Premarital Sex Norms: A Test of a Conceptual Model

Jerry Asselin
PREMARITAL SEX NORMS: A TEST OF A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Sociology & Anthropology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

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

by
Jerry D. Asselin
July 1971
PREMARITAL SEX NORMS: A TEST OF A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

APPROVED July 28 1971

J.annon Wells
Director of Thesis

William E. Angell

Dean of the Graduate School
Although many persons have made direct and indirect contributions toward this research, I am most grateful to Professor William Snizek and James Ewalt for their assistance.

I wish to express special thanks to Professor James Gipson Wells for directing this thesis. Because of his keen advice, guidance, and cooperation, this research effort was brought to a successful conclusion.
# Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .................................................. ii
LIST OF TABLES ..................................................... v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ........................................ vi

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION .................................................. 1
   The Hebrew Tradition
   Greek Roman Tradition
   Christian Tradition
   Romantic Era
   Feminist Movement
   Industrial Revolution

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ....................................... 12
   Behavioral Studies
   Normative Studies
   Ideal Mate Studies
   Sociological Variable Studies
   Age
   Religion

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM ................................ 31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. METHOD AND DATA ANALYSIS</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section One</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Modification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Construction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use and Design of the Questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Normative Patterns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Permissiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Abstinence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling Abstinence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Abstinence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Normative Patterns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Permissiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Abstinence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling Abstinence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Standard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Findings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conceptual Model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations and Shortcomings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for Further Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Incidence of Premarital Sexual Intercourse of Males as Reported by Various Investigators</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Incidence of Premarital Sexual Intercourse of Females as Reported by Various Investigators</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Percentage Holding Various Premarital Sex Norms by Sex From Three Studies</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Holding Abstinence or Permissive Norms at Various Levels of Reference</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Conceptual Model as Initially Designed by Wells</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Revised Hypothesized Model Subjected to Testing by Wells</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Hypothesized Model as Tested in this Research</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Two Combined Patterns to Form the Totally Permissive Pattern for Females</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Three Combined Self-Abstinence Patterns for Females</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Two Combined Sibling Abstinence Patterns for Females</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Two Combined Permissiveness For Ideal Mate Patterns for Females</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Total Abstinence Pattern For Females</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Two Combined Patterns Used to Form the Total Permissiveness Patterns for Males</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Illustration of Total Abstinence Pattern for Males</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Two Combined Patterns Used to Form Sibling Abstinence Pattern for Males</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Illustration of the Two Combined Patterns that Form the Male Double Standard</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTION

For the past two decades, issues concerning the sexual morality of young people in America have been highly debated.

Lawrence Lipton is one of several proponents who argue that a sexual revolution among young people is now occurring.\(^1\) On the other hand, Ira Reiss contends that changes in premarital sexual behavior have been rather moderate, especially the rate of increase of premarital coitus.\(^2\) He further suggests that major changes have been in the attitudes of young people toward premarital sex, rather than in actual behavior.\(^3\)

Perhaps the most recent and thorough investigation of premarital sex norms has been conducted by Gilgon Wells.\(^4\) His approach was to develop a conceptual model which would

---

\(^1\)Lawrence Lipton, *The Erotic Revolution* (Los Angeles: Sherbourne Press, 1965).


reveal the strength and manner in which young people perceive premarital sex norms. He hypothesized a model which was devised for the purpose of examining various sex norms at various levels of reference.

The concern of this study is to re-test the validity of this newly hypothesized model developed by Wells.

There have been two prevalent thoughts in America regarding the relationship between coitus and marriage. The first has been that intercourse should take place only within marriage and that engaging in sexual intercourse outside of marriage is vile or sinful. The second manner of thought involves the attitude held by members of each past generation that they were less promiscuous than the present generation. For example, parents often claim they were less promiscuous in their premarital sexual behavior than are the young people of the present generation. Conversely, it appears that each younger generation considers the preceding one to have held standards of higher morality in relation to sexual behavior.

At the beginning of the Twentieth century there were few alternative norms competing with the past ones of chastity and the double standard. This is not intended to imply that there were not various types of permissiveness, but rather to suggest that only recently has permissiveness under certain circumstances been accepted by a large enough
group to be called a norm.\textsuperscript{5} To better understand these
sex norms it is necessary to examine how sexual behavior
has been perceived in the past.

The Hebrew Tradition

One of the most important influences of today's sexual
standards can be traced to the Hebrew civilization. In
Hebrew society, marriage was more of a socio-economic
arrangement between two families, than a choice between two
people. With the parents selecting the mates, love or
mutual affection was of little or no concern. Their reli-
gion also stressed early marriages and several children.\textsuperscript{6}
Although polygyny and concubinage had been practiced in
their earlier history, monogamy became the favored type of
marriage.\textsuperscript{7}

The double standard apparently prevailed in the divorce
laws and sexual morality of the Hebrews. For example, the
law permitted only the male to initiate a divorce\textsuperscript{8} and, in
respect to sexual morality, punishment was far more severe
for a female, if she were suspected of, or proven to have
engaged in, premarital or extra-marital intercourse.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{6}Ira Reiss, Premarital Sexual Standards in America
\textsuperscript{7}Deuteronomy 21:18.
\textsuperscript{8}Deuteronomy 24:1.
\textsuperscript{9}Deuteronomy 22:20-21.
Greek-Roman Tradition

Two other civilizations, the Greek and Roman, must also be included if the development of present-day sexual standards are to be placed in their proper perspective. In Greek society, women were viewed as being innately inferior to men, and by virtue of their inferiority, they should obey their husbands and manage the household. In addition, wives were carefully guarded and very often were not permitted to speak to other men. For the Greek husband, several forms of sexual pleasure were available and acceptable. In addition to the common prostitute, the Greeks created a higher-class of prostitute (the Hetaerae) who was educated and trained for the purpose of entertaining and pleasing men.

It seems that extramarital sex was not only permitted for men, but was expected of them; for women, it was strictly forbidden. Obviously, the double standard was very much in effect at this time.

In Rome, the status of the wife was very similar to that of the Grecian wife. However, one privilege that the Roman wife had over her Grecian sister, was that she was permitted to attend banquets and public places with

---


her husband, whereas the latter was prohibited from doing so.  

Great importance was placed upon female virginity in Rome and Athens, as is the case in most double standard cultures. However, there was a major difference between the two cultures in respect to ensuring virginity of their women. The Romans, instead of keeping their women confined to a specific section of the home or locked in chastity belts, taught the female to think of virginity as the highest virtue; thus her behavior was regulated more by her conscience, than by physical means.

**Christian Tradition**

In general, the religious restrictions against sex were not felt until the influence of Christianity. Because of the teachings of Paul, and the anticipated return of Christ, rejection of all worldly things including sex and marriage was the highest type of achievement possible for the early Christians. As Christianity came to be embodied in the Catholic Church, the Virgin Mary was the ideal image for all women; i.e., virginity was the highest possible state of being. Women were viewed as being the root of all evil, since the female was perceived as the "original

---


source" of sin. Consequently the early Christians accorded her with the lowest status of any other known cultures. Later, the Medieval Church became so preoccupied with sex that it prohibited sexual coitus between husband and wife, except for the purpose of procreation. The result of this extreme doctrine was an increased deviancy from the church rules by both parishioners and the clergy.

Ira Reiss suggests that "the Christian influence has given our culture an element of guilt associated with all sexual behavior outside of marriage." 

Romantic Era

Another influence upon present-day sexual standards in America can be traced to the period which is commonly referred to as courtly or romantic love.

The basis of the romantic tradition appears to be in the worshiping of the Virgin Mary, which reached its peak somewhere between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

---

16 Reiss, Premarital Sexual Standards, p. 50.
17 Wells, "Structure and Change . . .," pp. 5-6.
18 Reiss, Premarital Sexual Standards, p. 53.
Traditionally, during this period, romantic love was usually chaste and non-sexual and most often occurred between a married aristocratic woman and a bachelor knight or troubadour.\(^{20}\)

With the early romantic movement, love and sexual coitus were not to be consumated; to do so would destroy the relationship. If love was to last it must continue free from sexual intercourse and marriage.\(^{21}\)

By the sixteenth century, the former courtly love system of non-sexual involvement between a noblewoman and her champion began to break down. Now rather than a traditional kiss on the forehead, sexual intercourse became the reward for some heroic deed performed for a lady.\(^{22}\)

By the seventeenth century romantic love had secured many adherents, and the focus of love was changing from the married women to the single girl. However, this transition took place primarily between couples who were engaged. Thus, it was at this point that love and marriage were combined, thereby challenging the court rulings that had declared love and marriage incompatible. It is also


important to note that the idea of coitus occurring within marriage was also re-emphasized.23

Feminist Movement

The Feminist Movement is also related to the Romantic Movement because it was during the seventeenth century that women began to publically fight for equal treatment, especially in the areas of the double standard, the doctrine of female inferiority and suffrage. Although this movement is possible 300 years old, the greatest impact has been in the last century.24 In respect to sexual freedom, women's gains have a more recent history. It has only been a few decades since women have openly advocated equal sexual freedom, which is partly due to society's increasing volition to tolerate more liberal behavior for women. By the turn of the nineteenth century, women were beginning to smoke, drink and patronize taverns.25

In the 1920's the suffragettes not only won the right to vote, they also acquired for the first time economic independence. Thus, the double standard had been weakened, but still persisted in most areas.

23Reiss, Premarital Sexual Standards . . . , pp. 57-59.
25Ibid., p. 8.
Industrial Revolution

Another event which affected present-day sexual standards, and made possible the feminist revolt, is the industrial revolution. With technological advancement, several latent and manifest events occurred. For example, when women began working outside of the home, they not only had contact with several other males, but more important, they no longer depended completely upon the male for economic support.

Other consequences of technological advancement are increased mobility, improved birth control techniques, mass society, and finally, the lessening of primary social controls. In brief, with people migrating from rural areas to the cities, seeking employment in factories, ostracism and other means of social control were less effective in regulating sexual behavior. Agreement as to what constituted appropriate behavior was often confusing and/or lacking. Consequently, some of the older sexual standards were altered or destroyed, making possible more permissive or new standards.

Perhaps it is important to point out that the sexual standards, attitudes, and behavior just discussed have not changed rapidly, but rather had been undergoing a gradual transition for several centuries. Therefore, more recent changes may appear to be less important in comparison.

Nevertheless, there are several persons who refer to
the 1960's as the "decade of protest." Lambert suggests that young people in the past have rebelled against antiquated traditions and are presently active in attempting to change most of these attitudes and customs. Protestors in the past, generally tended to "withdraw" from society, whereas today the young people actively attack the system. Sexual norms of the past and present are one of the areas under attack.

There is little doubt that sexual norms will continue to change. Thus, this thesis has justification both sociologically and socially. Socially, the public is in need of current and valid information in respect to this topic. Also, there have been few major empirical studies conducted since 1965. Sociologically, there is a good deal of confusion in regard to conceptualization of premarital sex norms. Therefore, it is of major importance to improve the methodology in attempting to clarify and explain the structure of these norms as they develop in society.

In brief, the needs for subjecting past research to further empirical testing can be summarized as follows:
(1) all scientific research when conducted by an individual or individuals is subject to error and fallacious reporting,
(2) to support the findings of the investigator himself,
(3) to support the findings at a different time, and under other conditions, (4) to acquire a more precise measurement

of the variables which contribute to the cause-effect relationship, and (5) to reconstruct or reject theoretical constructs.

The purpose of this investigation is to further improve and re-test the validity of the conceptual model, constructed by Gipson Wells (to be explained in Chapter III) and to increase understanding and knowledge in respect to premarital sexual norms. Stated in another way, verification of the model will more accurately reflect the manner in which young people perceive, and apply these norms.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The approach utilized for reviewing the literature relevant to this study of premarital sex norms was as follows: (1) to include those studies which investigated premarital heterosexual behavior; (2) to include studies which focused upon the norms governing premarital heterosexual behavior; (3) to include studies which attempted to measure the importance of premarital chastity; and (4) to include studies which have been concerned with specific variables such as age, religion, and social class, in relation to premarital coitus.

Obviously, all of the studies could not be placed exclusively in one category. Some of the major studies could have been placed in any one of the four categories, but due to the vast amount of literature on this topic some system of organization was essential.

Behavioral Studies

Research concerning premarital sexual behavior can be found dating back to 1915, however the Kinsey studies

of 1948-1953, were the first to devote wide attention to
this subject.

Several other studies, however, using diverse samples
and methods were conducted prior to the Kinsey investiga-
tions. Winston Ehrmann has summarized these various studies
and their findings in a concise manner. The data are par-
tially reproduced and presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Perhaps the most important implication of the various
data were the inconsistent incidence of premarital coitus
among females. When examining the findings for consistency,
one particular trend emerges. Male and female post college
adults indicated higher rates of premarital coitus, with
the majority of them being married at the time of the study.
One interpretation is that the persons included in the sam-
ples were more favorably disposed to tell the truth about
their behavior than were those that could be labeled as
"restrained" or "inhibited." However, Kinsey's data offers
a more plausible explanation. His studies indicate that
most incidence of premarital intercourse occurred with the
future spouse and during the engagement period. Thus, it
seems that more married couples would have gone through
this period than unmarried persons.

The Kinsey data may be the most accurate concerning
premarital sexual behavior of adults, but none of the
informants were college students and therefore it was not
possible for him to discuss contemporary sexual behavior
of college students.
TABLE 1. Incidence of Premarital Sexual Intercourse
of Males as Reported by Various Investigators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Percent Incidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exner</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>518 college students [single]</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peck and Wells</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>180 young adults [married and single]</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peck and Wells</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>230 young adults [married and single]</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>100 adults [married]</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley and Britten</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>470 college students [single] [questionnaire]</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley and Britten</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>472 college students [single] [interview]</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersen</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>419 college students [single]</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terman</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>760 adults [married]</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porterfield and Salley</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>285 college students [single]</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finger</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>111 college students [single]</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hohman and Schaffner</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1000 adults [single]</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinsey, et. al.</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>3271 adults [single and married]</td>
<td>51-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>95 college students [single]</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilbert Youth Research</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>-- college students [single]</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgess and Wallin</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>580 adults [married]</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landis and Landis</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>600 college students [single and married]</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehrmann</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>274 college students [single and nonveterans]</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehrmann</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>302 college students [single and veterans]</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehrmann</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>50 college students [single, half veterans]</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2. Incidence of Premarital Sexual Intercourse of Females as Reported by Various Investigators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Percent Incidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1200 older adults [single]</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1000 young adults [married]</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>100 adults [married]</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickinson and Beam</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>500 young adults [single]</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley and Britten</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>618 college students [single] [questionnaire]</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley and Britten</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>154 college students [single] [interview]</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terman</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>777 young adults [married]</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landis, et. al.</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>100 young people [single]</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landis, et. al.</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>44 young adults [married]</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porterfield and Salley</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>328 college students [single]</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilbert Youth Research</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>210 college students [single]</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgess and Wallin</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>604 young adults [married]</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landis and Landis</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1000 college students [single and married]</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beevy</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>120 college students [single]</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehrmann</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>285 college students [single]</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehrmann</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>50 college students [single] [interview]</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Winston Ehrmann (1959) conducted a study of college students at approximately the same time that Kinsey was gathering his data. His findings partially support those of Kinsey's in frequency of premarital intercourse for males, but for females incidence rates are somewhat lower.

Lester Kirkendall, in a more recent study (1961) investigated premarital sexual behavior. His primary interest was upon examining the degree and quality of interpersonal relationships involved in the sexual unions of young people. A continuum was developed for the purpose of examining significant variables which appeared to influence the nature of sexual relationships. The continuum was divided into six levels in order to distribute 668 sexual liaisons along its range. Each liaison was classified according to a level, depending upon the circumstances under which intercourse occurred. Levels ranged from prostitute (level I) to fiance's (level IV). After the sexual liaisons were classified by levels, each one was analyzed for the purpose of isolating situations that would illustrate how five characteristics, such as attitudes, motivations and communication determine the quality of interpersonal relationship, and were influenced by premarital sexual intercourse.2

His findings indicated that premarital intercourse ranged from a low of 14% for engaged couples to a high of

49% with casual acquaintances who were pursued strictly for
sexual exploitation.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 254-256.}

Bell and Blumberg (1959) have attempted to relate pre-
marital coitus to religious identification and background.
In their sample of 400 college students, they found between
40-46% of males had experienced premarital intercourse,
while female incidence showed 10% had engaged in coitus on
casual dates, 15% while going steady, and 31% while engaged.\footnote{Robert R. Bell and Leonard Blumberg, "Courtship Inti-
macy and Religious Background," Marriage and Family Living,
Vol. 21 (November, 1959), pp. 356-360.}

More recently, Freedman (1965), interviewed and tested
recent graduates of an eastern women's college. He reported
a premarital coital rate of 22\%, with the majority of these
relationships occurring when there was strong emotional
involvement with the male.\footnote{Mervin B. Freedman, "The Sexual Behavior of American
College Women: An Empirical Study and an Historical Survey,"
11 (January, 1965), pp. 33-39.}

In brief then, research up to 1965, suggests that there
has been little change in premarital coitus rates since the
1920's.

More recent studies, however, suggest that the incidence
of premarital coitus for females is increasing.

Keith Davis's (1969) study of 193 females at Kansas
State University offers support of this view. He reported
a non-virginal rate of 26.9% for females; when controlling
for age (19 or above) there was an increase to 37%.6

Kaats and Davis (1970) in a replicated study at the
University of Colorado, reported a premarital coitus rate of
41-44% for females and a 60% rate for males.7

Luckey and Nass (1969) have conducted an international
study of premarital sexual behavior and attitudes. Their
sample included 2,230 unmarried undergraduate college
students from five countries. In the United States twenty-one
colleges and universities were represented. In their find-
ings, (for the U. S.) they reported a premarital coital
rate of 43.2% for 668 females, and for 644 males, 58.7%.8

Another study conducted in Georgia, by Robinson, et. al.
(1968) reports a premarital coitus rate of 26.7% for female
college students.9 Thus, no major study conducted since the

6Keith E. Davis, "Sex on the Campus: Is There a Revo-
lution," cited by Kenneth L. Cannon & Richard Long, "Premar-
ital Sexual Behavior in the Sixties," Journal of Marriage and

7Gilbert R. Kaats and Keith E. Davis, "The Dynamics of
Sexual Behavior of College Students," Journal of Marriage and

8Eleanor B. Luckey and Gilbert D. Nass, "A Comparison of
Sexual Attitudes and Behavior in an International Sample,"
pp. 364-379.

9Ira E. Robinson, Karl King, Charles Dudley and Francis
J. Clune, "Change in Sexual Behavior and Attitudes of College
Students," The Family Coordinator, Vol. 17, (April, 1968),
pp. 119-123.
middle or late 1960's has reported the low frequency rates of premarital coitus that were found prior to the early sixties. However, it is important to note that the differences in premarital coitus rates reported could be due to differences in research techniques, populations, location, and so forth.

Two recent studies that have attempted to examine premarital coitus rates by using comparable samples and methods are: (1) Bell and Chakes (1970) and (2) Christensen and Gregg (1970). Bell and Chakes in 1968 replicated an earlier study done in 1958, using the same questionnaire at the same university. The respondents were all females in both studies. In 1958, 10% of the girls reported having had premarital coitus "while in a dating relationship," compared to 23% in 1968. "While going steady," the rate of increase was from 15% to 28%. Premarital coitus rates during engagement showed a slight increase from 31% in 1958, to 39% in 1968.10 Here the findings suggest that in 1958, for a coed's first experience in premarital intercourse, it was most likely to occur during the engagement period. Whereas, in 1968, her first experience was more of an individual decision and more likely to occur in a dating relationship.

Christensen and Gregg (1970) in a comparative study of 1958 and 1968 concerning premarital attitudes and behavior have recently reported their findings. Their data indicates that for the Norman males, (Intermountain) there had been a slight decline in premarital coital experience from 1958 to 1968, but an increase in attitudes toward approval of premarital coitus. Midwestern males showed about the same trends, however the percentages in both categories are substantially higher for the latter. The most noticeable change for females is in the Intermountain culture, where there is a large increase in both approval and reported coital rates.\(^1\)

**Normative Studies**

The studies included in this category are those which centered primarily upon the structure and interrelationship of premarital sex norms.

There have been several studies which have investigated general attitudes toward various types of sexual behavior, and two of the more relevant have provided findings regarding premarital sex attitudes.

The first, by C. Kirkpatrick, et. al. (1952) found that females held less permissive attitudes than males in respect to overall sexual expression. The data also suggested that

females disapprove of the male double standard norm. The second study by M. Needham and E. Schur (1963) attempted to measure the punitive attitudes, held by students, toward individuals who engaged in premarital coitus. They found that 8% of the students held punitive attitudes toward males and 6% toward females. There findings did not indicate any strong display of the double standard.

There are two studies that have focused on changes in moral values in respect to premarital sexual permissiveness. The first investigation was a replication of a study conducted in 1929, 1939, and 1949. The authors Rettig and Pasamanick (1959) found only a slight increase in permissiveness in this thirty year period. The second study by Christensen and Carpenter (1962) concerning values and behavior discrepancies, found men more permissive than women among college students. They also indicated that males and females at a religious college were less permissive than those of a secular college.


A more extensive study of premarital sex norms was conducted by W. Ehrmann (1959). His basic approach was to differentiate between the various levels of sex codes of conduct. The term "code" refers to a group of standards which may be applicable to a given situation or at a given level of operation. The sex codes used were social, peer, and personal.16

By looking at the relationship between personal and peer codes, he found that the codes held by females were less permissive than their acknowledged behavior; males held codes that were more permissive. In examining lifetime behavior of the respondents and their relationships, he found that 67% of the males in their personal codes, complied to a single standard and were most strict within their peer codes.17

Single standard categories indicated conservatism for 86% of the females and 20% of the males in their personal codes; general liberalism showed 42% and 7% respectively.18

Probably the most impressive studies concerning premarital sex norms have been conducted by I. Reiss. He advocated that there were two basic forms of premarital attitudes. The first, body-centered, which stresses the physical aspect of sex, and the second is person-oriented

16Ehrmann, Premarital Dating . . . , pp. 170-220.
17Ibid., pp. 178-182.
18Ibid.
which stresses the emotional nature of a relationship.19

According to Reiss, premarital sexual attitudes can be classified into one of four categories. The categories are: (1) abstinence, (2) permissiveness with affection, (3) permissiveness without affection, and (4) the double standard.20

In measuring permissiveness, Reiss developed a twelve item scale which provided an opportunity for the respondent to select an acceptable level of intimacy for an appropriate strength of the relationship. For example, one level of intimacy could be coitus, and the strength of the relationship could be engagement.

Reiss has recently expanded his original four categories to include several sub-types; under each of the major categories.21 Even though Reiss's typology appears to be exhaustive of all types of premarital behavior, it has several shortcomings, which are discussed in the next chapter.

Reiss's most current data (1967) concerning premarital sexual attitudes were collected from student populations at two Virginia colleges; two Virginia high schools; and one New York college. In the total sample of 386 males, he found that 28% supported the abstinence standard; and of the

19Reiss, Premarital Sexual Standards ..., p. 80.
20Reiss, Premarital Sexual Standards ..., pp. 83-84.
35 females, 55% favored the abstinence standard. Permissiveness with affection was supported by 24% of the males and 15% of the females. Permissiveness without affection was the favored standard for 13% of the males and only 2% of the females. And finally, the double standard was indicated by 27% of the males and 23% of the females. 22

Gipson Wells (1969) collected data for his study from three college campuses, with a total sample of 614 students. In his investigation of premarital sex norms, the findings indicate that only 8% of the males and 32% of the females support the abstinence standard. Permissiveness with affection was favored by 17% of the males, compared to 58% of the females; permissiveness without affection was the preferred standard for 23% of the males and only 5% of the females. The double standard was indicated by 38% of the males, whereas females did not display any evidence of this standard. 23

Wells had compared and summarized the data from three studies, including his own in a concise form. The data are reproduced and presented in Table 3. Comparative evidence strongly suggests a trend of increasing permissiveness, for both males and females.

In summary, most of the data concerning attitudes suggest that: (1) permissiveness with affection and abstinence are the prevalent standards for males and females;

---

22Ibid., pp. 25-27.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissiveness</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Affection</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Affection</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstinence</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Standard</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Reverse&quot; Double Standard</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100(^a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                         |                |              |              |
| **Females**             |                |              |              |
| Permissiveness          | 14             | 17           | 63\(^a\)     |
| General                 | 7              | --           | --           |
| With Affection          | 7              | 15           | 58           |
| Without Affection       | --             | 2            | 5            |
| Abstinence              | 86             | 77           | 32\(^a\)     |
| Double Standard         | --             | 6            | --           |
| Unspecified             | 100            | 100          | 100          |


\(^{a}\)When percentages are figured on white students only, there is no change greater than two percent for the males and an increase in abstinence and a decrease in permissiveness of five percent for the females.
(2) evidence strongly indicates that the trend in respect to premarital sexual attitudes is toward increasing permissiveness; (3) female acceptance of permissiveness with affection is increasing, with the abstinent standard decreasing; and (4) the double standard appears to be sharply declining.

Ideal Mate Studies

One of the questions under investigation in this research was the desirability of virginity of the potential mate. A few studies in this area are considered most relevant.

Ruben Hill (1945) investigated the value that students placed upon premarital chastity among men and women. He found that chastity was rated tenth and behind other characteristics such as "emotional stability," "doesn't use liquor," and "good health," for both sexes.24 Another study by H. Christensen (1947) reported women rating virginity in eighth place and males ranking it in ninth place.25 Wells (1969) found that females ranked the importance of virginity nineteenth and for males fourteenth,26 thus, the data strongly suggesting that the importance placed upon virginity for the future mate is declining.


A final study by Bell and Buerkle (1961) compared mother-daughter attitudes in respect to the importance of virginity. They found that 88% of the mothers indicated that intercourse before marriage was "very wrong" and the remaining 12% expressed that it was "generally wrong." Of the daughters, 55% indicated that premarital coitus was "very wrong," and 34% said it was "generally wrong." Stated in another way 100% of the mothers expressed that virginity is important before marriage, whereas 89% of the daughters were in agreement with their mothers.27

**Sociological Variable Studies**

Although the previously mentioned studies have dealt with independent variables, the purpose here is to present some findings related to specific variables.

**Age**

When controlling for age and incidence of premarital intercourse, Kinsey (1953) found as direct relationship for both men and women. His explanation for the increased rate was that the older a person was at marriage, the greater the probability, that they had engaged in premarital intercourse.28

---


Ehrmann's (1959) study suggested a positive correlation between age and lifetime coitus for males in his studies, but he did not find a positive relationship for females.\(^{29}\)

Reiss's (1967) findings do not support a positive relationship between age and permissiveness among students. However, he felt that a low correlation was because dropouts tended to have higher rates of permissiveness.\(^{30}\)

Religion

In investigating the degree of religiosity and incidence of premarital sexual permissiveness, Reiss (1967) found an inverse relationship. A weakness in his findings may be due to the fact that he measured religiosity by only one factor (church attendance).\(^{31}\)

Ehrmann's (1959) study of denominational differences indicated higher rates of premarital intercourse for Jewish males and Catholic females, and an inverse relationship between church attendance and incidence of premarital coitus.\(^{32}\)

Reiss did not find a relationship between various denominations, but did find an inverse relationship between church attendance and sexual permissiveness.\(^{33}\)

---

\(^{29}\)Ehrmann, *Premarital Dating* . . . , pp. 76-78.


\(^{31}\)Ibid., pp. 42-46.


Journal articles have also dealt with religion as an independent variable.

Dedman (1959) found a slight relationship between religious attitudes and attitudes toward premarital sex relations.34

In examining the relation of social mobility and religiosity to sexual attitudes and behavior, Lindensfeld (1960) found that 48% of the women held restrictive sexual codes toward premarital coitus, compared to 18% for men. Also the most restrictive sexual codes were held by persons with strong religious orientations.35

A more recent study by R. Clayton (1969) investigated the relationship of religion and premarital sexual permissiveness. Using a sample of 887 college students, the researcher found only partial support for his hypothesis that "the more ideologically orthodox respondents will be less ideologically orthodox respondents."36

Middendorp, et.al., (1970) in looking at the relation between age, religion, social class, and sexual permissiveness, found varying strengths between the independent and dependent variables.


Religion and age were the strongest determinants of pre-marital sexual permissiveness. There was no relationship found between social class and premarital sexual permissiveness. 37

CHAPTER III
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The review of literature has revealed several needs for the present study. First, numerous investigations have provided information concerning incidence and frequency of premarital coitus. However, little effort has been made to study the various norms associated with premarital sexual behavior and consequently knowledge in this area has lagged behind.

Second, contradiction and failure to support previous findings are not uncommon. Perhaps this is due to the lack of any systematic method for analysis of premarital sexual norms.

Third, past researchers have often failed to make explicit which subject they were dealing with, that is, whether their concern was with norms, attitudes, and values on the one hand, or with behavior on the other. Consequently, this has led to confusion and misinterpretation of their findings. Although generalizations can be inferred from attitudes and behavior, they are by no means always congruent. Furthermore, the findings of behavioral studies can be as deceiving as those of attitude studies, therefore, it is essential that the researcher make explicit which type of
study he is conducting. The intent of this study is to clearly focus upon the structure of premarital sex norms. More specifically, this investigation is concerned with the strength and manner in which norms governing premarital coitus are perceived by young people today.

Of major importance to this investigation is the "norm" concept. In the social sciences norms have generally been defined in one of two ways: (1) as patterns of behavior, and/or (2) patterns of expectations for behavior. Proponents of the former definition would be more apt to view a norm(s) as a mode of behavior or think of norms in a statistical sense, whereas adherents of the latter definition refer to norms as a shared propensity toward behavior, rather than behavior per se. The varying manner in which the concept norm has been defined is not the concern here, but rather it is to operationally define norm(s) and illustrate how they relate to the conceptual model.

The concept "norm" has been defined from a structural-functionalist perspective by Gipson Wells and will also be used in this study in the same manner: (1) "the term "norm" will refer to either a prescription or a proscription for behavior, rather than to any particular act, pattern or mode of actual behavior. Norms are the "thou shalt"s" and the "thou shalt nots" of the culture. (2) for a norm to exist, there must be at least some expectation, and usually a strong one, that the prescription or proscription will be adhered to. (3) the norm must carry with it some generally predetermined
Judgment which is to be directed almost automatically toward the individual or group according to how the prescriptions and proscriptions are followed. (4) the norm must also carry with it some sanction, i.e., a reward or punishment, to be imposed according to that judgment. ¹

Most people would agree with the position that there are societal prescriptions governing sexual conduct and these cultural prescriptions differ among various groups and individuals personality structure it seems logical to assume that there is no single sex norm applicable for all young people.

The conceptual model as employed in this study draws its impetus from three basic concepts: (1) definition of the situation; (2) social distance; and (3) reference group.

The relationship of W. I. Thomas's "definition of the situation" and the norm concept is quite obvious. For example, there will be a specific norm or norms governing an individuals reaction, depending upon how he defines the situation, i.e., as being dangerous, safe, and so forth. ²

Social distance refers to the degree of propinquity or acceptance felt by an individual for other individuals or

¹Wells, "Structure and Change . . .," p. 46.

group members. The nearness which one feels to a group or individual, is a determining element in his affectual responsiveness. ³

The basic idea underlying the reference group concept is that various groups (real or imaginary) provide a frame of reference for one's actions. ⁴ For example, a person may ask himself what his parents or friends might think of his behavior, or if his peer group would approve of a particular act.

Reference groups not only differ in the degree of social distance from an individual, but are also important to individuals for defining a situation. All of the concepts just discussed are closely interrelated to each other and are important in analyzing the perception and selection of premarital sex norms by individuals.

The integration of these concepts into various methodological scheme's has been attempted by only a few sociologists.

Past researchers have generally attempted to classify informants into one of four basic normative categories: (1) abstinence, (2) permissive with affection, (3) permissive without affection, and (4) double standard.


Ehrmann, who did focus upon differentiating between individual and peer group norms, considered these standards to be exhaustive of all possible attitudes that any society could hold toward premarital coitus.5

He approached the subject of premarital sexual attitudes by devising four basic normative categories: (1) double standard; (2) conservative single; (3) general liberal single; and (4) lover liberal standard. These four categories are basically the same as those used by previous researchers such as, Rockford and Ford6 (1945) and Landis and Landis7(1958). The conservative single standard is congruent with the rejection of premarital coitus for both male and female. The general liberal single is the same as the acceptance of premarital coitus for either sex, but with strong affection present.8

Although Ehrmann attempted to slightly refine and improve upon past categorizations and techniques employed by past researchers, he was highly criticized by Ira Reiss.

---

5Ehrman, Premarital Dating . . ., pp. 170-220.
Reiss contended that Ehrmann (as well as past investigators) has failed to provide a comprehensive typology, which would more accurately reveal and allow for the classification of premarital sexual standards.  

Furthermore, Reiss accused Ehrmann of failing to treat each category as mutually exclusive. In attempting to improve upon the limitations of these past studies concerning premarital sexual norms, Reiss developed a more comprehensive typology of standards that would better reflect American premarital sexual standards. Reiss used the same four basic standards as initially employed by others; however, he expanded each major category to include several subtypes.

His rationale for including several subtypes under each major sex standard was that it not only permitted a more accurate classification of individuals but it also avoided overlapping classification. This final typology is reproduced and presented below.

1. Abstinence (premarital intercourse is considered wrong for both sexes)  
   (a) Petting without affection  
   (b) Petting with affection  
   (c) Kissing without affection  
   (d) Kissing with affection

2. Double standard (males are considered to have greater rights to premarital intercourse)  
   (a) Orthodox (males may have intercourse, but females who do so are condemned)  
   (b) Transitional (males have greater access to coitus, but females who are in love or or engaged are allowed to have intercourse)

3. Permissiveness without affection (premarital intercourse is right for both sexes regardless of the amount of affection present)  
   (a) Orgiastic  
   (b) Sophisticated

---

4. Permissiveness with affection (premarital intercourse is acceptable for both sexes if part of a stable, affectionate relationship)
   (a) Love (love or engagement is a prerequisite for coitus)
   (b) Strong affection

For the purpose of measuring premarital sexual permissiveness, Reiss developed two twelve item Guttman scales, which he contended would reflect the sexual standard held by an individual. Ideally, each scale question takes into account three types of physical relationships (kissing, petting, and coitus) and the level or affectional state involved (engagement, love, strong affection, and no affection).\(^\text{11}\)

The validity of the methodology used by Reiss in attempting to distinguish between general permissiveness and personal permissiveness is questionable.

In gathering data for his study Reiss had each informant complete both a female and male questionnaire. Then to measure generalized permissiveness, he combined both male and female permissive scale scores. For measuring personal permissiveness, the informant's score was determined by using his or her appropriate sex scale.

In short, Reiss contended that his Guttman scale was a "unidimensional measure of premarital sexual permissiveness." The point is that Reiss was violating his own methodological scheme by attempting to operate at two levels or dimensions with a scale which he has claimed to be unidimensional.

\(^{10}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 19.}\)
\(^{11}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 20-24.}\)
Wells in his study has drawn attention to this oversight and states that,

a unidimensional scheme is not adequate to handle the realities of the manner in which norms are perceived and applied by individuals with reference to particular situations or persons.\(^{12}\)

He further contended that there is,

a need for a more comprehensive conceptual model which takes into account not only the available normative alternatives but also the situational, group, and individual conditions.\(^{13}\)

Wells has recently attempted to construct a more complete and clearer conceptual framework, which would accurately reflect the structure and perception of premarital sex norms. By using past research as a guide, Wells developed his initial model by using four levels of reference (societal, peer, ideal mate, and individual) and four basic alternatives or standards (two types of permissiveness, abstinence and the double standard).\(^{14}\)

In essence then, his questionnaire was organized in such a manner that it should reveal the strength of the various norms at each of the levels of reference.

When analyzing his data, Wells became aware of the erroneous approach employed by past researchers (Reiss and Ehrmann) who attempted to treat premarital sexual normative


\(^{13}\) Ibid.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., pp. 50-52.
categories as though each were mutually exclusive. Thus, he was forced to modify his original conceptual model to better coincide with the data.\textsuperscript{15}

Three modifications were seen to be necessary if the conceptual model was to reflect more realistically the norms as indicated by his data.

The first modification was to clearly define two major normative categories. Sexual abstinence was defined as complete refraining from coitus and sexual permissiveness as permitting coitus. The primary reason for this was to exclude the various lesser types of permissiveness, which were beyond the realm of this investigation.\textsuperscript{16}

The second modification was to handle the alternatives within the permissiveness categories as being potentially overlapping, rather than treating them as mutually exclusive categories. His data strongly indicated that the only standards which could be treated as mutually exclusive were abstinence and permissive (defined in absolute terms).\textsuperscript{17}

The final modification concerned the method by which the double standard was detected. More specifically if a male respondent indicated that the desired standard for his potential mate (ideal level) was abstinence and then chose permissiveness for himself, this would constitute one type

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 54.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 55.
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
of double standard.\textsuperscript{18}

Figure I illustrates the manner in which Wells' original model was designed.\textsuperscript{19} Figure II displays the revised model and the relationship between the categories and the reference levels.\textsuperscript{20}

Wells' findings not only partially support this revised conceptual model but also reflect its utility in at least two ways. First, it clearly displays the reference level (peer, societal, etc.) and the specific normative alternative possible at each level (permissiveness or abstinence).

Second, it permits delineation of normative types by which persons can be classified into various patterns. For example, if several respondents indicated permissiveness at every level, they would be categorized as "totally permissive." The same is true for those who chose abstinence at every level; they would be grouped into the pattern of "totally abstinent."

Although Wells has developed a conceptual model that reflects a more realistic view of premarital sex norms, there remains the problem of re-testing the validity of the newly hypothesized model which emerged from his study. The initial questionnaire used by Wells, was not specifically designed to measure the new model.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., pp. 55-56.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 51.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 57.
FIGURE 1. Illustration of the Conceptual
Model as Initially Designed by Wells

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Reference</th>
<th>Normative Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDEAL CULTURAL</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTS</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEAL MATE</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 2. Illustration of the Revised Hypothesized Model Subjected to Testing by Wells

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Reference</th>
<th>Normative Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDEAL CULTURAL LEVEL</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERMISSIVENESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WITH AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W/O AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEER GROUP LEVEL</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERMISSIVENESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WITH AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W/O AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEAL MATH LEVEL</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERMISSIVENESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WITH AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W/O AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</td>
<td>ABSTINENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERMISSIVENESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WITH AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W/O AFFECTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated earlier, Wells, upon analyzing his data, realized the past researchers had erred in their treatment of normative alternatives as being mutually exclusive categories. In attempting to make an adjustment for these past shortcomings, only partial verification of the model could be offered.

Thus, the central problem of this investigation is to develop an instrument which will more adequately test the validity of the newly hypothesized model.
CHAPTER IV
METHOD AND DATA ANALYSIS

At this point it should be clear that the basic intent of this study is to suggest that past studies of premarital sex norms have not yielded a realistic account of the manner in which these norms are perceived by young people. Although Ira Reiss has contributed to the understanding of premarital sexual norms, his approach is somewhat limited. By utilizing his detailed typology and Guttman scales, Reiss was able to classify individuals more accurately as to the situations and conditions, in which young people are most likely to engage in premarital coitus. That is, in relationships where young people are going steady, in love, or engaged. However, for Reiss to apply his findings to wide groups of young people in American society today may be both an invalid and inaccurate generalization.

This criticism is primarily based upon the manner in which Reiss has devised his schedule. For example, to ask the informant "do you believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for the female before marriage?" is too general. The informant should be provided with some frame of reference if the response is to be meaningful, and in essence this is the purpose of the proposed model.
It is not the concern nor within the scope of this investigation to analyze the various situations, types, and degrees of permissiveness of which persons either approve or disapprove. Instead, the analysis of the data are confined to examining the emergent major normative sex patterns. More specifically, the concern is with the number of respondents that either indicate approval or disapproval of premarital coitus and at precisely which levels of reference they do so.

Although degrees of permissiveness (approval of premarital coitus when the couple are in love, engaged, etc.) are of importance in understanding perception of premarital sex norms, they will not be dealt with here since the concern here is for only a partial verification of the model. To be more specific, the concern here is to verify only the basic form of the model.

This chapter consists of two sections: the first is an elaboration concerning a slight modification of the conceptual model as hypothesized by Wells. The construction of the instrument and the sample are also discussed in this section. The final section focuses upon the actual analysis of the data as it relates to the hypothesized scheme.
Model Modification

Although Well's data strongly suggested an additional salient sibling level,\(^1\) it was not treated as a fifth level of reference in his revised model due to the lack of appropriate data. Therefore, the task remains to include an additional brother-sister level to further refine and clarify the analysis of the perception of premarital sex norms.

The procedure followed was to include both a brother and a sister level in the model. At the brother level, the model would indicate or display the attitudes of males toward their brothers engaging in premarital coitus, as well as female's attitudes toward their brothers premarital behavior. At the sister level, the model would reflect the attitudes of males and females toward their sisters engaging in premarital coitus. The modified conceptual model subjected to testing in this research, is presented in Figure 3.

Instrument Construction

To test the validity of the newly hypothesized model, it was necessary to construct a new questionnaire. As pointed out earlier, Wells had developed an instrument to measure one set of ideas but when analyzing his data a new

\(^{1}\text{Wells, "Structure and Change . . .", pp. 86-87.}\)
FIGURE 3. Illustration of the Hypothesized Model as Tested in This Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF REFERENCE</th>
<th>NORMATIVE ALTERNATIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Societal Level</td>
<td>Abstinence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Groups Level</td>
<td>Abstinence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother Level</td>
<td>Abstinence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister Level</td>
<td>Abstinence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Mate Level</td>
<td>Abstinence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Level</td>
<td>Abstinence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
set of ideas emerged, which necessitated a change in the proposed model. Consequently, he encountered some difficulty with the interpretation as to which items on the questionnaire would least reflect particular norms at a given level. Thus, in this investigation it was thought that a reconstructed questionnaire would more adequately serve to verify or reject the newly hypothesized model.

For each level of reference specific questions were devised to reveal the perception of premarital sex norms held by young people at each level. Furthermore, the questions for each level provided the respondent with several alternatives from which to choose. Each question was designed so that the informant's response could be categorized at each level as being either abstinent or permissive because of the mutual exclusive handling of the two.

For example, the question designed to measure the perception of sex norms at the peer group level was stated as follows:

If close friends of yours were engaging in premarital sexual intercourse, how would you feel about it? (check one only):

(a) If the couple were in love, I think it would be alright.

(b) If the couple were not in love, (that is a casual relationship), I think it would be alright.
(c) It would be alright if the couple were either in love or not in love.

(d) I would be highly disappointed.

This question was devised then, to yield a response of either abstinence or permissiveness. To further specify, if the informant checked item (a) or (b) or (c), he would be demonstrating a permissive standard. If the final item, (d), was checked, it was interpreted as displaying an abstinence standard. The other questions differ slightly, depending upon the level of reference to which they refer. However, all of the questions permitted individual responses that could be classified as either permissive or abstinence. The questionnaire used in this study has been included in appendix A in its complete form.

Use and Design of the Questionnaire

The anonymous questionnaire was used in this research as its reliability in past studies has been very high. Also, in this type of study the questionnaire appears to be the best method of getting the embarrassed or reluctant respondent to agree to participate in the investigation.

The schedule consisted of two sections. The first part was to provide background information about the informant, relevant to such variables as age, sex, academic class and major. The final section was designed to reveal the manner in which premarital sex norms are perceived at six levels of reference. For convenience, there were separate questionnaires for males and females. The only difference, however,
was in wording of the final section due to the sex referent of the question.

The questionnaire was pretested on a group of 45 students. Upon completion of the schedule, the respondents were encouraged to include written comments on the instrument, or verbal comments to the researcher, if they found a particular question was forcing a response they did not desire to make.

The results of the pretest indicated that the questionnaire was most adequate.

The procedure followed by the researcher, was to arrive at the beginning of the class period and request the participation of the students in this study. They were then briefly informed that the purpose of this study is to learn more about young people and their attitudes toward premarital sexual intercourse. Married students were permitted to fill out the questionnaire but theirs were deleted from the final sample. It was thought that their data could be possibly used for comparative analysis at some later date. Each section of the questionnaire included a cover letter of instruction and explanation. Complete anonymity was assured both verbally and written. There were no refusals.

Obviously some bias occurs in this study due to the nature of the sample, that is, the utilization of students in Sociology classes as respondents. However, this had little or no bearing upon the testing of this conceptual model. Furthermore, no academic majors were over represented
in the total sample.

Sample

The subjects for this study were 552 unmarried undergraduate college students enrolled in Sociology classes at Western Kentucky University, during the Spring semester of 1971. The student body is predominately white, with an approximate enrollment of 10,000 full-time students. The University is located in Bowling Green, Kentucky, which has a population of nearly 35,000 inhabitants. The campus atmosphere is perhaps best described as conservative with most students representing rural backgrounds.

Of the 552 questionnaires obtained 23 were rejected as being either incomplete or response errors. Of the remaining 529 useable schedules, 235 were males and 294 were females, and constitute the data for this investigation.

The majority of the students appeared to be most interested in this study. This opinion is based on two criteria: (1) by the nature of the questions asked before and after the researchers administering of the questionnaire; and (2) by the low number of rejections due to carelessness, incomplete information, or response sets.

The questionnaires were coded for convenience in transferring the data to IBM cards for computer analysis. Spaces were provided for each question on the extreme left hand margin of each page. The researcher then coded each response so that the data could be punched from the questionnaire directly to the IBM card. Machinery used for the analysis
of the data were by means of printing card sorter, and the computer number 1200.

Section Two

Group Response

To support the utility of the hypothesized model it is essential that different proportions of people specify permissiveness and abstinence in an inconsistent manner at the various levels of reference. That is, a meaningful number of informants should display various alternating patterns. For example, several respondents may choose permissiveness at the societal level, abstinence at the peer level, permissiveness at the sibling level, and so forth.

On the other hand, if the model were rejected, it would be because the respondents showed consistency across all levels. More specifically, if the respondents were permissive at every level or abstinent at every level, the validity of the conceptual model would be seriously questioned.

Classifying the informants into categories (depending on their response) of abstinence or permissiveness at each level of reference provides a clear picture of the group structure with respect to premarital sex norms. The number and percent of respondents indicating either permissiveness or abstinence at the various levels are provided in Table 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Reference</th>
<th>Abstinence</th>
<th>Permissiveness</th>
<th>Total % (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>100 (529)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>100 (529)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>100 (529)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>100 (529)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100 (529)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>100 (529)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Holding Abstinence or Permissive Norms at Various Levels of Reference: Total Sample
This Table clearly reveals variations in the normative alternatives at specific levels of reference. Additionally a macro-structural view of the total sample is provided through the differences in percentages which give some indication of the utility of the model. It is axiomatic that this picture of the model will change a great deal when controlling for sex of respondent. The utility of the model can easily be seen by observing the percentage of students indicating abstinence or permissiveness at the various levels since it provides the respondent with a frame of reference when asking questions concerning his or her perception of premarital sex norms. As Table 4 clearly illustrates, persons can hold abstinent norms at one level while at the same time holding permissive norms at another level.

The importance of the hypothesized model becomes even more meaningful when it is used to analyze individual patterns of normative structure. Patterns, as used in this research refers to any arrangement of normative alternatives (abstinence and permissiveness) across various levels of reference in the model.

To determine if salient patterns emerged was a relatively simple process. Since the data had been transferred to IBM cards all that remained was to sort the cards according to the items which were designed for measuring permissiveness or abstinence at each level.

It was calculated that there were 64 \(2^6\) patterns possible, although the likelihood of having each pattern
represented by an individual (s) on the sample was thought to be quite small.

Upon sorting the data 34 different patterns emerged, and of these, 17 patterns were considered to have contained a sufficient number of cases to warrant further examination.

If the sample had been randomly distributed across the 64 possible patterns this would also have called into question the utility and validity of the model. However, the respondents fell into a small number of patterns, indicative of the statistical validity of the model categorized by sex of respondent. A description of these patterns as well as a discussion of their intuitional validity follows.

Female Normative Patterns

Of the 294 female respondents, 269 (91%) could be classified into 10 distinct patterns. The remaining 26 respondents represent either diffused patterns or possibly response errors and treated as a residual category.

The ten distinct patterns were further combined in a logical manner, into five dominant patterns. This was thought to be justifiable on the basis of similarity in the nature and form of some of the patterns.

The final five dominant patterns were labeled: (1) total permissiveness; (2) self-abstinence; (3) sibling-abstinence; (4) permissiveness for ideal mate and (5) total abstinence.
Total Permissiveness

Total Permissiveness was the largest dominant single pattern emerging for females. One-hundred and fifty-nine or 54% of the respondents were classified as being permissive at every level of reference. One smaller pattern containing 8 persons was combined with the larger pattern. The justification for this was that the 8 females chose permissiveness at every level except at the societal level. The possibility exists that these respondents may have interpreted the societal question in such a manner that they visualized a future society, as being without any form of social control, with respect to coitus. Therefore, the abstinent response may reflect a possible concern over the "deterioration of society."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Peer Group</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 151

N = 8

Figure 4. Illustration of the two combined patterns to form the totally permissive patterns for females.
Self Abstinence

This category consists of three combined patterns, with a total of 25 respondents. Essentially, each indicated that they were permissive at every level, except the individual level at which they chose abstinence. The smallest pattern shows that four females chose abstinence not only for themselves, but also for society in general. Again, this may be due to the individuals concern with the possible moral "deterioration of society."

The justification for including the next smaller pattern was that not only did the individual hold an abistent standard for herself, but extended it to her sister, as the abstinence norm is generally stronger for these persons. It is also suggested that these patterns display the female's acceptance of the traditional double standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 7
N = 9
N = 12

Figure 5. Illustrations of the three combined self-abstinence patterns for females.
Sibling Abstinence

The brother-sister category includes 20 respondents and represents two combined patterns.

Females are permissive at every level, but hold abstinence norms for their siblings, especially their sisters. Perhaps the explanation for this, is that the respondents are non-virgins and due to their sexual experience, they are somewhat regretful, thereby directing their feelings to their brother or sister.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 16

N = 4

Figure 6. Illustration of the two combined sibling-abstinence patterns for females.

Ideal Mate

This pattern contained the second largest number of respondents, and consists of two combinations. Sixty-one females (20%) were classified as belonging to this category. The respondents indicated that they held abstinence premarital sex norms at every level with one exception, that is,
permissiveness in respect to their potential mate. This can be explained perhaps in two ways. First, it appears that these females would accept the traditional male double standard. Second, they prefer that their future husband has some sexual experience. The justification for including the pattern in which the respondents indicated permissiveness at the societal level as well as the Ideal Mate level, is that the societal level is the most generalized and consequently, here, it is of less importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 33

N = 28

Figure 7. Illustration of the two combined permissiveness for ideal mate patterns for females.

Total Abstinence

This category was not combined with any other pattern and there were only four respondents that indicated abstinence at every level.

This unusually low number of persons indicating abstinence at every level may be due to a weakness in the
question designed for measuring normative alternatives at the ideal mate level (see Figure 7 and Item 5a, Section 2 of questionnaire). There is no way to be certain, but this question may have been stated too strongly, thereby forcing a permissive response. For example, for the ideal mate pattern just described, respondents were abstinent at every level with the exception of the ideal mate level. It is suspected that if the question had been stated differently, several of these respondents would have also indicated abstinence at every level, thus possibly increasing the number of respondents in the total abstinence category.

Level     Ab.  Per.
Societal    X
Peer        X
Brother     X
Sister      X
Ideal Mate  X
Individual  X

N = 4

Figure 8. Illustration of total abstinence pattern for females.

Male Normative Patterns

Of the 235 male respondents 211 or 90% could be classified into seven distinct patterns. The remaining 24 respondents placed in a residual category because of response
errors or diffused patterns.

Some of these seven patterns were also combined for logical reasons which reduced the number for males, to four dominant patterns. The final four patterns were labeled: (1) total permissiveness; (2) total abstinence; (3) sibling-abstinence; and (4) double-standard.

**Total Permissiveness**

The total permissiveness category was formed by combining two patterns and it is the largest single pattern. Of the males, 149 or 63.3% belong in this classification. The smaller pattern consists of eight respondents that indicated permissiveness at every level except for the societal level. Again, the justification for combining this smaller pattern with the total permissiveness pattern is because of the higher abstraction of the societal level and the possibility of the respondents concern with "society's deterioration."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ N = 8 \]

**Figure 9. Illustration of the two combined patterns used to form "total permissiveness" pattern for males.**
Total Abstinence

The total abstinence category was not combined with any other pattern. Six males indicated that they were abstinence at every level of reference. This unusually low number of abstainers may be due to the weaknesses in the question dealing with the Ideal Mate as discussed previously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ab.</th>
<th>Per.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ N = 6 \]

Figure 10. Illustration of total abstinence pattern for males.

Sibling Abstinence

This brother-sister category was formed by combining two patterns. Respondents in the smaller of the two patterns (8) were permissive at all levels except the societal and sister level. The pattern containing 23 males indicated that the respondents were permissive at every level except for their sisters. The reason for including the smaller pattern, containing the eight respondents, was again because the societal level is the most generalized and is not as salient as other levels.
This sibling level can also be interpreted as representing the Male Double Standard. Although males are permissive toward their ideal mate, and abstinent toward their sister, it still is somewhat of a reflection of the double standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 8

N = 23

Figure 11. Illustration of the two combined patterns used to form sibling abstinence pattern for males.

Double Standard

The double standard was formed by combining two patterns. The larger pattern consisting of ten respondents, clearly illustrates the traditional male double standard. That is, the respondents held permissive norms at every level except the ideal mate level, at which the preferred norm was abstinence. The smaller pattern consisting of eight respondents, not only illustrates the male double standard but appears to be stronger for these respondents. That is, besides indicating that abstinence is the preferred norm for their potential mate, they also chose this norm for their sister.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ab.</th>
<th>Per.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Mate</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 10

**Figure 12.** Illustration of the two combined patterns that form the male double standard.

In summary, it would appear that the data have offered a good deal of support for the hypothesized model. Not only does the model provide a clear picture of the group structure of premarital sex norms but it also shows the individuals normative choice (abstinence or permissiveness) at each level of reference.
CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Findings

The intent of this investigation has been two-fold: First, to suggest that past studies of premarital sex norms have not provided a realistic account of the perception of these norms. Second, and by far the most important was to modify and retest a conceptual model developed by Gipson Wells.

In this study, respondents were classified into various patterns according to their response. The normative alternative choices provided to respondents were abstinence or permissiveness at each of the six levels of reference, societal, peer group, brother, sister, ideal mate, and individual level.

Analysis of the data have shown that different proportions of people specify permissiveness and abstinence in an inconsistent manner, at the various levels of reference. Thus, these alternating patterns indicate strong support for the basic form of the hypothesized model.

Thirty-four different patterns emerged after sorting the data, and of these 17 were thought to have contained a sufficient number of cases to warrant further examination.

For the females, 10 distinct patterns were found. Some of these patterns were combined, in a logical manner, forming
5 dominant patterns. Of the 5 patterns the "total permissiveness" pattern was the largest single category, with 54% of the females choosing the permissive norm. The second largest pattern to emerge for the females, was the "permissiveness for ideal mate" pattern. This category, containing 20% of the total female sample, showed that the respondents held abstinent norms at every level except for the ideal mate level, at which they expressed permissiveness. This pattern was interpreted as a female acceptance of the double standard and/or that they would prefer that their future spouse is sexually experienced.

The "self-abstinence" pattern consisted of 25 respondents, who indicated that permissiveness was the preferred norm, at all, but the individual level, at which they chose abstinence.

The "sibling-abstinence" or brother-sister pattern, consisted of 20 respondents, who held abstinent norms for their siblings (especially sisters) but were permissive for themselves at the other levels.

The final pattern, "total abstinence," was comprised of only 4 respondents, which was thought to be a rather low number of females to express abstinence at all levels of reference; an explanation for this was offered in Chapter IV.

For the 235 male respondents, 90% clearly fell into 7 distinct patterns. Some of these patterns were also combined to form 4 dominant male patterns.

The largest single pattern for males, was also, the "total permissiveness" pattern, with 63% indicating
permissiveness at every level. The next largest single pattern for males was the "sibling-abstinence" category which consisted of 31 respondents.

The "double standard" pattern consisted of 18 respondents. The males held permissive norms at all levels, except for the ideal mate level, at which they indicated abstinence. This pattern clearly demonstrated the traditional male double standard.

The final pattern, "total abstinence," consisted of only 6 respondents which may have resulted from a weakness in one of the questions, which has been previously discussed.

**The Conceptual Model**

In brief, the data have offered support for the basic form of the hypothesized model. Furthermore, the evidence suggest that students perceive and apply premarital sex norms differently, depending upon the particular referent involved in a heterosexual relationship.

The utility of the model can be supported in several ways. First, it can be used to isolate groups of persons according to the particular sex norm at the specific level of reference. Second, the model clearly facilitates the categorization of individuals into patterns (such as the double standard) according to their normative perceptions.

Finally, the model is advantageous in respect to past approaches as it provides a more accurate description of premarital sex norms within a multi-dimensional scheme.

**Limitations and Shortcomings**

Although the basic form of the hypothesized model was
supported, the possibility exists that bias has occurred in this study due to the nature of the sample (college students enrolled in Sociology classes). However, no academic major was over represented in the sample.

Another possible limitation of this investigation appears to be a weakness in one question (item 5a, section 2 of the questionnaire) which was designed to measure the normative alternative at the ideal mate level. Due to the low number of totally abstinent respondents, it is suspected that this question was stated too strongly, thereby forcing a response of permissiveness at the ideal mate level. If the question had been stated somewhat differently, perhaps some of the respondents would have instead, indicated abstinence at this level. Thus, the result would have been fewer respondents classified as permissive in the ideal mate pattern and more respondents in the totally abstinent pattern.

Suggestions for Further Research

The basic form of the conceptual model has been supported, but, further research is needed if a better understanding of the manner in which young people perceive premarital sex norms is to be gained. In brief, some of the areas that were omitted from this study, but warrant further investigation, are the various degrees of permissiveness and types of permissiveness. For example, it would be most interesting to further explore the specific conditions involved at which respondents are most likely to approve of premarital coitus. For example, after utilizing the model for illustrating the normative alternative at each level, the next procedure
would be to investigate the condition in which the respondent is most likely to be permissive; that is, with affection or without affection.

Also, the relationship of variables such as age, group membership, place of residence, military service, religious affiliations, and marital status of parents, with respect to premarital coitus, should be examined.

In conclusion, because of the apparent flexibility of the model, it seems feasible that other areas of social deviance could be explored by utilizing this type of model.
APPENDIX A:

THE QUESTIONNAIRE
COURTSHIP AND DATING BEHAVIOR: A SURVEY OF STUDENT ATTITUDES

This questionnaire is part of a scientific research project. It is designed to learn something about the attitudes that young people have with respect to various kinds of courtship and dating behavior. The questionnaire is fully anonymous and there is no way to identify you with your answers. Please be as truthful as possible in answering the questions. We are not interested in any particular individuals response, but are concerned about general or overall patterns.

Part I: General Information

1. How old are you by your nearest birthday? ______

2. Sex: Male ______ Female ______

3. Academic Class: Freshman ______ Sophomore ______ Junior ______ Senior ______ Graduate ______ Special ______

4. Please estimate your family's yearly income (father and mother):

   $3000 or more ______
   $3000 to $6000 ______
   $6000 to $10,000 ______
   $10,000 to $15,000 ______
   Over $15,000 ______

5. What is your academic major? ______ (undecided) ______

6. While attending school, where do you live? (check one only)

   Fraternity house ______
   Sorority house ______
   Private Dormitory ______
   Campus Dormitory ______
   Off campus (but not at your home) ______
   At home ______
   Other (explain) ____________________________

70
7. Have you been in any of the armed forces?
   Yes____ No____

8. Are you a member of any religious campus organization?
   Yes____ No____

9. Are you an active member of a fraternity or sorority?
   Yes____ No____

10. Are you presently:  (check one only):
    Married _____
        Engaged _____
        Piined _____
        Going Steady _____
        Divorced _____
        Divorced and remarried _____
        Dating _____
        Not Dating _____

11. What is your religious preference?  (check one only):
    Mormon _____
        Baptist _____
        Church of Christ _____
        Methodist _____
        Presbyterian _____
        Christian Church _____
        Adventist _____
        Episcopal _____
        Catholic _____
        Jewish _____
        Church of God _____
        None _____
        Other (please specify) _____

12. Are you a member of your church or synagogue?
    Yes____ No____

13. How often do you attend church services or meetings?
    Once a week or more _____
    About once a month _____
    Several times a year _____
    Almost Never _____
    Never _____
14. Have you ever taken a sex education or family life course in high school or college?
   Yes____  No____

15. What is the marital status of your parents?
   Married__  Divorced__  Separated__  Other__

16. How many brothers do you have? ______  Sisters ______?

Part II: Please read the questions carefully and treat each one independently. Also of major importance is that you read all of the alternatives (for each question), and then select the one which most reflects your feeling or attitude. Keep in mind that this questionnaire is anonymous and that your honesty in answering the questions is of most importance.

1. I feel that there should not be any laws governing sexual intercourse between unmarried adults (over 21 years of age) who desire it.
   Agree____  Disagree____

2a. I feel that society should not permit sexual intercourse between unmarried consenting adults.
   Agree____  Disagree____

2b. If you disagreed with the above statement (2a) which of the following statements best describes your attitude? (check one only):
   ____ a. Societal approval of sexual intercourse should apply only to couples who are in love.
   ____ b. Society should approve only of those sexual relationships in which the couple is not in love.
   ____ c. Sexual intercourse between unmarried consenting adult couples should not be the concern of society under any circumstances.
3. If you learned that your brother had engaged in sexual intercourse prior to marriage, what would be your response? (check one only):

_____ a. If he and the girl were in love, I think it would be alright.

_____ b. If he and the girl were not in love, (that is, a casual relationship), I think it would be alright.

_____ c. I would be alright if he and the girl were either in love or not in love.

_____ d. I would be highly disappointed.

4. If close friends of yours were engaging in premarital sexual intercourse, how would you feel about it? (check one only):

_____ a. If the couple were in love, I think it would be alright.

_____ b. If the couple were not in love, (that is a casual relationship), I think it would be alright.

_____ c. It would be alright if the couple were either in love or not in love.

_____ d. I would be highly disappointed.
5a. Assume that you were in love and planning to marry! If you learned that the girl was not a virgin, would you discontinue the relationship?

Yes____ No____

5b. If you answered no to the above, which of the following would be most acceptable to you? (check one only):

_____ a. If I learned that before meeting me, she had engaged in intercourse with other men whom she felt no particular affection for.

_____ b. If I learned that she had engaged in intercourse with a man whom she thought she was in love with.

_____ c. Whether or not her loss of virginity was due to a casual relationship or a serious love relationship, makes no difference at all.

6. If you learned that your sister had engaged in sexual intercourse prior to marriage, what would be your response? (check one only):

_____ a. If she and the man were in love, I think it would be alright.

_____ b. If she and the man were not in love (that is, a casual relationship), I think it would be alright.

_____ c. It would be alright if she and the man were either in love or not in love.

_____ d. I would be highly disappointed.

7. "Assuming the use of a reliable contraceptive and the protection of your reputation and health (that is, no chance for venereal disease), under what circumstances would you consider engaging in sexual intercourse?"

(Check one or more):

_____ a. With someone to whom you are physically attracted.
b. With a female acquaintance to whom you are sexually attracted.

c. With a close female friend.

d. A woman with whom you are in love.

e. The woman to whom you are engaged to be married.

f. Never before marriage.
5a. Assume that you were in love and planning to marry! If you learned that the man was not a "virgin", would you discontinue the relationship?

Yes______  No______

5b. If you answered no to the above, which of the following would be most acceptable to you? (check one only):

_____a. If I learned that before meeting me, he had engaged in intercourse with other women whom he felt no particular affection for.

_____b. If I learned that he had engaged in intercourse with a woman whom he thought he was in love with.

_____c. Whether or not his loss of "virginity" was due to a casual relationship or a serious love relationship, makes no difference at all.

6. If you learned that your sister had engaged in sexual intercourse prior to marriage, what would be your response? (check one only):

_____a. If she and the man were in love, I think it would be alright.

_____b. If she and the man were not in love (that is, a casual relationship), I think it would be alright.

_____c. It would be alright if she and the man were either in love or not in love.

_____d. I would be highly disappointed.

7. "Assuming the use of a reliable contraceptive and the protection of your reputation and health (that is, no chance for venereal disease), under what circumstances would you consider engaging in sexual intercourse?"

(Check one or more):

_____a. With someone to whom you are physically attracted.
b. With a male acquaintance to whom you are sexually attracted.
c. With a close male friend.
d. A man with whom you are in love.
e. The man to whom you are engaged to be married.
f. Never before marriage.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Corinthians. The Bible.

Deuteronomy. The Bible.


Articles


Unpublished Materials