

# research in brief

## **Decision-Making Patterns**

Decisions concerning housing, both spouses' jobs, family goals, and finances—especially savings—were the most difficult and also the most important ones as reported by the young couples in this study. The largest proportion of the wives were between the ages of 21 and 23 years old, and husbands were between 24 and 26 years old. Average length of marriage was 2.7 years.

The study was designed to identify home management decisions made by young married couples. Ten decisions in which both difficulty and importance ranked high were deciding:

1. When to buy a needed but expensive clothing item.
2. When to rent or buy a house.
3. How much money to spend for housing.
4. Whether to move to another town or state.
5. Where to move.
6. Which job the husband should take.
7. Whether the husband should quit or change jobs.
8. When to trade cars or buy a new car.
9. Which family goals are most important to work toward.
10. Plans for meeting family goals.

The majority of the decisions listed on the questionnaire were seen by both husbands and wives as joint decisions. Therefore, the joint decision-making pattern appeared to be predominant in the couples studied and should be stressed in adult education programs.

Most of the respondents were not engaged in any type of adult education classes at the time of the study. Very few of the husbands and approximately one-fourth of the wives had not taken home economics courses in high school.

"Home Management Decision-Making Patterns of Young Married Couples in Story County, Iowa." Nancy Louise Murdock. Master's thesis, Iowa State University, Ames, 1977.

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