child is frequently in the professional and managerial groups (Barbe, 1965; Goldberg, 1958; Havighurst, 1964). It appears that a much higher percentage come from this socio-economic class than their proportion in the general population. Families in this classification usually have higher incomes than families in the clerical or laboring classes, a classification in which many families of the non-gifted children are found. A common practice in families of the professional class is exposure of the
children to many forms of art--piano, ballet, voice, and opera. These activities cost money, but the important element of exposure is there. In addition, entertaining is a frequent occurrence among this class, and as a result etiquette is introduced to the child at an early age. In general, those children classified as gifted also seem more likely to have favorable characteristics such as social popularity. It is very possible that enriched family environment plays an important part in the development of the high IQ (Gallagher, 1964; Havighurst, 1964). It may therefore be that the attitudes of the mothers of the non-gifted group towards excluding outside influences are due more to the socio-economic class to which they belong than to actual desire to exert more parental control or to be more authoritarian. To such a mother, being authoritarian may be one of the only ways in which she can prove to herself and to others the importance of the role of homemaker. The mother of the gifted child feels little need to do the same--she clearly rejects the homemaking role.

It was found that mothers of the gifted group reject the homemaking role to a greater degree than do the mothers of the non-gifted. It may be that there is also a correlation between socio-economic class and rejection of the homemaking role. It has already been pointed out that although gifted children are found in every social class, a much higher percentage come from the professional or managerial class. Families classified at this level are frequently more able to offer enrichment for their members than families of the clerical or laboring class. There is
commonly a wide variety of literature of high quality in the home which
the mother, as well as the other members of the family, is likely to read
(Lucito, 1963). Frequently she is involved in the various activities and
organizations to which her children belong. In many cases the mother is
involved in voluntary work in the community. It appears that although
the mother of the gifted child need not be above average intellectually or
have college training, the socio-economic class to which she frequently
belongs encourages her to participate in the broad variety of opportunities
and civic responsibilities available to her outside of her home. For this
reason it is possible that the homemaking role is much less significant
to a mother in this class than to a mother in a lower class. It appears
logical for a woman to reject the homemaking role to a certain degree if
it is possible for her to participate in intellectually stimulating and pro-
ductive activities outside of the home.

In families of gifted children found lower on the socio-economic
scale, it is commonly found that parents have set examples of interest
and attainment in education which have motivated the children. Early
family training has produced a desire for achievement in the children
(Havighurst, 1964). In this type of situation, it is possible that the
mother wants a better life for her children than she has had. Perhaps
family circumstances have prevented her from fulfilling her own aspira-
tions. Such a mother could provide the proper incentive for achievement
for a child with above average ability for learning, even though
opportunities for enrichment by activities outside the home may be very limited. It would appear that this type of woman could be very dissatisfied with her role as homemaker, especially if she resented the limitations the role has placed upon both her and her children.

It would prove interesting to find out the number of mothers of gifted children that eventually seek work outside of the home. It would also be of interest to find the ways in which these mothers spend their leisure time if they don't work.

That no statistically significant differences exist between the educational levels of the two groups of mothers was of great interest to the writer. Hollingworth (1926) found that the educational level of the parents of the gifted subjects in her study was far above the average for their generation. Lucito (1963) also found the parents of the gifted were better educated than parents of non-gifted in his study. The results of this study indicate, however, that the educational level between the two groups is comparable. It is possible that the lack of difference may result from the increased number of women now attending college. These women cover an extremely wide range of intellectual ability. Several decades ago it was more the trend for only promising high school women graduates to go to college. Now it appears that almost any young woman, regardless of her ability, can get into a college--at least a two-year college. It is relatively easy to stay in college now--"flunking out" has been made more difficult. In many ways attending college for woman today
is more of a social amenity than an academic endeavor. This is one possible answer to the lack of differences in the educational level of the two groups—a greater percentage of women with lower levels of intellectual ability are attending college, at least for a year or two.

It has long been a popular belief that the gifted child is an only child or perhaps has only one sibling (Hollingworth, 1926; Barbe, 1965). The results of this study indicate that no statistically significant differences exist between the mothers of the two groups when compared on the total number of children in their families. The average number of children for the mothers of the non-gifted was 3.6 whereas the average number for the mothers of the gifted was 3.3. A possible explanation is that until recent years only the wealthy or better educated people had the knowledge of family planning and could see the need for doing so. It has already been stated that in early studies the mothers of gifted children were better educated. Quantity and quality of education have improved remarkably in the last few decades, and now information about family planning is available to all classes of people with all types of educations. Therefore, both groups of mothers tend to have families of similar size—relatively small.

The results indicate that no differences exist between the two groups of mothers when compared as to the age at which they give birth to their first child. This may be due to the great change now taking place within our society. A young woman has several choices as to her
future upon graduation from high school. Many obtain some type of training before they marry. Some continue working after their training is completed. If a young woman decides to marry, she need not give up her work or discontinue her college education. The point is that regardless what a girl does after high school, i.e., go to college, get a job, or marry immediately, many appear to wait about the same time to have their first child. Young men and women may be marrying as young or younger than the young people in generations past, but they have almost complete control over when they wish to begin their families—a situation quite different from past generations. This may be a possible explanation for the lack of difference in the age of two groups of mothers relative to the birth of their first child.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the purpose of this study to determine whether or not any differences exist between the attitudes toward child rearing and family life of mothers of gifted children and the attitudes toward child rearing and family life of mothers of non-gifted children of the same age, living in the same community, and attending the same schools. These children were enrolled in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in the Renton School District during the 1967-1968 academic year. The mothers were compared on responses given on the Parental Attitude Research Inventory and on the Maternal Questionnaire.

The conclusions found in this study were as follows:

1. That no statistically significant differences exist between the groups as to their attitudes toward the following responses given on the PARI:

   a. suppression of sex  
   c. encouraging verbalization  
   d. seclusion of the mother  
   e. dependency of the mother  
   f. fear of harming the baby  
   g. fostering dependency  
   h. marital conflict  
   i. irritability  
   l. avoidance of communication  
   m. ascendancy of the mother  
   n. inconsiderateness of the husband
2. That statistically significant differences exist between the
groups as to their attitudes toward the following responses
given on the PARI:

b. comradeship and sharing—the mothers of the non-gifted
females appear to have a closer parent-child relation­
ship than do the mothers of the non-gifted males.

j. excluding outside influences—mothers of the non-
gifted group exert more parental control and have more
authoritarian attitudes than the mothers of the gifted
group.

k. rejection of the homemaking role—mothers of the gifted
group feel more tied down as homemakers than do the
mothers of the non-gifted group. In addition, it was
also determined that the mothers of the gifted males
feel significantly more tied down by the homemaking
role than do the mothers of the non-gifted males.

3. That no statistically significant differences exist between
the educational level of the mothers of gifted children and
the educational level of the mothers of non-gifted children.

4. That no statistically significant differences exist between
the total number of children in the families of mothers of
gifted children and the total number of children in the
families of mothers of non-gifted children.
5. That no statistically significant differences exist between the ages of the mothers of gifted children and the ages of the mothers of non-gifted children relative to the birth of their first child.
CHAPTER VI
RECOMMENDATIONS

Further study into the difference of attitudes about comradeship and sharing, excluding outside influences, and rejection of the home-making role for the groups should be done to determine possibilities as to cause-effect relationship. Are the attitudes of the mothers of the gifted children contributing to their children being gifted, or does the giftedness of the children have a strong influence upon the child-rearing attitudes of the mothers?

Since it was found that mothers of the gifted children are very receptive to outside influences affecting their children, it is felt that the public schools should capitalize upon this factor and expose these children to as many aspects of life as possible. This exposure should begin in the first grade and should include music, art, literature, religion, philosophy, science, and politics. Enrichment should be provided in these areas at all age levels, with more in-depth study taking place in junior high and senior high school. As to the method of presentation of this enrichment, further research in this area could result in the development of a realistic program for the public schools.
With the results indicating that the mothers of the gifted group strongly reject the homemaking role, it is felt that the mothers could be urged to become actively involved with the public schools in the development and execution of enrichment programs for their children. This would satisfy their desire for intellectual stimulation outside of the home while at the same time working towards a worthwhile and personally meaningful goal.

The study of gifted children is a fascinating one. It is only in recent years that our nation has begun to realize the seriousness of the problem now facing us—the education and preparation for adult life of these gifted children. Great care must be taken to inspire and motivate these children in our educational systems so they will want to work to their capacities. In addition, equal emphasis must be put upon helping these children make a healthy adjustment to living in a world that at times displays great misunderstanding of them. The only way in which we can achieve these goals is through extensive research into all areas related to the gifted. This is an extremely serious project with which we are now faced—the future of our nation and of the world lies in the hands of these children.
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APPENDIX A

PARENTAL ATTITUDE RESEARCH INVENTORY
APPENDIX A

PARENTAL ATTITUDE RESEARCH INVENTORY

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Inventory of Attitudes on Family Life and Children

Read each of the statements below and then rate them as follows:

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<td>mildly disagree</td>
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</table>

Indicate your opinion by drawing a circle around the "A" if you strongly agree, around the "a" if you mildly agree, around the "d" if you mildly disagree, and around the "D" if you strongly disagree.

There are no right or wrong answers, so answer according to your own opinion. It is very important to the study that all questions be answered. Many of the statements will seem alike but all are necessary to show slight differences of opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better.</td>
<td>A   a   d   D</td>
</tr>
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<td>2. A good mother should shelter her child from life's little difficulties.</td>
<td>A   a   d   D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The home is the only thing that matters to a good mother.</td>
<td>A   a   d   D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Some children are just so bad they must be taught to fear adults for their own good.</td>
<td>A   a   d   D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Children should realize how much parents have to give up for them.</td>
<td>A   a   d   D</td>
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</table>
6. You must always keep tight hold of baby during her bath for in a careless moment she might slip. A a d D
7. People who think they can get along in marriage without arguments just don't know the facts. A a d D
8. A child will be grateful later on for strict training. A a d D
9. Children will get on any woman's nerves if she has to be with them all day. A a d D
10. It's best for the child if he never gets started wondering whether his mother's views are right. A a d D
11. More parents should teach their children to have unquestioning loyalty to them. A a d D
12. A child should be taught to avoid fighting no matter what happens. A a d D
13. One of the worst things about taking care of a home is a woman feels that she can't get out. A a d D
14. Parents should adjust to the children some rather than always expecting the children to adjust to the parents. A a d D
15. There are so many things a child has to learn in life there is no excuse for him sitting around with time on his hands. A a d D
16. If you let children talk about their troubles they end up complaining even more. A a d D
17. Mothers would do their job better with the children if fathers were more kind. A a d D
18. A young child should be protected from hearing about sex. A a d D
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<th></th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>If a mother doesn't go ahead and make rules for the home, the children and husband will get into troubles they don't need to.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>A mother should make it her business to know everything her children are thinking.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Children would be happier and better behaved if parents would show an interest in their affairs.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Most children are toilet trained by 15 months of age.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>There is nothing worse for a young mother than being alone while going through her first experience with a baby.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Children should be encouraged to tell their parents about it whenever they feel family rules are unreasonable.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>A mother should do her best to avoid any disappointment for her child.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>The women who want lots of parties seldom make good mothers.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>It is frequently necessary to drive the mischief out of a child before he will behave.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>A mother must expect to give up her own happiness for that of her child.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>All young mothers are afraid of their awkwardness in handling and holding the baby.</td>
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<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Strict discipline develops a find strong character.</td>
<td>A  a  d  D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Mothers very often feel that they can't stand their children a moment longer.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>d</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>A parent should never be made to look wrong in a child's eyes.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>The child should be taught to revere his parents above all other grown-ups.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>A child should be taught to always come to his parents or teachers rather than fight when he is in trouble.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Having to be with children all the time gives a woman the feeling her wings have been clipped.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
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<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Parents must earn the respect of their children by the way they act.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Children who don't try hard for success will feel they have missed out on things later on.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
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<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Parents who start a child talking about his worries don't realize that sometimes it's better to just leave well enough alone.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Husbands could do their part if they were less selfish.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>It is very important that young boys and girls not be allowed to see each other completely undressed.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Children and husbands do better when the mother is strong enough to settle most of the problems.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>A child should never keep a secret from his parents.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Laughing at children's jokes and telling children jokes makes things go more smoothly.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
45. The sooner a child learns to walk the better he's trained.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

46. It isn't fair that a woman has to bear just about all the burden of raising children by herself.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

47. A child has a right to his own point of view and ought to be allowed to express it.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

48. A child should be protected from jobs which might be too tiring or hard for him.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

49. A woman has to choose between having a well run home and hobnobbing around with neighbors and friends.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

50. A wise parent will teach a child early just who is boss.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

51. Few women get the gratitude they deserve for all they have done for their children.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

52. Mothers never stop blaming themselves if their babies are injured in accidents.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

53. No matter how well a married couple love one another, there are always differences which cause irritation and lead to arguments.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

54. Children who are held to firm rules grow up to be the best adults.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

55. It's a rare mother who can be sweet and even tempered with her children all day.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

56. Children should never learn things outside the home which make them doubt their parents' ideas.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D  

57. A child soon learns that there is no greater wisdom than that of his parents.  
   Agree  Disagree  
   A  a  d  D
58. There is no good excuse for a child hitting another child.  
   A  a  d  D

59. Most young mothers are bothered more by the feeling of being shut up in the home than by anything else.  
   A  a  d  D

60. Children are too often asked to do all the compromising and adjustment and that is not fair.  
   A  a  d  D

61. Parents should teach their children that the way to get ahead is to keep busy and not waste time.  
   A  a  d  D

62. Children pester you with all their little upsets if you aren't careful from the first.  
   A  a  d  D

63. When a mother doesn't do a good job with children, it's probably because the father doesn't do his part around the home.  
   A  a  d  D

64. Children who take part in sex play become sex criminals when they grow up.  
   A  a  d  D

65. A mother has to do the planning because she is the one who knows what's going on in the home.  
   A  a  d  D

66. An alert parent should try to learn all her child's thoughts.  
   A  a  d  D

67. Parents who are interested in hearing about their children's parties, dates and fun help them grow up right.  
   A  a  d  D

68. The earlier a child is weaned from its emotional ties to its parents the better it will handle its own problems.  
   A  a  d  D

69. A wise woman will do anything to avoid being by herself before and after a new baby.  
   A  a  d  D
70. A child's ideas should be seriously considered in making family decisions.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

71. Parents should know better than to allow their children to be exposed to difficult situations.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

72. Too many women forget that a mother's place is in the home.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

73. Children need some of the natural meanness taken out of them.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

74. Children should be more considerate of their mothers since their mothers suffer so much for them.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

75. Most mothers are fearful that they may hurt their babies in handling them.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

76. There are some things which just can't be settled by a mild discussion.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

77. Most children should have more discipline than they get.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

78. Raising children is a nerve-wracking job.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

79. The child should not question the thinking of his parents.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

80. Parents deserve the highest esteem and regard of their children.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

81. Children should not be encouraged to box or wrestle because it often leads to trouble or injury.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

82. One of the bad things about raising children is that you aren't free enough of the time to do just as you like.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D

83. As much as is reasonable a parent should try to treat a child as an equal.  
Agree  Disagree  
A a d D
84. A child who is "on the go" all the time will most likely be happy. A a d D

85. If a child has upset feelings, it is best to leave him alone and not make it look serious. A a d D

86. If mothers could get their wishes, they would most often ask that their husband be more understanding. A a d D

87. Sex is one of the greatest problems to be contended with in children. A a d D

88. The whole family does fine if the mother puts her shoulders to the wheel and takes charge of things. A a d D

89. A mother has a right to know everything going on in her child's life because her child is part of her. A a d D

90. If parents would have fun with their children, they would be more apt to take their advice. A a d D

91. A mother should make an effort to get her child toilet trained at the earliest possible time. A a d D

92. Most women need more time than they are given to rest up in the home after going through childbirth. A a d D

93. When a child is in trouble, he ought to know he won't be punished for talking about it with his parents. A a d D

94. Children should be kept away from all hard jobs which might be discouraging. A a d D

95. A good mother will find enough social life within the family. A a d D

96. It is sometimes necessary for the parents to break the child's will. A a d D
97. Mothers sacrifice almost all their own fun for their children.  
   Agree   Disagree
   A   a   d   D

98. A mother's greatest fear is that in a forgetful moment she might let something bad happen to the baby.  
   Agree   Disagree
   A   a   d   D

99. It's natural to have quarrels when two people who both have minds of their own get married.  
   Agree   Disagree
   A   a   d   D

100. Children are actually happier under strict training.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

101. It's natural for a mother to "blow her top" when children are selfish and demanding.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

102. There is nothing worse than letting a child hear criticisms of his mother.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

103. Loyalty to parents comes before anything else.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

104. Most parents prefer a quiet child to a "scrappy" one.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

105. A young mother feels "held down" because there are lots of things she wants to do while she is young.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

106. There is no reason parents should have their own way all the time, any more than that children should have their own way all the time.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

107. The sooner a child learns that a wasted minute is lost forever the better off he will be.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

108. The trouble with giving attention to children's problems is they usually just make up a lot of stories to keep you interested.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D

109. Few men realize that a mother needs some fun in life too.  
    Agree   Disagree
    A   a   d   D
110. There is usually something wrong with a child who asks a lot of questions about sex.  

111. A married woman knows that she will have to take the lead in family matters.  

112. It is a mother's duty to make sure she knows her child's innermost thoughts.  

113. When you do things together, children feel close to you and can talk easier.  

114. A child should be weaned away from the bottle or breast as soon as possible.  

115. Taking care of a small baby is something that no woman should be expected to do all by herself.
MATERNAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many children do you have? ________________

2. Please list your children by age and sex.

3. What is your present marital status?
   a. married
   b. divorced
   c. separated
   d. widowed
   e. other

4. What kind of work does your husband do? ________________

5. What kind of work do you do? _________________________

6. How many hours do you spend each week working outside the home?
   a. 40 or more
   b. 20 to 40
   c. less than 20
   d. none

7. How far did you go in school?
   a. I graduated from college
   b. I had 2 years or more of college
   c. I graduated from high school
   d. I did not graduate from high school.

8. How old are you?
   a. over 40
   b. 30-39
   c. 25-29
   d. less than 25

9. At what age did you have your first child?
   a. 16 through 18
   b. 19 through 21
   c. 22 through 24
   d. 25 or older
Dear Mrs.

Central Washington State College, through its professional staff and graduate student research program, is continually attempting to better understand the needs of children and how they can best be served by the schools.

Enclosed you will find a questionnaire which is part of a study designed to sample the opinions of parents relative to their attitudes on family life and children. Your name was chosen at random in the hope that you would be willing to help as we attempt to clarify some ideas relative to this area.

For this study, we would like your opinion as a mother. If you would complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us in the stamped envelope as soon as possible it would be greatly appreciated.

As this is a research project and we are interested only in collective data, there is no need to sign your name.

Sincerely,

Miss Kemme Caldwell
Graduate Student, C. W. S. C.
Teacher, Renton School District
APPENDIX B

PARENTAL ATTITUDE RESEARCH INVENTORY

RATINGS OF SUBSCALE ITEMS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Encouraging Verbalization</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24. Children should be encouraged to tell their parents about it whenever they feel family rules are unreasonable.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47. A child has a right to his own point of view and ought to be allowed to express it.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70. A child's ideas should be seriously considered in making family decisions.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93. Family life would be happier if parents made children feel they were free to say what they think about anything.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Fostering Dependency</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. A good mother should shelter her child from life's little difficulties.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25. A mother should do her best to avoid any disappointment for her child.</td>
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<td>48. A child should be protected from jobs which might be too tiring or hard for him.</td>
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Item No.  

71. Parents should know better than to allow their children to be exposed to difficult situations.  

94. Children should be kept away from all hard jobs which might be discouraging.  

Seclusion of the Mother  

3. The home is the only thing that matters to a good mother.  

26. The women who want lots of parties seldom make good mothers.  

49. A woman has to choose between having a well run home and hobnobbing around with neighbors and friends.  

72. Too many women forget that a mother's place is in the home.  

95. A good mother will find enough social life within the family.  

Fear of Harming Baby  

6. You must always keep tight hold of baby during his bath for in a careless moment he might slip.  

29. All young mothers are afraid of their awkwardness in handling and holding the baby.  

52. Mothers never stop blaming themselves if their babies are injured in accidents.  

75. Most mothers are fearful that they may hurt their babies in handling them.  

98. A mother's greatest fear is that in a forgetful moment she might let something bad happen to the baby.
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<th>Irritability</th>
<th>Excluding Outside Influences</th>
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<tr>
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<td>People who think they can get along in marriage without arguments just don't know the facts.</td>
<td>9. Children will get on any woman's nerves if she has to be with them all day.</td>
<td>10. It's best for the child if he never gets started wondering whether his mother's views are right.</td>
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<td>No matter how well a married couple love one another, there are always differences which cause irritation and lead to arguments.</td>
<td>55. It's a rare mother who can be sweet and even tempered with her children all day.</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>There are some things which just can't be settled by a mild discussion.</td>
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33. A parent should never be made to look wrong in a child's eyes. 1 2 3 4

56. Children should never learn things outside the home which make them doubt their parents' ideas. 1 2 3 4

79. The child should not question the thinking of his parents. 1 2 3 4

102. There is nothing worse than letting a child hear criticisms of his mother. 1 2 3 4

Rejection of the Homemaking Role

13. One of the worst things about taking care of a home is a woman feels that she can't get out. 1 2 3 4

36. Having to be with the children all the time gives a woman the feeling her wings have been clipped. 1 2 3 4

59. Most young mothers are bothered more by the feeling of being shut up in the home than by anything else. 1 2 3 4

82. One of the bad things about raising children in that you aren't free enough of the time to do just as you like. 1 2 3 4

105. A young mother feels "held down" because there are lots of things she wants to do while she is young. 1 2 3 4

Avoidance of Communication

16. If you let children talk about their troubles they end up complaining even more. 1 2 3 4

39. Parents who start a child talking about his worries don't realize that sometimes it's better to just leave well enough alone. 1 2 3 4

62. Children pester you with all their little upsets if you aren't careful from the first. 1 2 3 4
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<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85.</td>
<td>If a child has upset feelings it is best to leave him alone and not make it look so serious.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>108.</td>
<td>The trouble with giving attention to children's problems is they usually just make up a lot of stories to keep you interested.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inconsiderateness of the Husband</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>63.</td>
<td>When a mother doesn't do a good job with children it's probably because the father doesn't do his part around the home.</td>
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<td>86.</td>
<td>If mothers could get their wishes, they would most often ask that the husband be more understanding.</td>
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<td>109.</td>
<td>Few men realize that a mother needs some fun in life too.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suppression of Sex</strong></td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>A young child should be protected from hearing about sex.</td>
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<td>It is very important that young boys and girls not be allowed to see each other completely undressed</td>
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Ascendancy of the Mother

19. If a mother doesn't go ahead and make rules for the home, the children and husband will get into trouble they don't need to. 1 2 3 4

42. Children and husbands do better when the mother is strong enough to settle most of the problems. 1 2 3 4

65. A mother has to do the planning because she is the one who knows what's going on in the home. 1 2 3 4

88. The whole family does fine if the mother puts her shoulder to the wheel and takes charge of things. 1 2 3 4

111. A married woman knows that she will have to take the lead in family matters. 1 2 3 4

Comradeship and Sharing

21. Children would be happier and better behaved if parents would show an interest in their affairs. 4 3 2 1

44. Laughing at children's jokes and telling children jokes makes things go more smoothly. 4 3 2 1

67. Parents who are interested in hearing about their children's parties, dates, and fun help them grow up right. 4 3 2 1

90. If parents would have fun with their children, the children would be more apt to take their advice. 4 3 2 1

113. When you do things together, children feel close to you and can talk easier. 4 3 2 1

Dependency of the Mother

23. There is nothing worse for a young mother than being alone while going through her first experience with a baby. 1 2 3 4
46. It isn't fair that a woman has to bear just about all the burden of raising children by herself. 1 2 3 4

69. A wise woman will do anything to avoid being by herself before and after a new baby. 1 2 3 4

92. Most women need more time than they are given to rest up in the home after going through childbirth. 1 2 3 4

115. Taking care of a small baby is something that no woman should be expected to do all by herself. 4 3 2 1
APPENDIX C

STATISTICAL DATA
## APPENDIX C

### COMPARISON OF SCORES

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