1986

Relationships between ego identity status and assertive behavior in adult women

Rachel Stock Christensen
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd

Part of the Adult and Continuing Education Administration Commons, and the Adult and Continuing Education and Teaching Commons

Recommended Citation
Christensen, Rachel Stock, "Relationships between ego identity status and assertive behavior in adult women " (1986). Retrospective Theses and Dissertations. 7987.
https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd/7987

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a manuscript sent to us for publication and microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this manuscript, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted. Pages in any manuscript may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. Manuscripts may not always be complete. When it is not possible to obtain missing pages, a note appears to indicate this.

2. When copyrighted materials are removed from the manuscript, a note appears to indicate this.

3. Oversize materials (maps, drawings, and charts) are photographed by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each oversize page is also filmed as one exposure and is available, for an additional charge, as a standard 35mm slide or in black and white paper format.*

4. Most photographs reproduce acceptably on positive microfilm or microfiche but lack clarity on xerographic copies made from the microfilm. For an additional charge, all photographs are available in black and white standard 35mm slide format.*

*For more information about black and white slides or enlarged paper reproductions, please contact the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

UMI Dissertation Information Service
University Microfilms International
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106
Christensen, Rachel Stock

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EGO IDENTITY STATUS AND ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IN ADULT WOMEN

Iowa State University

Ph.D.   1986

University Microfilms International 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Copyright 1986 by Christensen, Rachel Stock

All Rights Reserved
PLEASE NOTE:

In all cases this material has been filmed in the best possible way from the available copy. Problems encountered with this document have been identified here with a check mark √.

1. Glossy photographs or pages ____
2. Colored illustrations, paper or print ____
3. Photographs with dark background ____
4. Illustrations are poor copy ____
5. Pages with black marks, not original copy ____
6. Print shows through as there is text on both sides of page ____
7. Indistinct, broken or small print on several pages ✓
8. Print exceeds margin requirements ____
9. Tightly bound copy with print lost in spine ____
10. Computer printout pages with indistinct print ____
11. Page(s) _________ lacking when material received, and not available from school or author.
12. Page(s) _________ seem to be missing in numbering only as text follows.
13. Two pages numbered _______. Text follows.
14. Curling and wrinkled pages ____
15. Dissertation contains pages with print at a slant, filmed as received _______
16. Other __________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

University
Microfilms
International
Relationships between ego identity status and assertive behavior in adult women

by

Rachel Stock Christensen

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department: Professional Studies in Education
Major: Education (Adult and Extension Education)

Approved: Members of the Committee:
Signature was redacted for privacy.

In Charge of Major Work
Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Major Department
Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Graduate College

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1986

Copyright (c) Rachel Stock Christensen, 1986. All rights reserved.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions and Hypotheses</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik Erikson: Ego identity</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity statuses</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego identity statuses--research</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive variables</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality correlates</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental perspective</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness research</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Assertion Inventory</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability and validity</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pilot study</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoring of The Assertion Inventory</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity and reliability</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the OM-EISE</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity of the OM-EISE</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoring of the OM-EISE</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Information Sheet</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling process</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of instruments</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis and Design</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Measurements</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Assertion Inventory</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Information</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Life Event Question</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hypotheses</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Research Study</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the study</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results of the study</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Study Results</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The identity status paradigm</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter/Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The foreclosure status</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The moratorium status</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The measure of identity statuses</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The assertive construct</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Future Research</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING FIRST MAILING OF QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: POSTCARD REMINDER FOR SECOND MAILING</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C: COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING SECOND MAILING OF QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO SAMPLE</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E: SUMMARY OF CONTENT AREAS FOR LIFE EVENT QUESTION</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 1</td>
<td>Assertive profiles</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 2</td>
<td>Return rate on questionnaire</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 3</td>
<td>Means, standard deviations, and cutoff points on the Objective Measure of Ego</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identity Status Expanded Scales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 4</td>
<td>Identity status categories on the OM-EISE</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 5</td>
<td>Identity status scores by age group (n=208)</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 6</td>
<td>Means and standard deviations of the discomfort scale and the response</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>probability scale of The Assertion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 7</td>
<td>High and low values on the discomfort scale and on the response probability</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 8</td>
<td>High and low values on the assertive discomfort scale and on the assertive</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>response probability scale across age groups (n=208)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 9</td>
<td>Frequency distribution of the sample into four assertive profiles (n=208)</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 10</td>
<td>Assertive profile of moratorium identity status (n=147)</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 11</td>
<td>Assertive profile of achieved identity status (n=34)</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 12</td>
<td>Assertive profile of diffusion identity status (n=14)</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 13</td>
<td>Assertive profile of foreclosure identity status (n=13)</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 14. Highest education levels of the overall sample and by identity status . . . . . . . . . . 116

TABLE 15. Response probability means by identity status . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 118

TABLE 16. Analysis of variances on mean response probability scores by identity status . . . . 119

TABLE 17. Discomfort means by identity status . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 122

TABLE 18. Analysis of variance on mean discomfort scores by identity status . . . . . . . . . . . . . 122
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. Erikson's epigenetic chart (Erikson & Erikson, 1981) .................. 31

FIGURE 2. Developmental pathways of identity status formation .................. 53

FIGURE 3. Expected observations of statuses to assertiveness ..................... 76
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of personal identity to the ways in which adult women cope with change in their lives. The investigation was approached from the perspectives of ego identity and assertive behavior. It was conjectured that there is a relationship between the ego identity status of a woman and both her probability of engaging in assertive behavior and her comfort in doing so. The relationship between these two constructs was conducted among a sample of adult women in a midwestern farm state.

Recent emphasis on changing roles and cultural norms as influences on women's psychosocial development suggests a need to understand factors which might be related to the ways women cope with change over their life spans (Baruch, Barnett, & Rivers, 1983). Assertiveness is a coping tool that is especially useful for women during times of expanding role definition because it utilizes skills for effective social influence (Linehan, 1984). Both psychological and societal factors are taken into consideration as an individual's situation of change is presented and dealt with.
We know that identity is a strong influence on behavior (Wilson, 1978). What is not known is the relationship of identity to how receptive women might be in using assertive behavior for increased effectiveness; nor do we know the relationship of identity to how anxious women may feel in applying assertive behavior in their life situations. It is suggested that the more a person values a particular coping strategy, the more likely he or she will use that mode. When observing the willingness or reluctance of a woman to use particular coping skills, such as assertiveness, it is wise to consider whether the behavior of the coping skill conforms to what she considers appropriate behavior. According to Roskies and Lazarus, "the sexual stereotypes of the dependent woman and the strong silent man have left their imprint in the reluctance of some women to use aggressive problem-solving skills, and some men to use social support" (1980, p. 57).

A woman's values are an integral part of her identity. This should not be overlooked when considering personal identity and its accompanying values in relation to one's willingness or reluctance to activate assertive coping skills. People who work with women in transition need to be cognizant of the relationship of identity to coping styles, and, in particular, on assertive style.
Background of the Study

The study of adult lives as a focus of research has emerged only within the last thirty years (Schlossberg, 1984). Earlier studies of human development concentrated on the years of infancy, childhood and adolescence with the underlying assumption that change and further growth stopped with early adulthood. Current research is challenging this presupposition because findings indicate that psychological growth and change are inevitable for adults, whether the changes are planned or unexpected. Educators working with adults acknowledge the importance of understanding adult development and related implications for the practice of adult education (Merriam, 1984). Aslanian and Brickell (1980) have documented from a survey of 2,000 Americans 25 years or older that 83 percent of 744 interviewed indicated change in their lives as a motivation for seeking learning opportunities.

The lives of adult women, in particular, have been undergoing dramatic change in recent decades (McGuigan, 1980; Baruch et al. 1983). Cultural and social trends have placed women in arenas different from the traditional realm of home and family. Life patterns have been altered for many women in which their options are expanded beyond the roles of wife and mother. In 1983, fifty-two percent of
married women were employed outside the home, compared with about 40 percent in 1972. Of women in the civilian labor force, nearly two-thirds worked out of economic need in 1984, being in the category of "either single (26 percent), divorced (11 percent), widowed (5 percent), separated (4 percent), or had husbands whose 1983 incomes were less than $15,000 (19 percent)" (U.S. Department of Labor, 1984, p. 2). And future trends reveal that women are delaying marriage a few years if they choose to marry; will limit the number of children if they have any; will have a greater chance of being divorced; will live longer; and will probably work outside the home (Smith, 1979).

These figures reflect a variety of life patterns for contemporary women, a change from the 1950s when one life direction dominated the society--that of being wife and mother working within the home. A recent study which surveyed and interviewed 300 women ages 35 to 55 years also revealed a wide variety of patterns among women as their lives change (Baruch, et al., 1983). The most important finding was that well-being is highest when women believe they are using their talents in a productive way. Well-being is defined as a balance between the elements of pleasure (affective domain) and mastery (instrumental domain) and is not necessarily free of stress. Contrary to
conventional advice, a woman's depression is not alleviated by focusing on her relationships alone. The aspect often overlooked in depression among women is the state of her "doing side of life"—how satisfied she is in utilizing her talents.

Identity

One of the major underlying themes interwoven throughout the research on adult life changes is the theme of identity (Schlossberg, 1984). Very simply, identity is the way we come to perceive ourselves and the way we think the world perceives us.

Most research to date has focused on identity formation in mid to late adolescence, and within the context of male development. It has become apparent that more study needs to address women's lives, not as they are observed in relation to male life patterns, but as they exist in and of themselves (Rossi, 1980; Gilligan, 1979). With this approach, the concept of ego identity and its formation and evolvement in women can be studied more accurately.

The prevailing cultural milieu has a strong influence on shaping identity, and frequently society has imposed an identity on women, making it difficult for a mutual shaping of what one wants to be and what the culture expects one to be. In the research of Baruch et al. (1983), role
preference was found to be very powerful in predicting a high level of well-being. If you are in the role you prefer, rather than one which is imposed, you will most likely have a higher sense of well-being. Interestingly, there was no relationship between age and well-being which could indicate the change in social climate in the last few decades toward being more accepting of a variety of options for women. Women may be feeling it's more culturally sanctioned to ask the question, "What about me?", and to seek their own identity role preference. Historically, however, women have not been encouraged to seek an identity separate from others' expectations of who they should be—an identity which develops and defines a separate sense of self (O'Connell, 1976; Sangiuliano, 1978).

For some women, it is more acceptable and perhaps easier to remain within the traditional definitions of being female. The "nurturant imperative" has been strong (Baruch et al., 1983) and opposing societal norms of what is considered appropriate behavior is often perceived as being deviant (Lipman-Blumen & Leavitt, 1977). Research confirms the existence of sex role stereotypes even though on the surface economic and social conditions may be more amenable to women's role change as compared to earlier decades (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972).
Yet for other women, there is a need to gain more control over their destinies by re-examining the central identity question: "Who am I?" when changes occur in life commitments. These times of transition can be an opportunity for further clarification between what others believe a woman should be and do and what the individual woman prefers for the development of her full potential as a person. As these women choose nontraditional role definitions or are thrust without choice into new and different life responsibilities, the question of identity is of concern to them (Astin, 1977; Glatfelter, 1982).

The originator of the concept of ego identity is Erik Erikson, a pioneer in the study of adult development. From his perspective of ego psychology, Erikson created a psychosocial model for understanding the emergence and development of the ego. The eight stages described in the model cover the entire lifespan, with each stage presenting psychological conflicts to be addressed and resolved, either to a negative or to a positive outcome. Each of these stages are influenced by one another, forming an interdependent system. The term "psychosocial" model indicates the importance of viewing psychological growth as being influenced both by inward forces of self struggle and outward demands of the society.
Of concern to this study is the fifth stage of Erikson's model in which the bipolar issues of identity and role confusion are preeminent. The task during this phase is to define oneself in light of future adult tasks in society, physiological changes of puberty, and accumulated experiences of childhood (Erikson, 1963). As adolescents move toward a commitment to personal identity, Erikson believes they make these committed decisions around the themes of ideological beliefs and occupation. To be an active member of society, one must have a vocational direction and some kind of value orientation. Erikson observed the issues of identity first appearing during the period of adolescence, though he acknowledges that identity concerns will reappear across the lifespan as the adult encounters different life events and environments. It is with adult women that this study will focus its exploration of identity development.

James Marcia (1964) originated a focus of research which took Erikson's construct of ego identity (Stage V) and developed a model for the empirical study of identity. Marcia's purpose (1964) was to design measures for the ego identity construct so that this particular stage of development could be examined under research conditions outside clinical observations which had been Erikson's
source of data. Marcia organized Erikson's concept of identity resolution into four categories or "styles" which describe the strategy used for "meeting the identity crisis" (Marcia, 1964, p. 4). These styles are called "identity statuses."

The criteria used to define the statuses of ego identity are crisis and commitment, terms originating with Erikson. The presence or absence of these two variables in the areas of occupation and ideology determine the following statuses: 1) identity achieved status has experienced a crisis period and has made a commitment; 2) persons in a moratorium status are currently in crisis, seeking to make a decision among alternatives; 3) the foreclosure status describes individuals who have never been through a crisis period but have made commitments to ideologies and occupation; these are assumed from the beliefs of parents or other authority figures; and 4) identity diffused status includes people who have made no commitment and have never been in a crisis, or if they have had a time of questioning, they were not able to resolve the issues. These descriptions may be summarized as follows (Widick, Parker, & Knelfelkamp, 1978, p. 11):
The use of crisis and commitment as criteria for the identity statuses reflects Erikson's writings on the subject. Marcia defines crisis as "a time during adolescence when the individual seems to be actively involved in choosing among meaningful alternatives" (Marcia, 1964, p. 24). Likewise with adults, a crisis period is that time when a decision must be reached after thoughtful consideration of options. Commitment, the second criterion, is "the degree of personal investment the individual expresses in a course of action or belief" (p. 24). Making a commitment leads to the achievement of ego identity, if a period of self-examination precedes this commitment.

We observe many women seeking alternative life patterns from the traditional one, with or without their own choosing. The question of identity resurfaces and a new synthesis forms. Commitments of early adulthood are now reevaluated in light of their meaning for changed life situations. Hence, a woman's identity shifts at transition points throughout the life cycle. "In this view, identity
crisis is a reopening of commitments that were once considered settled, and a new awareness of choice" (Loewenstein, 1980, p. 162). Particular events can introduce opportunity for re-evaluation of self. Levinson (1978) used the term "marker event" in his study of men's lives to designate those events which have a strong influence on one's life. Marker events are characterized by the adaptation they require due to changes in the life situation.

**Assertiveness**

Women encountering life events will enter them in various ego-identity statuses and will respond differently in their approaches to the life events, themselves, and others. There has been an effort by counselors and educators to assist and support women by means of assertion training programs to enable women to competently cope with these challenges of changing life commitments (Scott, 1977). Assertiveness has been found to be a valuable coping mechanism which can increase personal effectiveness as women strive to develop their full potential (Butler, 1976; Jakubowski, 1978; Lazarus, 1980).

"Assertive behavior is that type of interpersonal behavior in which a person stands up for her legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of others are not
violated" (Jakubowski, 1978, p. 107). As was mentioned earlier, economic and social conditions, along with the women's movement, have necessitated a variety of life patterns for women. With these expanded options come changing self-concepts and behaviors for which many women feel unprepared. Assertive training facilitates self-expression and helps women overcome limitations in areas for which they've not received adequate preparation.

The concept of assertiveness was first introduced by behavior therapists Joseph Wolpe (1958) and Andrew Salter (1949). They viewed assertion as an inhibitor of anxiety. The work on assertiveness has grown increasingly both in assessment methods and clinical treatment. Its growth has paralleled the movement for women's rights of the 1970s and 1980s, sharing a common principle of the rights of the individual (Linehan, 1984). Gambrill and Richey state three ways that assertion training is especially relevant for women:

First, it offers a way to help women equalize their positions in relation to a number of inequities, such as in the world of work (Bird & Briller, 1968). Second, women comprise the majority of people seeking outpatient mental health services (National Institute of Mental Health, 1973) and the largest percentage of clients with presenting problems that often relate directly to a lack of assertion, such as depression (National Institute of Mental Health, 1974). Third, many women have been socialized to be self-critical, fearful, and nonassertive (Gambrill & Richey, 1980, p. 226).
Equally important to the behavioral aspects of assertiveness are the cognitions a person has about behaving a certain way. Thought patterns and the accompanying feelings reflect one's values and can influence how comfortable one is when acting assertively. Even though a woman might have the skills to act assertively, she may be blocked by negative thinking patterns and consequences. It is important that intervention programs and measures of assertion acknowledge both attitudes and feelings as well as improving social skills.

To become more assertive requires a woman to counteract socialized traditional female behaviors of dependency, passivity, and compliance. Some women are ready and willing to increase their assertive behaviors in social interactions; others are afraid they will appear aggressive and unfeminine (Gambrill & Richey, 1980; Butler, 1975). One of the themes in women's descriptions of their maturation processes is the difficulty in shaping new self-concepts that are both feminine and positive (Yahne, 1984). Linehan and Egan remind us, "Clearly, the learning of assertive behaviors requires a dramatic break with the traditional feminine role, and, in essence, the acquisition of behaviors formerly associated with the traditional masculine role" (Linehan & Egan, 1979, p. 251).
What may differentiate women who recognize the need for assertiveness and those women who are less aware of the need could be the extent to which the women have defined a self. By defining a self—one's own beliefs and life goals apart from others' expectations—a woman most likely is more receptive to employing the tools of assertive behavior than a woman who remains undifferentiated from others' definition of her. To assert oneself is to consider and take responsibility for the "What about me?" question. To know and express one's feelings, beliefs, and opinions requires attention to the individual self.

Conclusion

In summary, adults continuously develop and experience change over the lifespan. For women in recent decades, a variety of life directions has enlarged a once narrow view of what life holds in store for them. The contemporary woman has demands and expectations placed on her which are unlike those of past times. In the midst of life change, questions of identity arise concerning the perceptions women have of themselves. "How will I balance the traditional commitments to family with new commitments of a career?" "Has my life been worthwhile and purposeful?" "What are my skills and talents and where can I best express them?" "Will I regret never having a child?" Transitions present
opportunity to question values and priorities and to reconsider one's commitments made earlier in life.

Women in transition find themselves in new situations, experimenting with new behaviors which require interpersonal skills they've had little or no use for previously. Assertive skills can assist women to make the change from one lifestyle to another more easily. The extent to which a woman incorporates assertiveness into her behavior repertoire may depend on her sense of identity. To assert is to express one's preference without being disrespectful of others' rights. And to know what one prefers requires self-examination and a willingness to take responsibility for one's own life.

Of concern to this study was the investigation of the relationship of a woman's ego identity to the probability of engaging in assertive behavior as well as her comfort in behaving assertively. The underlying theory base for ego identity is the work of Erik Erikson and the operational constructs of identity come from the work of James Marcia. The construct of assertiveness is rooted in the theoretical behavior therapy literature, originating with Joseph Wolpe and Andrew Salter.
Assumptions

Each of the two theoretical constructs—ego identity and assertiveness—originate from different psychological perspectives. The study of identity formation comes from a psychoanalytic and ego/analytic framework; assertiveness derives from the behavioral framework. The assumptions underlying these two viewpoints are summarized and the merit of bringing them together in this study is discussed.

Traditional psychoanalysis emphasizes biological motivation and the unconscious as influences on human behavior. Focus is on the nonobservable with no regard for the influence of environment on psychological development. Ego psychologists, of whom Erik Erikson is an example, modified traditional psychoanalytic theory by recognizing the interaction between persons and their culture (parents, family, social institutions) and by placing less emphasis on the biological and the unconscious as the sole source of motivation. Cognitive factors, such as thinking and choosing, are also incorporated. It is the ego/analytic perspective which provides the framework for the study of ego identity in this research.

Behavior theory, from which the concept of assertiveness developed, is in contrast, yet with some common links to ego psychology. Emphasis is on the capacity
for learning and cognitive processes. Focus is on behavioral problems which can be observed and measured with no regard to unconscious "hidden" motivations. Essential to what is observed is the cultural environment which is considered when dealing with problematic behavior. Adaptive behaviors are acquired through learning more effective behaviors, using reinforcement and modeling, rather than being learned through insight.

The link between these two theoretical frameworks lies in their common concern for addressing environmental interaction with individual behavior, and for recognizing the importance of cognitive processes. An example of a study merging these two perspectives is an investigation of assertion and ego defense mechanisms (Massong, Dickson, Ritzler, & Layne, 1982). Results found assertive and nonassertive individuals to utilize different ego defense mechanisms in dealing with interpersonal anxiety. These conclusions suggest the fruitfulness of viewing the concept of assertion from a psychodynamic perspective as well as a behavioral one. In so doing, knowledge of human behavior is deepened by recognizing "the importance of understanding the underlying motivations and character styles that distinguish even 'clinically normal' individuals" (Massong et al., 1982, p. 595). This would support the merger of these two
psychological frameworks in the present investigation of the relationship of ego identity styles to assertive behaviors.

Definitions

The following are definitions of terms which are important to this study and to which reference will be given frequently.

1) Identity - a dynamic internal structure created by the individual which involves a sense of self separate from others' expectations and which reflects fidelity or commitment to a belief system and continuity between the individual's past and future.

2) Crisis - a period of self-examination and exploration of alternatives from which choices are reached; an intersection.

3) Commitment - the personal investment made to choices which are decided upon during a crisis period.

4) Assertive - "Assertive behaviors are the verbal and nonverbal responses that enable us to act in our own best interests . . . to express our opinions, feelings, and attitudes honestly without undue anxiety or the depreciation of others" (Gambrill & Richey, 1980, p. 222).
Research Questions and Hypotheses

The preceding discussion of identity development and assertive behavior in women supports the usefulness of a study of these two constructs and their possible relationship in adult women. Caught in the middle of changing cultural norms, women are redirecting and expanding their life patterns. As they confront shifts in identity in adult life, how do they cope with transition? Is their sense of personal identity related to how they cope with transition? More specifically, do women with an achieved status of identity feel less anxiety and are they more receptive to using assertive behavior than women whose personal identity is less defined?

It was conjectured that the ego identity status of a woman has a relationship on the probability of, and comfort in expressing assertive behavior. Going a step further, the following hypotheses were developed to test this conjecture. The alpha level was set at .05.

I. Women in either foreclosure or diffusion identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their response probability scores to assertive situations.

II. Women in either moratorium or achieved identity statuses will not be significantly different from
each other on their response probability scores to assertive situations.

III. Women in either moratorium or achieved identity statuses will be significantly different from women in either diffusion or foreclosure statuses on response probability scores.

IV. Women in either moratorium or diffusion identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their level of discomfort scores in assertive situations.

V. Women in either foreclosure or achieved identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their level of discomfort scores in assertive situations.

VI. Women in either foreclosure or achieved statuses will be significantly different from women in either diffusion or moratorium statuses on their level of discomfort scores in assertive situations.

Design

This was a nonexperimental causal-comparative design. This type of research examines possible effects of variables which cannot be manipulated experimentally (Borg & Gall, 1979). Causal-comparative research is similar to
correlational research but its emphasis is on investigation of differences between or among groups whereas correlational studies examine relationships among variables. In conducting causal-comparative research, groups are selected which differ on some critical variable (in this study it would be identity status) and are studied to determine how they differ on other variables (assertive response probability and level of comfort).

Sources of data

The 208-subject sample used in this study was derived from a random sample of 600 women selected from a membership mailing list of the United Church of Christ for the central region of a midwestern farm state. They ranged in age from 25 to 64 years. Questionnaires were sent to the random sample of 600 and 355 questionnaires were returned, a rate of 59.2%. A final sample of 208 was included for analysis after eliminating subjects who were over 64 years and under 25 years. Of greatest interest in this study was early and middle adulthood years of women's lives.

Instrumentation

The construct of assertiveness was measured by The Assertion Inventory (Gambrill & Richey, 1975) which contains two scales. One scale assesses the level of discomfort one
feels in considering assertive responses. The second scale assesses the probability of responding assertively to stated situations.

The identity construct was measured by the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status-Expanded which is a modification of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979). This instrument places respondents into one of the four coping styles for resolving identity issues--diffusion, moratorium, foreclosed, and achieved. Items describe beliefs about political ideology, religion, occupational concerns, and sex-role attitudes.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study concerns population validity. The sample of women was randomly selected from the membership list of the United Church of Christ in a midwestern farm state. This was considered the accessible population. Findings from the study may not apply to all adult women in the target population of a midwestern farm state. Caution is to be taken in making generalizations from the sample to the target population.

A second possible limitation concerns items on the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status-Expanded, the measure of the identity construct. Of concern are those
items which pertain to religious belief. The sample drawn from a church membership may not represent as much variability in responses to these items as would be found in the general population, which would include people who are not members of a religious organization. However, it is very customary in a midwestern farm state to affiliate with a church for social reasons, as much as for religious commitment. Membership is frequently in name only with little active participation and may not necessarily reflect religious commitment. This particular denomination is known for its wide variance among members in their religious faith perspective. Results may be limited to the accessible population, nonetheless.

Finally, it would be more ideal to study identity status as it relates to assertiveness over a period of time in a woman's life cycle. Limitations restrict the investigation to be confined to looking at the two variables at one point in time, providing cross-sectional data rather than longitudinal data.

Significance of the Study

The primary significance of this investigation lies with the study of identity in adult life, particularly with women. The majority of studies examine identity formation
in middle to late adolescence, the time Erikson designates when issues of identity first appear as critical to development. Little work has been documented on ego identity in later points of adulthood when identity questions can reappear as auxiliary concerns within later developmental tasks.

Secondly, by exploring the possible relationships between ego identity and assertive behavior, this study intends to contribute to the literature on adult development and may offer deeper understanding of the complexities of adult change or transitions experienced over the life cycle. Schlossberg suggests research on life transitions which examines "effective copers--whoever they might be and however they might be identified--" (1984, p. 47). Then, we may learn about their preferred coping strategy for transitions, unexpected or expected. Studying women's discomfort toward and self-perceptions of assertive behavior in relation to ego identity may be a step in the direction of understanding variability in coping responses. The extent to which one can utilize assertive skills during transition periods may indicate, in part, the strength of her coping resources. Also, a question for future research can be raised when we consider how one's present identity status may be influenced by future marker events which
inevitably will occur and which set in motion subsequent transitions.

Finally, this study offers a potential contribution to the growing body of knowledge regarding the lives of adult women. Research on the adult life cycle and resulting theoretical frameworks has been drawn primarily from the male life experience (Adelson, 1973; Gilligan, 1979; Doherty, 1973). Rather than generalize to females from these findings, it is more cogent to examine the lives of adult women directly. Women's life experiences and maturation processes need to be incorporated into emerging theoretical frameworks of adult development so that a more complete picture of human development is understood. Many contemporary women who seek new patterns have no role models to serve as guides. They are charting new paths--immigrants in a new land. In view of the changing social norms of the female role, it is of significant interest to educators and researchers to understand and know about women's experience from their own perspectives.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The study was concerned with learning about assertive behavior of women and its relationship to identity. It was conjectured that psychological identity status plays a significant role in assertive behaviors. This review will focus on theory and research related to both identity development and assertiveness in order to provide the explanation and rationale for this conjecture.

Erik Erikson: Ego identity

Ego identity can be traced to the theoretical formulations of ego psychologists who extended Freud's psychoanalytic theory by understanding the ego as being more autonomous, having its own pattern of development rather than being under the control of the instinctual forces of the id (Marcia, 1964). Erik Erikson (1963), a neo-Freudian, postulated a psychosocial theory of ego development which paralleled and extended Freud's psychosexual stage theory into the adult years.

The idea of "psychosocial" is a significant contribution of Erikson. From his clinical observations, he recognized the mutuality present in personality development between the individual and the culture. Erikson linked
Freud's biological emphasis in psychosexual development with the social attitudes and behavior patterns acquired by the individual. Erikson believes that the individual must be viewed in the context of his or her "changing community" (Erikson, 1968, p. 45).

A second contribution of Erikson is the enlargement of the five stages of childhood presented by Freud to eight stages, extending the analysis of psychological development into adulthood. Hence, the framework presented by Erikson for understanding the progression of ego development contains eight stages, each introducing a particular task of growth which focuses on a social conflict to be resolved. The underlying psychological principle in the model is that of ego epigenesis.

This principle states that anything that grows has a ground plan, and out of this ground plan the parts arise, each part having its time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole (Erikson, 1968, p. 92).

In other words, the psychosocial task resolution of one stage is influenced by the resolution of the previous stages' crises and this, in turn, contributes to the resolution of the following stages.

There are three domains of the individual which are involved in ego epigenesis: physical growth, cognitive maturation, and social demands. These domains of the
internal and external world converge to create a psychosocial issue which the individual must confront at certain stages of development. Erikson believes the manner in which people evaluate themselves shapes a positive or a negative orientation toward resolving the issue at each particular stage. As the person approaches a decision point, the task will be resolved either toward the negative valence or the positive. If the issue is resolved toward the positive aspect, a "virtue" or "vital strength" is the lasting outcome. These ego strengths provide a foundation for confronting life's challenges (Erikson, 1963).

The psychological work on these phase-specific tasks is never complete, although the extent to which a positive resolution has been accomplished will have a bearing on the need for re-working in later years. Thus, the issues are introduced at a particular stage in one's life and may be renewed later for further exploration. Each stage culminates in a crisis revolving around the task being addressed. Erikson uses the term crisis "in a developmental sense to connote not a threat of catastrophe, but a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential" (Erikson, 1968, p. 96). Out of this uncertainty comes a clarity and resolve to move ahead in new directions (positive resolution) or a regression and
stalemate, in which less completion of the task occurs (negative resolution).

Figure 1 illustrates the eight stages of ego development. The epigenetic principle is indicated by 1) the ascending vertical in which the work of each stage evolves out of the resolution of the previous stages and contributes to the following stages; and 2) the left-to-right horizontal which shows that each chronological stage has the psychosocial parts of all the previous stages. Erikson emphasizes the interdependency of these stages:

...the chart formalizes a progression through time of a differentiation of parts. This indicates (1) that each critical item of psychosocial strength discussed here is systematically related to all others, and that they all depend on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item; and (2) that each item exists in some form before its critical time normally arrives (1963, p. 271).

The vital strengths referred to earlier are included with each set of bi-polar attitudes.

Of concern to this study is the fifth stage in Erikson's model--Identity vs. Confusion. The task during this phase is to define oneself in light of future adult tasks, the physiological changes of puberty, and the accumulated experiences of childhood (Erikson, 1963). It is a "search for a new sense of continuity and sameness" (p. 261) during a period of questioning the continuity and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Age</td>
<td>Integrity vs. Despair. WISDOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adulthood</td>
<td>Generativity vs. Self-Absorption. CARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adulthood</td>
<td>Intimacy vs. Isolation. LOVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>Identity vs. Confusion. LOVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Age</td>
<td>Industry vs. Inferiority. FIDELITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Age</td>
<td>Initiative vs. Guilt. PURPOSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>Autonomy vs. Shame, Doubt. WILL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infancy</td>
<td>Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust. HOPE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Erikson's epigenetic chart (Erikson & Erikson, 1981)
sameness of childhood. It is a time of integrating childhood identifications and acquired skills and competencies with the opportunities and expectations presented by the culture. Erikson uses the term "moratorium" to describe this time between childhood and adulthood. "A moratorium is a period of delay granted to somebody who is not ready to meet an obligation or forced on somebody who should give himself time. By psychosocial moratorium, then, we mean delay of adult commitments, . . ." (Erikson, 1968, p. 157). Two tangible results of this searching are: 1) to become committed to an occupation, and 2) to become committed to an ideology. Ideology refers to a value orientation or set of beliefs which provide a framework for organizing one's experience. This, along with vocational direction, are the two areas around which choices are made.

Erikson postulates that issues of identity come to ascendance during adolescence, and (according to the epigenetic principle) will be revised and renewed in later stages of the life cycle. The first critical encounter with the struggle to define an identity lays a foundation for meeting the tasks of adult life. As those tasks of the later stages become dominant, the issues of identity are raised again and a new synthesis emerges.
"... every time one enters a new stage there is a new chance for reintegrating the issues of previous stages. So, if you have a problem with basic trust vs. mistrust, that in itself does not have to lead to severe problems at the generativity stage, because one has a chance to rework some of these things over the life cycle" (Erikson & Erikson, 1981, p. 253).

The sample in the present study includes women ages 25 to 64 years. Their ages distribute them, theoretically, over Stage VI (Intimacy vs. Isolation), Stage VII (Generativity vs. Absorption) and Stage VIII (Integrity vs. Despair). In the midst of the psychosocial issues relevant to these stages, the selfdefinitions of identity are reexamined. The intent of this study investigates identity concerns for women across these age groups.

Questions have been raised by researchers as to the "fit" for women with Erikson's framework concerning Stages V and VI in which identity and intimacy issues, respectively, are the focus. Some researchers suggest that identity and intimacy development merge or coexist together (Josselson, 1973; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979). Considering the fluctuation in values, goals, and behavior of women in recent years, it is important to reexamine Erikson's model in light of contemporary women's lives.

Erikson's writings on the identity resolution do not consider adequately the influence of socialization on women's development (Lott, 1981; Schaef, 1972). Young girls
receive conflicting messages about their identity. While encouraged on the one hand to develop their abilities, culture also dictates the importance of marriage and motherhood for women and the setting aside of professional talents and personal goals to support and aid a husband's career. Erikson did not address the implications of this conflict when developing his identity-through-intimacy model, but stated that female identity formation differs only in content with males, not in the process. In more recent discussion, he recognizes the effect of the change in sex role norms on women's psychological growth. Although he does not agree that the stages of identity and intimacy could be reversed, he does suggest "that in women the completion of identity might remain relatively open through the intimacy and even some of the generativity period" (Erikson & Erikson, 1981, p. 267).

It is with the construct devised by James Marcia to test Erikson's model of identity development that female identity formation can be further investigated. Marcia's emphasis on the role of choice and conflict as a prerequisite to identity achievement allows for an enlarged perspective on the way in which women define themselves, removing the definition from a strictly biological oriented basis (Morgan & Farber, 1982).
Identity statuses

Much research on the ego identity construct has been based on the operational framework developed by James Marcia for studying the fifth stage in Erikson's model of ego development. Marcia's understanding of identity based on the ego psychoanalytic theoretical framework is as follows:

... of construing identity as a self-structure--an internal, self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history. The better developed this structure is, the more aware individuals appear to be of their own uniqueness and similarity to others and of their own strengths and weaknesses in making their way in the world. The less developed this structure is, the more confused individuals seem about their own distinctiveness from others and the more they have to rely on external sources to evaluate themselves. The identity structure is dynamic, not static. Elements are continually being added and discarded. Over a period of time, the entire gestalt may shift (Marcia, 1980, p. 159).

Marcia's purpose (1964) was to develop measures for the ego identity construct as described by Erikson, so that this particular stage of development could be examined under research conditions outside clinical observations, which has provided the data for Erikson's analysis. Marcia organized Erikson's concept of identity resolution into four categories or "styles" according to the strategy used for handling the identity crisis. These approaches or styles for dealing with identity issues are termed "identity statuses."
The criteria used to define the statuses of ego identity are crisis and commitment, as developed in Erikson's theoretical ideas. The presence or absence of these two dimensions in the areas of occupation and ideology create the following four statuses: 1) the identity achieved status describes those who have experienced a crisis period and have made a commitment; 2) persons in a moratorium status are currently in crisis, seeking to make a decision among alternatives; 3) the foreclosure status describes individuals who have never been through a crisis period but have made commitments to ideologies and occupation; these are assumed from the beliefs of parents or other authority figures; 4) the identity diffused status includes people who have made no commitment and have never been in a crisis, or if they've had a time of questioning, they were not able to resolve the issues. These descriptions may be summarized as follows (Widick, Parker, & Knefelkamp, 1978, p. 11):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreclosed</th>
<th>Identity Diffused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Crisis</td>
<td>No Crisis/Past Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments</td>
<td>No Commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>Achieved Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Experienced</td>
<td>Crisis Experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Commitments</td>
<td>Commitments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marcia's reference for using crisis and commitment are derived from the themes of Erikson's writing about late adolescence when issues of identity are dominant. Marcia defines crisis as "a time during adolescence when the individual seems to be actively involved in choosing among meaningful alternatives" (Marcia, 1964, p. 24). Likewise with adults, a crisis period is that time when a decision must be reached after thoughtful consideration of the options available. The second theme of commitment concerns "the degree of personal investment the individual expresses in a course of action or belief" (p. 24). Making a commitment leads to the achievement of ego identity if the decision is preceded by a period of self-exploration.

Marcia selected the areas of occupation and ideology within which to examined crisis and commitment in a person's life. "Ideology" is further divided into religion and politics. Crisis and commitment in the area of religion pertain to the influences of religious or ethical values on daily living, rather than simply routine religious observations, such as attending services. Politics refers to one's broad base of political beliefs or ideological viewpoints, and is not limited to activity in a political party. It was from Erikson's theoretical writings and biographical studies that Marcia chose these criteria as
significant in forming identity. Creating one's value orientation and choosing a vocational direction are a major part of "growing up."

The results of Marcia's original research with college males (1964, 1966) gave partial validation to the identity statuses and indicated that those in identity achievement statuses performed better than those in the other statuses on a cognitive task performed under stress while setting performance goals realistically. Subjects in the moratorium status resembled those in the achieved status, but did not score as high and were more variable on the cognitive tasks. Subjects in the foreclosure status very clearly stood above those in the other statuses in their preference for authoritarian values, such as obedience, strong leadership, and respect for authority. Identity diffusion subjects scored next to lowest on the cognitive task and were at the opposite end of the continuum from the achieved status on the overall ego identity measure. The self-esteem outcome was not as predicted (no differences were found) due in part to the unreliability of the measure used. This was attributed to the 2-month lapse of time between the first and second administration of the self-esteem questionnaire. "The variability in subjects' self-esteem over this period of time may have obscured differences due to treatment alone" (Marcia, 1966, p. 557).
Ego identity statuses--research

The paradigm of the identity statuses created by Marcia has generated a great deal of research (some 40 studies between 1966 and 1978). The populations studied have been primarily late adolescence (college students, 18-22 years of age) and middle adolescence. Research with adult populations has been limited, and these studies have used predominantly male subjects (Waterman, 1982). Bourne (1978a and 1978b) and Marcia (1980) present complete reviews of this literature. Those of interest to this study will be summarized within the areas of cognitive variables, personality correlates, and developmental perspectives.

Cognitive variables One of the most consistent findings in research with college students was that no variability existed among the statuses regarding general intelligence (Marcia, 1966; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel, 1975). Bourne (1978a) notes, however, that this finding could reflect the possibility that the intellectual ability of college students is within a narrow range, not representative of other populations. People in the achieved status are distinguished from those in the other statuses in having the highest grade point average, suggesting the goal orientation of people in this status (Cross & Allen, 1970).
In a study on cognitive style, Waterman and Waterman (1974) found male subjects in the achieved and moratorium statuses to be more reflective in their decision-making process as opposed to impulsive—a style describing subjects in the diffused and foreclosure statuses. A measure of the reflection-impulsivity dimension (Kagan, Rosman, Day, Albert, & Phillips, 1964) defines a reflective individual as taking longer to consider a choice among several alternatives and making few errors, whereas people with an impulsive decision-making style move quickly to choices with higher chance of error. In addition, Drake (1970) found the reflective individuals to have compared all the alternatives before selecting one, something the impulsive style subjects would not bother doing. The reflective decision-making style is similar to components included in assertive skill training and, most likely, persons in achieved or moratorium identity statuses would find it easier to implement a reflective decision-making process with assertiveness than would those in foreclosure and diffusion statuses.

Schenkel (1975) found in college women that it was statuses of achieved and foreclosure which were linked closely on a measure of field independence (a dimension of cognitive style, Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough, & Karp, 1962). One of the distinguishing correlates of field
independent cognitive style is a "separate sense of identity" in which an internal frame of reference is utilized to guide oneself in forming an identity. A similar grouping was found when looking at achievement-related needs of the statuses (Marcia & Friedman, 1970). College women in the achieved and foreclosure statuses selected more difficult college majors. However, Orlofsky (1978) found college men and women in the achieved and moratorium statuses to be similar and display higher achievement motivation. In this same study, there was a reversal for the sexes on a measure of "fear of success" (Horner, 1968). Women in the achieved and moratorium statuses and men in foreclosed and diffused statuses all expressed greater apprehension about succeeding.

Summary These studies on cognitive variables indicate there are no differences among the identity statuses on general intelligence measures, but differences do appear in cognitive performance and style. There is a clear contrast between people in the achieved status and those in the diffusion status. At one end of the continuum, achievement people are more precise and thoughtful in making decisions, considering all alternatives; challenge themselves with more difficult academic fields; and have the ability to differentiate what is self and what is external
to self; are more goal oriented; use an internal frame of reference and are independent in judgment.

On the other hand, cognitive style is developmentally less advanced for those in the diffusion status. People in this category are more impulsive in making decisions; have lower achievement motivation; rely on an external frame of reference to guide self-definition; and are less motivated to consider identity concerns.

In between the two ends of this continuum are people in the moratorium and foreclosure statuses, where the findings are mixed. On measures of field independence and college major, women in the foreclosure status aligned themselves with those in the achieved status. In another study with college males, those in the moratorium status were more similar to those in the achieved status on a measure of cognitive style.

Evidence from these studies shows that identity statuses are differentiated on several cognitive variables. The attributes of these cognitive variables would appear to be traits useful for assertive behavior, so that the relationship between identity status and assertiveness might be supported from these findings.

**Personality correlates** Studies have replicated the findings that people in the foreclosure identity status
score significantly higher on authoritarian measures than those in the other three statuses. The same measure was used in all studies—a subscale of the California F Scale (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). Also of interest is that people in the moratorium status scored significantly lower in most of the studies. Thus, people in the foreclosure status, who have not experienced a personal crisis, endorse statements which show respect for authority, obedience, and adherence to conventional societal standards. On the other hand, moratorium subjects are questioning all these aspects, as they are in a period of exploring new options (Marcia, 1966, 1967; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel & Marcia, 1972; Matteson, 1977).

In general, people in the achieved and foreclosure statuses express less anxiety than those in moratorium and diffusion statuses. Toder and Marcia (1973) found that women in statuses of diffusion and moratorium had the highest negative affect score (were the most uncomfortable) in resisting group pressure to conform. Women of achieved or foreclosed identity, having a stable commitment, were found to have significantly less negative affect to resisting conformity than the other two statuses. In the Marcia and Friedman study (1970) anxiety, or general maladjustment, was measured by the Welsh Anxiety Scale
(Welsh, 1956) with results showing those in the foreclosure status to be significantly less anxious than the other statuses, followed by those in achievement, moratorium, and diffusion statuses.

Research on self-esteem has elicited inconsistent findings among the identity statuses. Marcia (1966) found no differences when using the Self Esteem Questionnaire (deCharms & Rosenbaum, 1960) on college men, nor any differences in change of self-esteem following positive or negative feedback about subjects' intellectual ability. However, these findings may be due to unreliability of the measurement which was administered twice with a 2-month gap of time in-between. This may have permitted other factors than the treatment to affect self-esteem. With college women, those in achieved status scored significantly lower than those in the other three statuses on self-esteem, and foreclosure subjects scored highest (Marcia & Friedman, 1970). Orlofsky (1978) using a different measure with males and females found no differences among the statuses. A study of women documented that those in the achieved status were able to maintain higher self-esteem on a measure of interpersonal behavior (Read, Adams, & Dobson, 1984).

College men in the foreclosure status scored lowest on a measure of autonomy (Edwards Personal Preference Schedule,
1954) and highest on the need for social approval (Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973). Toder and Marcia (1973) reported that late adolescent college women in achieved and foreclosure statuses were most resilient to group pressure and conformed less than women in moratorium and diffusion statuses. The former were seen as the more stable statuses in that an identity commitment had been made and hence would produce more resistance to conformity pressure. Both statuses have an independent frame of reference. In a study of both sexes, Neuber and Genthner (1977) documented that those in identity achieved and moratorium statuses seemed to assume more personal responsibility for their lives.

Turning to a less studied area of research, that of interpersonal social relations, there is evidence supporting those in the more developed status of achieved identity to have the greatest ability to establish intimate interpersonal relationships, whereas individuals in the foreclosure and diffusion statuses formed stereotyped relationships, lacking depth and mutuality. The moratorium status fluctuated on this variable (Orlofsky et al., 1973; Fitch & Adams, 1983; Josselson, 1973).

A study of college women (Read et al., 1984) substantiated the hypothesis "that more developmentally advanced identity statuses (achieved and moratorium) would
be associated with a more direct, assertive social-influence style" (p. 170). Social influence (Johnson, 1976) was defined "as the ability to get another individual to do or believe in something he or she would not necessarily have done or believed spontaneously" (p. 170).

An initial sample of 279 female undergraduates was classified into one of the four identity statuses by the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979), a measure maintaining predictive and concurrent validity with Marcia's interview and Ego Identity Incomplete Sentence Blank (1966). From this pool, 80 subjects were randomly drawn to complete an experimental social task and were scored on four dimensions of the Social Interaction Scoring System (SISS) (Savasta, 1977) and the Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Style (TAIS) (Nideffer, 1976).

Based on the TAIS data and observable social behavior in a laboratory setting (SISS), the following personality profiles for each identity status were provided by means of discriminant function analysis:

1) women in the foreclosure status showed the least capacity for integration of ideas and analytic thinking from many perspectives;
2) women in the moratorium and achieved statuses were able to absorb and use large amounts of information, and at the same time were able to think independently;

3) women in the diffusion and foreclosure statuses were more likely than those in other statuses to make errors in judgment, because they narrowed their attention so much that important information was omitted.

Concerning identity and social influence behavior, there were also differences among the statuses:

1) women in diffused and foreclosed statuses were more likely than those in other statuses to offer or take away resources (i.e., money or candy) in order to influence others and engaged in deceptive strategies rather than interdependent strategies of compromise and cooperation used by people in achievement and moratorium statuses;

2) women in achieved and moratorium statuses were more likely to disagree directly and take an opposing view; would express feelings, offer solutions and opinions, all with little or no deceptiveness or hostility.
Evidence from this study substantiates further that the foreclosure status does not serve women as well as the achievement status in developing one's identity. Previous studies which suggest the two stable identity statuses (achievement and foreclosure) be linked together used broad personality constructs to differentiate the statuses and seldom used observable behavioral settings to collect data. Read et al. (1984) conclude that the foreclosure and identity achievement statuses are not equally adaptive coping styles of identity resolution for women.

Data from the above study appears to provide rationale for the conjectures. Women whose identity is either achieved or in a moratorium status would have greater capacity to cope assertively with change in their lives. Women in these statuses seem to grasp most everything in a situation and, simultaneously, use judgment in solving a problem. Whereas women with an identity status of foreclosure or diffusion would be less likely to be aware of and integrate the possible alternatives; would not feel comfortable disagreeing directly; and, hence, would cope less assertively.

There is conflicting evidence as to which of the statuses manifests greater psychological maturity. When examining variables among female subjects, women in the
foreclosure status were sometimes found to be similar to women in the achieved status. Studies with men consistently found moratorium more closely resembling the achievement status. Some research suggests the moratorium and foreclosure statuses have different meanings for the sexes—that the foreclosure strategy for resolving identity issues may be more adaptive for women because they can acceptably follow the traditional expectations of identity for women endorsed by the culture (Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel, 1975). Orlofsky (1978) views this explanation with caution in that different types of interview instruments were used in these studies and samples were drawn from different populations. The conclusion reached by Marcia (1980) and others (Read et al., 1984) is that "the relative adaptiveness of the moratorium or foreclosure status for women is a function both of the dependent variables used in a particular study and of the existing cultural supports for women's exploration of alternatives" (Marcia, 1980, p. 175). When social support is given equally to moratorium or foreclosure strategies, the moratorium status will maintain advanced ratings on measures of ego strength.

Summary There is evidence from these studies on personality correlates and identity statuses to support the assumption that ego identity status will predict certain
behavioral manifestations. The most reliable finding is that the foreclosure status consistently favors authoritarianism. Also, foreclosure females are low in anxiety, conform less to group pressure, are fairly high on self-esteem measures, while both males and females in this category are low in autonomy and do not develop close intimate peer relationships.

Those in the moratorium status are more likely to rebel against or question the status quo; score high on anxiety measures, low on self-esteem; are more susceptible to peer pressure; and are able to establish close relationships with their peers. It would appear that those in the achieved status are able to deal effectively with interpersonal conflict and manage situations with people. They are found to maintain mature and intimate relationships and are not influenced to change by peer pressure, nor dependent on authority figures.

It has been conjectured by the researcher, in this study, that the ego identity status of a women is related to the probability of engaging in assertive behavior and to the degree of discomfort in expressing assertive behavior. As women are confronted with change in adulthood, those who have an achieved identity or are in the process of questioning who they are and their values (moratorium
status) may manage these life changes assertively. Women in the moratorium status, unstable in terms of not yet being committed, may be expected to feel vulnerable and anxious in expressing assertive behavior, yet may choose to do so. They are testing out new life patterns which may deviate from traditional cultural expectations. Women in the achieved status are less vulnerable as they have settled on an identity for the time being. They are more stable and able to deal with sudden shifts in their environment in an assertive manner. The foreclosure status of identity indicates that these women have made a commitment but it is based on someone else's expectations of what they should do and be. Their rigid, inflexible stance and close parental ties presume they don't care to question externally imposed values of family and society. They have a greater need to perpetuate the status quo, rather than experience the conflict in challenging it. This leads one to believe they would not want to practice assertiveness in that they would need to be more confrontive and questioning than is comfortable. Unlike the foreclosure status, women in the diffusion identity status have no commitment and are unstable. This brings about confusion and anxiety. People in this status tend to isolate themselves and find it difficult to establish intimate supportive relationships.
It is unlikely that those in this status would manage assertively during a transition period.

As we continue to explore the relationships of identity and assertiveness during adult life changes, it is important to understand that identity is not formed once and for all. Waterman (1982) suggests we re-examine developmental patterns of identity formation. The following section addresses some of his review on theory and research in this area.

**Developmental perspective** Marcia's measurements of ego identity status (1964) places people in categories according to their style of coping with the identity crisis and does not give a continuous measure. Waterman (1982) offers a descriptive model of pathways for identity development which reflects research of a longitudinal nature, and which is consistent with Erikson's theory.

The utility of the model rests in the opportunity it affords to study the relative frequency of the different developmental paths and the circumstances that influence their adoption. It thus becomes possible to compare the patterns of development among various groups within a population (and between populations) and to identify the impact of socio-historical conditions on identity formation (Waterman, 1982, p. 343).

Waterman's hypothesis supporting the model is that "Movement from adolescence to adulthood involves a preponderance of changes in identity status which can be characterized as progressive developmental shifts" (1982, p. 343).
A visual presentation of the pathways of identity formation is given in Figure 2. The broken lines are considered regressive shifts since movement from any status back to diffusion implies that identity concerns are tabled without a satisfactory completion. The solid lines indicate progressive developmental shifts in identity; either a crisis period of exploration or a move to meaningful commitments has occurred. Movement from achievement to moratorium is not regressive but implies a re-examination of identity concerns. "It reflects a continuation of the identity formation process, an attempt to make more rewarding choices, not a renunciation of identity concerns" (Waterman, 1982, p. 343). The wavy line indicates no progression or regression.

(D=identity diffusion; F=foreclosure; M=moratorium; A=identity achieved)

FIGURE 2. Developmental pathways of identity status formation
These developmental shifts are based on college studies of late adolescents (Waterman & Waterman, 1971; Waterman, Geary, & Waterman, 1974; Waterman & Goldman, 1976). Only two longitudinal studies have been conducted tracing identity changes from college years into adulthood (Whitbourne & Waterman, 1979; Marcia, 1976). In general, the statuses, excluding moratorium, were fairly stable. Waterman (1982) concluded that "the adult years are a period of strengthening identity but not a time when many new identity issues are raised or novel possibilities are considered" (p. 348). I question this conclusion based on only two studies. Waterman does footnote that this statement may need alteration if the phenomenon of midlife crises becomes more frequent. I should think the changes occurring for women during the adult years would challenge his conclusion.

Two nonlongitudinal studies suggest change in women's adult identity. O'Connell (1976) investigated the process of identity formation among 87 college educated married women by means of retrospective data. She found that traditional and neotraditional lifestyle calls for a "partial hiatus" or moratorium in identity synthesis from marriage through childbearing until the stage of school children, whereas nontraditional women felt their personal
identity development progressed without interruption. This study did not use Marcia's paradigm of identity statuses, although Erikson's theory provided a base.

A study of married women which did use Marcia's ego identity interview (Waterman et al., 1980) found that women attending college (as compared to fulltime homemakers or women employed parttime) were in the achievement status and they also held more nontraditional attitudes than foreclosures concerning the rights and roles of women and were lower on a measure of fear of success. Data from interviews revealed that approximately 83 percent of all identity crises occurred during or after the age of twenty-two.

A study by Glatfelter (1982) examined identity development, intellectual development and their relationship in reentry women students. It was hypothesized that they are different in both identity development and intellectual development from younger women students and from women their own age who are not students. Results generally supported this hypothesis.

More first-year reentry women were found either to be in the process of considering personal identity issues, . . . or to have made a commitment to an identity following such consideration than either traditional-age students or non-student age cohorts. This suggests transition in their lives; substantive changes occur which affect both how they perceive themselves and how they are seen by others (Glatfelter, 1982, p. 138).
Marcia's identity status paradigm was used in this study, with statuses being determined by the Identity Status-Incomplete Sentences Blank Expanded (developed by Glatfelter as based on the Identity Status-Incomplete Sentences Blank by Breuer (1974)). There was also a strong relationship between level of identity status and intellectual development as measured by the Reflective Judgment Interview (King, 1978; Kitchener, 1978). Subjects in the achievement status scored higher than subjects in other status levels.

The developmental perspective and Waterman's model of progressive shifts in identity formation suggest that the developmental identity pathway of a woman during life change or transition may influence the style of coping she utilizes in assimilating change in adulthood. If she selects a pathway to the moratorium or achieved status, she will most likely have assertive skills to manage her life. If she opts for diffusion or foreclosure pathways, she will be less likely to be assertive.

The research on identity status has, for the most part, examined the effect identity status has on late adolescents' transition to college life. Little examination has been given to the influence of ego identity status on adult transitions. It was the purpose of this study to investigate the relationship of personal identity to the
ways in which adult women cope with change in their lives. The following section will review relevant literature on the assertive construct as it applies to the purpose of this study.

Assertiveness

Introduction

The construct of assertive behavior finds its theoretical roots in the work of Salter (1949), Wolpe (1958, 1982) and Wolpe and Lazarus (1966), all of whom are behavioral psychologists. From these earlier beginnings, a more recent interest in assertion training has emerged. Jakubowski (1978) suggests the convergence of three cultural trends to explain this recent popularity: 1) the emphasis for self-actualization; 2) the changing sex roles and increasing opportunities for employment of women in non-traditional areas; 3) the growth of the women's liberation movement encouraging women to be effective change agents.

We are reminded of the cultural milieu to which Erikson gave reference (1968) as an important factor in influencing one's identity formation. These cultural trends are forces out of which life transitions may occur for adults. In studying women's lives as workers, Baruch et al. (1983) found a dramatic shift in the balance between "work and
love" with commitments to career growth increasing in combination with maintenance of interpersonal relationships. Assertiveness has been implemented as a strategy for dealing effectively with new situations, and new roles—a tool for coping with change. From both the perspective of ego psychologists (especially Erikson's psychosocial framework) and behaviorists and social learning theorists, the environment is considered an important influence on one's behavior and development.

The early behavioral therapists believed that honest and open self-expression and standing up for legitimate personal rights may be inhibited by feelings of anxiety. It was suggested that assertion may serve to counteract these feelings which are associated with submissiveness (Salter, 1949; Wolpe, 1958). In earlier clinical work with assertive interventions, the emphasis was on Wolpe's paradigm of "reciprocal inhibition" in which anxiety inhibits assertiveness and assertiveness inhibits anxiety.

The goal here is to weaken the habit of responding with anxiety and to strengthen those responses which inhibit anxiety, such as making demands, initiating change, expressing anger (Wolpe, 1982). The reinforcement for assertion is the diminished fear. "Each act of assertion reciprocally inhibits to some extent the concurrent anxiety
and slightly weakens the anxiety response habit" (Wolpe & Lazarus, 1966, p. 13).

Assertion training originated with Wolpe and has become a fundamental therapeutic intervention of behavior therapists (Galassi & Galassi, 1978). With increased application of assertiveness in clinical work, psychologists found the conceptual base created by Wolpe (reciprocal inhibition and operant conditioning) was not broad enough to explain everything about assertiveness. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1969) became the broader base from which assertive and nonassertive behavior could be understood. The premise is that assertive and nonassertive responses are learned and, therefore, the environment and the people therein have influence on behaviors an individual chooses to use (Galassi & Galassi, 1978).

Assertiveness is one part of social behavior involving interactions with others (external) and interactions with self (internal). Lack of assertive behavior decreases effectiveness in these interactions and can place one at a disadvantage in social situations (Gambrill & Richey, 1980). The ability to be assertive in social interactions is a coping tool which has been found to lead to greater satisfaction and self-acceptance (Percell, Berwick, & Beigel, 1974) and to increase emotional health (Jakubowski,
The goal of assertion training is "to increase the influence people exert over their interpersonal environment by increasing the appropriate expression of both positive and negative feelings" (Gambrill & Richey, 1980).

Although this study will not focus on assertion training, the content areas included in training are salient to understanding assertiveness. Gambrill and Richey (1980) emphasize the following:

1) eliminate dysfunctional beliefs and attitudes
2) develop skills of appropriate verbal and nonverbal expressions
3) decrease feelings of anxiety
4) discriminate among assertive, nonassertive, and aggressive responses
5) analyze consequences of assertive behavior, positive and negative
6) learn positive self-reinforcement

Assimilating these content areas in training requires participants to use cognitive skills to analyze and weigh alternatives and their consequences; to develop independent judgment for appropriate uses of assertion; and to think reflectively on one's values and goals for effective interactions. As was discussed earlier, the identity statuses appear to differentiate some of these same
qualities. It would appear that there could be a relationship between certain identity statuses and people who respond well and utilize assertiveness in social interactions.

**Definition** In reviewing the literature in terms of how the concept of assertion is defined, Linehan (1984) concluded that such diversity of definition makes it difficult to agree upon a common understanding of the concept. This issue will be discussed further when literature pertaining to this study is reviewed. Others have attempted definitions which are useful for this study. In defining assertiveness, Wolpe said simply, "Assertive behavior is the appropriate expression of any emotion other than anxiety toward another person" (1982, p. 118). MacDonald (1974) refers to assertion as the open expression of preferences by words or actions in a manner that causes others to take them into account. Jakubowski defines and contrasts assertiveness with nonassertion and aggression:

1) Assertive behavior is that type of interpersonal behavior in which a person stands up for her legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of others are not violated. Assertive behavior is an honest, direct, and appropriate expression of one's feelings, beliefs and opinions. It communicates
respect (not deference) for the other person, although not necessarily for that person's behavior.

2) Nonassertive behavior is that type of interpersonal behavior which enables the person's rights to be violated by another. This can occur in two ways: First, she fails to assert herself when another person deliberately attempts to infringe upon her rights. Second, the other person does not want to encroach upon her rights, but her failure to express her needs, feelings, etc. results in an inadvertent violation.

3) Aggressive behavior is that type of interpersonal behavior in which a person stands up for her own rights in such a way that the rights of others are violated. The purpose of the aggressive behavior is to humiliate, dominate, or put the other person down rather than to simply express one's honest emotions or thoughts (1978, pp 107-108).

The distinction between assertion and aggression is especially important to understand (Lazarus, 1971; Alberti & Emmons, 1974; Jakubowski, 1978). There has been a belief on the part of some practitioners to view assertiveness as aggression, giving permission to attack others and to
express opinions and emotions without regard or respect for the other person. This basis of approach can keep women, in particular, from attempting to learn about assertiveness for fear that it will diminish their femininity and reveal aggression, stereotypically associated with masculinity.

In fact, the principles of assertion contradict the traditional feminine sex-role expectations (Butler, 1976; Jakubowski, 1977; Linehan, 1984). Research documents (Broverman et al., 1972) that across sex, age, educational level, religion, and marital status there is evidence that societal expectations would have women behave nonassertively, "placing other people's needs above their own, waiting for others to take the initiative, withholding their own opinions in deference to other people" (Jakubowski, 1977, p. 148).

In light of this, women who are seeking new directions from the traditional cultural role expectations will find the tools of assertion very useful if they are willing to implement them counter to social approval. MacDonald notes "those persons who need assertion training are frequently persons in ambiguous social roles where role rights are either ill-defined or in cultural flux" (1975, p. 60).
Assertiveness research

Linehan emphasizes the difficulty in making comparisons and generalizations across research findings on this multidimensional concept because of "the complexity and diversity of assertion definitions" (1984, p. 239). She summarized the following areas as those encompassed within the rubric of assertive behavior as described in the literature: a) sets of behavioral response classes; b) styles of expression; c) levels of social effectiveness; d) sets of interpersonal situations.

Interest in assertion has generated at least 900 scholarly papers and over 20 scales of assertion measurement (Moore, 1981). Only those studies relevant to this research will be reviewed here. They will be organized under the headings of anxiety, self-concept, and cognition. These areas fall generally under the behavioral response class category suggested by Linehan (1984).

Anxiety Confirmation was given to the hypothesis that anxiety and assertiveness would be inversely related (Orenstein, Orenstein, & Carr, 1975). High, average, and low assertive groups of men and women college undergraduates as measured by the Rathus Assertive Scale (Rathus, 1973) were tested on measures of neuroticism, measured by the Maudsley Personality Inventory (Eysenck, 1962); trait
anxiety, measured by the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1968); and interpersonal anxiety measured by the Fear Survey Schedule (Geer, 1965) resulting in a highly significant relationship (p<.0005) between the two variables following analysis of variance. Supporting Wolpe's theory of reciprocal inhibition (1958), nonassertion in females and males is associated with generalized anxiety and assertive behaviors are found to inhibit these neurotic fears.

Similarly, in a study with an adult population (Gay, Hollandsworth, & Galassi, 1975), anxiety significantly discriminated between high and low assertive groups as identified by The Adult Self-Expression Scale. The low assertive group scored significantly higher, F(1,56)=17.86, p<.001, (M=23.74) on the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale than the high assertive group (M=14.65).

Percell et al. (1974), found women who are assertive, as measured by a modified version of the Lawrence Interpersonal Behavior Test (Lawrence, 1970) are less anxious than nonassertive women. Anxiety was measured by the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale (Taylor, 1953). The correlation was -.88 with p<.001 level of confidence. In examining fear and helplessness in women, Kidder, Boell, and Moyer (1983) found evidence that assertive training lessens
women's feelings of fear and helplessness in situations requiring self-defense from physical harm.

In evaluating the effectiveness of behavior rehearsal in assertion training, McFall and Marston (1970) also found evidence of a reduction in anxiety from the pre- to posttreatment (-7.88 versus -3.00, t=1.70, df=33, p<.05).

An investigation of assertive and nonassertive individuals and ego defense mechanisms (Massong, Dickson, Ritzler, & Layne, 1982) which are used when dealing with interpersonal stress and conflict presented evidence to support the hypothesis that assertive males and females utilize adaptive, socially effective defenses (rationalization, intellectualization, and separation of emotions from content of the conflict) while nonassertive individuals rely on less adaptive defenses (turning against self and turning against an external object) F(1,36)=10.64, p<.001. Nonassertive females scored higher than both assertive females and males, as well as nonassertive males, on the defense groupings of Turning Against Self, "which suggests that they respond to such interpersonal anxiety in a guilt-ridden, intrapunitive manner" (p. 594). The researchers suggest this coping response could lead to diminished self-esteem and even less assertion. Nonassertive males favored use of the defense cluster
Turning Against Object, or attacking something outside oneself when experiencing interpersonal conflict.

**Self-concept** In studying the long range effects of acquired assertive skills, Stake and Pearlman (1980) found there was a significant change (p<.0001) in self-esteem as a result of assertive training. Female subjects (mean age=35.8 years) were measured on a performance self-esteem scale at the beginning of the training session (M=72.68), at the conclusion of a 6-session training (M=84.90), and at a one-year follow-up (M=92.56). Acquiring assertive skills appears to improve self-esteem immediately as well as over an extended period of time.

The hypothesis that people who are more assertive will also be more self-accepting was confirmed in a study of 100 outpatient psychiatric patients (50 men and 50 women). A measure of assertiveness correlated positively with a self-acceptance measure (.49 for men and .51 for women, p<.001) (Percell et al., 1974).

Results of a study (Tolor, Kelly, & Stebbins, 1976) on assertiveness, measured by the Rathus Assertive Scale (Rathus, 1973) and the College Self Expression Scale (Galassi, DeLo, Galassi, & Bastien, 1974), and self-concept, measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Fitts, 1965), in undergraduate students (mean age=19 years) indicated that
assertiveness is positively related to self-acceptance in both sexes. Regarding women, high assertive subjects on the Rathus Scale had a self-concept score mean of 353.44 and low assertive subjects had a mean of 342.09 (t=1.77, df=69, p<.10>.05). On the College Self Expression Scale, the high assertive group had a self-concept score mean of 359.50 and the low assertive group had a mean of 335.86 (t=4.00, df=69, p<.01).

Self-confidence measured by the Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965), significantly discriminated between high and low assertive groups as measured by the Adult Self Expression Scale (Gay, Hollandsworth, & Galassi, 1975), F(1,56)=20.51, p<.001. The low assertive group had a mean of 42.67 and the high assertive had a mean of 52.71. In addition, the need scales on the Adjective Check List revealed the high assertive group are

more achievement oriented, more often seek leadership roles in groups or influence and control roles in individual relationships, . . . are more independent, are more attention seeking. . . less likely to express feelings of inferiority through self criticism, guilt, or social impotence, and less deferential in relationships with others (Gay, Hollandsworth, & Galassi, 1975, p. 343).

These findings are similar to those of Bates and Zimmerman (1971) who presented evidence that female subjects scoring high on nonassertion also scored significantly
higher on pencil and paper measures of introversion (p<.001), fear (p<.05), abasement (p<.001), deference (p<.001), neuroticism (p<.05), and scored lower on measures of dominance (p<.001), autonomy (p<.01), and self-confidence (p<.001).

In summary, those individuals who utilize assertive skills in interpersonal interactions as is appropriate, seem to have an overall positive feeling about themselves, are comfortable with who they are, are confident about exhibiting their opinions and abilities, and are willing to function independently.

Cognition Eisler, Frederiksen, and Peterson (1978) investigated cognitive differences among individuals with varying levels of assertiveness. High assertive people generally held expectations that consequences of their interactions with others would be more favorable or reinforcing as compared with low assertive people. When considering socially appropriate alternative responses to selected situations, the high assertive subjects indicated assertive choices more often than the unassertive group \((X^2(1)=6.68, p<.01)\), whereas the unassertive group selected passive alternatives more frequently. Furthermore, the high assertive people demonstrated assertive behavior to match their cognitive evaluation of the socially appropriate
alternative almost twice as often (91%) as did the nonassertive subjects (55%). This would suggest that how one perceives others' reactions to her behavior and how one imagines the outcome, will reflect how assertive her behavior pattern might be.

Massong et al. (1982) compared assertive and nonassertive subjects on a measure of intellectual achievement, Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (Matarazzo, 1972), and on their grade point average (GPA). Support was given to the prediction that assertive individuals will score higher and will report a higher GPA than nonassertive individuals.

Research on individual difference variables (Pentz, 1981) as contributors to assertive behavior outcome revealed high verbal reasoning and low anxiety to be correlated with higher levels of assertive behavior and self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura as "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the desired outcomes" (1977, p. 193).

These findings suggest that assertive individuals would be likely to reflect an identity achieved status, and to some extent the moratorium status, as they demonstrate greater reliance on their cognitions and reasoning powers in their interpersonal actions and report higher scholastic
achievement. Self-efficacy would appear to be more prevalent among those in these two statuses than those in the diffused identity status or foreclosure status who would be among the less assertive in behavior. There are times, as the identity status literature states, when those in the foreclosure status will seem to function with self-efficacy, similar to the achieved status. Most likely that would be within a limited area of acceptable behavior.

Conclusion

After examining literature on identity statuses and on assertive behavior, it would appear that evidence supports a possible relationship between these two constructs. Thus, it was conjectured that there is a relationship between ego identity status and the level of discomfort in expressing assertive behavior and the probability of engaging in assertive behavior.

In review, high assertive individuals, as compared to low assertive, were found to be less anxious, more self-accepting, exhibited independent judgment, were more extroverted, did not degrade themselves, did not defer to others frequently, expressed less social fear and helplessness, and dealt with interpersonal stress and conflict in a flexible and socially effective manner.
Women in the achievement identity status manifest characteristics which are similar to assertive behavior. In the area of social contacts, these women have an interest in extending themselves to others and are motivated to be direct, rather than evasive in expressing both positive and negative feelings and opinions. This results in more intimate and less stereotypic associations. These women operate from an internal frame of reference and make judgments independently; hence, they are less fearful of confronting differences in opinion from others or of expressing their own. They trust their ability to examine alternatives in an issue and weigh consequences, so that decisions are reached from a point of reflection, not impulsiveness. Feelings of anxiety and discomfort are minimal for people in this status regarding interpersonal interactions. Therefore, it was hypothesized that women in the achieved identity status will show low levels of discomfort and a high probability of engaging in assertive behavior.

Women in the moratorium status manifest characteristics which are also similar to assertive behavior. However, women in this status have not yet made a commitment to an ideology or occupation and are less stable and unsure in their interactions. They may experience high levels of
anxiety, and, because they are not completely resolved as to their direction and goals, they may feel greater discomfort in asking for what they want, or setting limits with others. At the same time, they are not willing to go along with the status quo, and, therefore, find it necessary to challenge authority. Assertive behavior supports the crisis period (a time of questioning and exploring) experienced by women in the moratorium identity status. These assertive qualities enable the individual to seek out resources, to take initiative, and to be more self-accepting during the ambiguous time preceding the choice-making which leads to commitment. At the same time, women in this status are not entirely at ease in being assertive in all situations. This is an unstable status in which women fluctuate between feelings of self-reliance and confidence, and feelings of doubt and insecurity. Therefore, it was hypothesized that women in the moratorium identity status will report high levels of discomfort in specific situations of assertiveness and a high probability of responding assertively.

Women in the foreclosure identity status have made a commitment to an identity, but it was not reached through their own self-search. Rather they assumed a commitment similar to that of their parents or spouse, those authority figures whom women in this status wish to please and from
whom they receive support. Because a commitment has been reached, life is stable for these women. Hence, they experience less anxiety in their interactions. This status resembles the achieved identity status because of a stable commitment and less anxiety. An important difference between the two statuses lies in the foreclosure individuals' respect for authority and conventionality. Because individuals in the foreclosure status are closely tied to beliefs held by significant authority figures (society, parents, spouse), they see no reason to challenge or question situations in which assertiveness may be appropriate. In interpersonal interactions, these women avoid being direct and confrontive and are more superficial. Therefore, it was hypothesized that women in the foreclosure identity status will show low levels of discomfort and a low probability of engaging in assertive behavior.

Women in the diffusion identity status exhibit characteristics which are similar to nonassertive behavior. They have not made a commitment to an identity and are currently not in a crisis. Confusion and instability are present causing these women to be self-denying and deferent. They are uncomfortable in initiating contact with others and remain isolated, not really knowing where they belong. They appear unwilling to struggle with issues of belief and
values and can be easily pressured and influenced by others. Conflict is to be avoided, reflecting their insecurity in confronting differences of opinion. Their low self-esteem and external frame of reference cannot tolerate criticism from others. Therefore, it was hypothesized that women in the diffusion identity status will report high levels of discomfort in specific assertive situations and a low probability of engaging in assertive behavior.

Figure 3 illustrates the expected observations of the identity statuses in relation to each component of the dependent variable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Probability</th>
<th>Identity Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Discomfort</th>
<th>Identity Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 3. Expected observations of statuses to assertiveness
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand more fully the ways in which women cope with change in their adult lives by examining ego identity and its relationship to assertive behavior. It was conjectured that there is a relationship between the ego identity status of a woman and her probability of engaging in assertive behavior and her comfort or level of anxiety experienced in assertive interactions.

Population

Subjects for the study were women ranging in age from 25 to 64 years who live in a midwestern farm state. The majority were married (79.0%) and identified themselves as homemakers (71.0%). Forty-six percent identified themselves as being employed outside the home full-time. The sample was almost equally divided between rural and urban communities, 47.2% and 51.8%, respectively. (Rural was defined as 10,000 or less and urban was greater than 10,000 population.)

The 208-subject sample used in this study was derived from a random sample of 600 women selected from a membership mailing list of the United Church of Christ for the central region of a midwestern state. Using the membership list of
a church denomination provided a systematic structure for reaching potential subjects, a process that can be difficult when working with the general population. Church membership is common among the citizens of a midwestern farm state and particularly for women. The United Church of Christ is a Protestant denomination created by the union in 1957 of two denominations--the Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Of the 500 questionnaires mailed, 355 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 59.2%. A final sample of 208 was included for analysis after some subjects were eliminated because of their age. Age of the sample was not known until questionnaires were returned with that information. Only one woman did not indicate her age group.

Those women younger than 24 years (n=10) and older than 64 years (n=97) were eliminated from the analysis to test the hypotheses. In examining where missing data appeared for every age group in the initial return sample (n=355), it was evident from the large number of missing items of subjects over the age of 64 years that this older group was qualitatively different in the way they responded to the questionnaire. The researcher realized that study of this age group would be of interest in a separate project and could not be the focus of the present study.
The age group of primary interest to this investigation was early and middle adulthood. The measurements were not as applicable to women over 64 years, especially in terms of occupation. Though subjects were instructed to consider "homemaker" as an occupation, many women in the older two age groups omitted items pertaining to job or occupation. Also, many of the women considered themselves retired and the items about job or occupation were not relevant to them. Hence, many of these items were found missing in their questionnaires.

With the elimination of the youngest age group (less than 24 years) and the oldest age group (older than 64 years), the number of respondents was 247. Of these, 161 had questionnaires with no missing items. When item #29 on both scales of The Assertion Inventory was dropped (this decision is discussed later in Chapter 3), an additional 32 questionnaires were recovered for use in the analysis, bringing the total to 193 subjects between the ages of 25 and 64 years.

For the final analysis, 15 questionnaires were added to the 193 completed questionnaires, making a total of 208. Questionnaires which had at least half of the items completed on each measurement were recovered by substituting the average score of the completed items for the unanswered items.
It must be noted here that an error was made in collecting age category information from the sample. In the questionnaire (Appendix D), respondents were to check one of six age categories which described their age range. The first age category was mistakenly labeled "under 24 years" rather than "under 25 years". The second category was labeled "25-34 years", so any subjects who were 24 years exactly did not have an accurate category to check. Since there was only one respondent who did not indicate an age grouping, the oversight in labeling did not keep subjects from giving their age category.

Instrumentation

The measures used in the study were The Assertion Inventory (Gambrill & Richey, 1975) and the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status-Expanded developed by the author and based on the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (Adams et al., 1979). A description of the two instruments and the Biographical Information Sheet follows.

The Assertion Inventory

Gambrill and Richey (1975) developed a self-report instrument which measures two levels of assertiveness: 1) behavior (probability of engaging in assertiveness) and 2) affect (amount of discomfort in behaving assertively).
This distinction in levels is not found in other scales on assertiveness (Furnham & Henderson, 1984). Of the thirteen paper-and-pencil instruments designed to measure assertion, The Assertion Inventory is one of the six scales which has provided the greatest number of validation studies (Galassi & Galassi, 1978) and is one of two which to a certain extent "have shown demonstrable validity and usefulness for screening and assessment purposes" (Rich & Schroeder, 1976, p. 1091). This 40-item self-report questionnaire collects three types of information about assertive behavior of an individual:

1) degree of discomfort in relation to specific situations;
2) judged probability of engaging in a behavior, and
3) identification of situations in which a person would like to be more assertive (Gambrill & Richey, 1975, p. 551).

Eight response classes of assertiveness are included among the forty items: 1) turning down requests; 2) expressing personal limitations such as admitting ignorance in some areas; 3) initiating social contacts; 4) expressing positive feelings; 5) handling criticism; 6) differing with others; 7) assertion in service situations; 8) giving negative feedback. The items are as situationally specific
as length allows. Most of the items are meaningful for a wide range of individuals although two items were re-worded for purposes of clarity in this project. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale and scored in the same direction, with high scores indicating a nonassertive style.

**Reliability and validity**

Normative data were gathered from three samples of undergraduates at two different universities (269 male and 388 female subjects in total) and from a clinical sample of 19 women taking part in a six-week assertive training program (Gambrill & Richey, 1975). The reliability coefficients were .87 for the discomfort scale and .81 for the response probability scale. These were reached with Pearson correlations between pre- and posttests for one of the samples over a five-week period, reflecting a consistency of the measure over time. The standard deviations of the normative samples "reflect a fairly wide range of scores" telling us "that respondents in a normal population are widely distributed along the continuum labeled 'assertion'" (Gambrill & Richey, 1975, p. 555).

Validity was examined by comparing the clinical sample with the college sample (a normal population) where the scores differentiated the two groups. The mean discomfort score for the clinical group was significantly higher than
the mean discomfort scores for the undergraduate samples. Also, the inventory revealed significant changes in scores of the clinical group before and after training. Both the mean discomfort and mean response probability scores decreased significantly (107.7 to 82.0, t(36)=3.67, p<.002; and 104.8 to 87.9, t(36)=2.39, p<.05, respectively).

A correlational study comparing The Assertion Inventory with the Galassi College Self Expression Scale, a self-report assertive measure (Galassi & Galassi, 1974) revealed a correlation of .59 between the two measures (Rock, 1977). When correlated with four other measures, The Assertion Inventory was significantly intercorrelated (p<.05) with all scales when the discomfort scale was considered (.60, .35, .66, .51). "The discomfort score correlated consistently more highly with the other inventories than the probability score, suggesting that the other inventories could be influenced more by emotional attitude than behavioral probabilities" (Furnham & Henderson, 1984, p. 86). The other instruments correlated with The Assertion Inventory are as follows (in order of the correlation coefficients given above): The Wolpe-Lazarus Assertiveness Inventory (Wolpe & Lazarus, 1966); The Galassi College Self-Expression Scale (Galassi & Galassi, 1974); The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (Rathus, 1973); The Bakker Assertiveness Inventory (Bakker, Bakker-Rabdau, & Breit, 1978).
The pilot study  A pilot study was conducted to see how well the questionnaire could be administered through the mail without a test administrator present to answer questions. Twenty-two women, ages 32 to 47 years, from the local United Church of Christ Congregational church were asked to participate in the pilot study for this research. The questionnaire and cover letter were hand delivered and participants were asked to return it completed within one week along with comments about the item phraseology. Seventeen responded.

Based on suggestions from participants in the pilot study and the judgment of the author, the format of The Assertion Inventory was rearranged and two items were reworded to make them less confusing. The format was altered by repeating the response scale for each subscale at the top of every page which kept it close to the items being read. The directions for the instrument were rearranged for greater visual comprehension.

Two items were re-worded without changing the intent of the content:

Item #7: "Admit fear and request consideration"

   (original)

"Disclose to others that you have fears about a particular situation and ask to be listened to."  (re-wording)
Item #34: "Resist pressure to 'turn on'" (original)
"Resist pressure to use drugs or smoke marijuana." (re-wording)

Two items relating to employment (#9 and #33) had the following phrase attached to the statement: "(if you are or might be employed)." This was done to include those subjects in the sample who are homemakers unemployed outside the home. Some respondents in the pilot study fit this category and had omitted items related to employment.

In order to keep the questionnaire from getting too lengthy, it was decided to omit one category of information collected by the original instrument. This pertained to the identification of situations in which a person would like to become more assertive. For the purposes of this investigation, such information was unnecessary.

When the returned questionnaires were examined for missing data, it was discovered that item #29 on both scales was not answered by a great number of subjects. For women in the age group analyzed (25 to 64 years), 54 omitted the item on the response probability scale and 48 chose not to answer on the discomfort scale. The item reads, "Accept a date (if you are or might be single)." When item #29 was dropped from both assertion scales, 32 additional complete questionnaires were recovered for use in the analysis. Therefore, it was decided not to use the item.
Scoring of The Assertion Inventory  

Scores are obtained by summing responses for each scale; the range of possible scores is 40 to 200. Items are scored in the same direction, with high scores indicating a nonassertive style.

The cut-off points used in the present study which discriminate high and low levels of discomfort and response probability were the means for each scale. Gambrill and Richey (1975) also used the means for cut-offs in the normative studies. For high response probability, a value of 105 or less was used and for low response probability, a value of 106 or greater. A high discomfort level included scores greater than 95 and low discomfort was 94 or below. The relationship between the high and low values of discomfort and response probability reveals four profiles as illustrated in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Assertive profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort</th>
<th>Low (106+)</th>
<th>High (105-)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (95+)</td>
<td>&quot;unassertive&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;anxious performer&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (94-)</td>
<td>&quot;doesn't care&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;assertive&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS)

A modified and expanded version of The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status was used to measure identity statuses of the sample in this study. The OM-EIS is a self-report assessment developed by Adams et al. (1979) in an effort to find an objective measure of ego identity status which would give equivalent results with both male and female samples to the semi-structured interview measure designed by Marcia (1966). The advantages in using the OM-EIS over the Marcia interview are the elimination of the potential rater bias in scoring; of the interviewer influence on subjects' responses; and the greater ease of administration, allowing use with larger sample sizes.

The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status instrument contains 24 items measuring the self reported presence or absence of crisis and commitment in occupational, religious, and political attitudes which parallels Marcia's criteria for classifying individuals into identity statuses of diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, or achieved. Each of the four identity subscales consists of six items totaling 24, with two items each pertaining to the areas of work, political ideology, and religious beliefs. Subjects respond to each item by indicating the degree to which the statement agrees with their own self-perceptions. The Likert scale
includes six choices ranging from "strongly agree" (value of 6) to "strongly disagree" (value of 1). Respondents are asked in the instructions to indicate which response best describes their personal attitude regarding each item.

Validity and reliability Four studies (Adams et al., 1979) were completed to validate the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status. These were conducted with a sample of late adolescent male and female college students. Marcia's Ego Identity Incomplete Sentence Blank (EI-ISB) was used as the major validation source in all four of these studies, as it had been used by Marcia to validate the ego-identity interview schedule (Marcia, 1966). In all four studies, predicted differences between diffusion and identity achievement were found. Individuals in the achieved status scored significantly higher on overall identity than did those in the diffusion status, confirming Marcia's outcome.

In Study Four of the validation studies (Adams et al., 1979), the test-retest reliability was moderate to high with coefficients of 0.84, 0.93, 0.71, and 0.78 for subscales of diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement, respectively (p<.001). Internal consistency was found among the four subscales by computing Cronbach's alpha (1951) with the following significant alphas: diffusion 0.68,
foreclosure 0.76, moratorium, 0.67, and achievement 0.67. Later studies gave evidence of alphas of .75 or higher for each subscale (Adams & Jones, 1983) and ranging from .66 to .81 (Read et al., 1984).

Convergent-divergent validity was found among the four subscales in the validation studies (Adams et al., 1979). The two committed statuses (foreclosure and achieved) revealed little shared commonality which supports "the theoretical assumption that the two forms of commitment are separate forms of identity development" (Adams et al., 1979, p. 277). In a later study, Adams and Jones (1983) replicated convergent-divergent correlations among the subscales of identity with the original study while studying a middle-adolescent sample and parental socialization styles.

The original validation studies (Adams et al., 1979) found some convergence between the OM-EIS and the Marcia interview (1966), and a later study produced data which "suggest a reasonably high convergence" between the OM-EIS and the interview techniques of Marcia (Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, & Nielsen, 1984). Convergence ranged from 70% to 100%. "Overall, 42 subjects were classified as equivalent with 8 misses, $X^2 (1,N=50)=23.12$, p<.01 . . . . This convergence, though far from perfect, does suggest that
relatively similar status categories are derived from either technique" (Adams et al., 1984, pp 1098-1099).

And, finally, evidence was provided for predictive validity of the OM-EIS with the personality constructs of self-acceptance, rigidity, and authoritarianism (Adams et al., 1979); parental socialization styles (Adams & Jones, 1983); and differential social influence behavior (Read et al., 1984).

Development of the OM-EISE The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded used in the present study is a modification and expansion of the OM-EIS developed by Adams, Shea and Fitch (1979). The OM-EIS was written for and validated with a population of traditional-age college students, and the items are worded to appeal to that age group, rather than to an adult population.

A pilot study conducted for this research using 22 women between the ages of 32 and 47 confirmed that the item phraseology was less appropriate for adult subjects. It was apparent that the items in the OM-EIS are addressing late adolescents and they needed to be rewritten in a context reflecting early and middle adult life.

In addition, a fourth content area pertaining to sex role attitudes was added to the OM-EIS, expanding the instrument from 24 to 32 items. The original content areas
of religious beliefs, political ideology, and occupation were retained. The decision to construct another content area was based in part on earlier studies of identity status with adult women in which the researchers believed the issue of women's role is a relevant identity concern for adult women (Glatfelter, 1982; Waterman, Besold, Crook, & Manzini, 1980; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985). Waterman et al. (1980), added the content areas of sex role attitudes and family/career priorities to the ego identity interview originally developed by Marcia (1966) and Glatfelter added the area of attitudes toward women's roles to the Identity Status Incomplete Sentences Blank (IS-ISB) developed by Breuer (1973) which was adapted from Marcia's framework (1966).

In constructing the additional eight items on sex role attitudes (each of the four identity statuses represented by two items), reference criteria was found in the scoring manuals developed by Waterman et al. (1980) and by Glatfelter (1982) for use in their respective studies. Attention was given to word these items so that crisis and commitment in identity could be detected in the responses. Examples of items in the area of sex roles are given below:

#22. Whether or not women's roles are changing in our society doesn't interest me very much.
(diffusion)
#13. When I try to figure out what I think about the roles of men and women in today's society, I count on important people in my life to guide me. (foreclosure)

#27. My mind keeps changing on what I believe about women's role and behavior and I haven't yet decided what I think. (moratorium)

#29. After careful thinking and wrestling with the topic, I have established my own convictions about the rights and roles of women. (achieved)

A second pilot study was conducted to test the effectiveness of the re-worded original items and the newly constructed items on sex role attitudes. Response from the ten adult women participating in the second pilot study was much more favorable to the revisions and to the added eight items. Further refinement of items was made following comments from the second pilot and after consultation with an expert in the field. The instructions were also clarified and expanded to insure understanding by the present sample who would be receiving the questionnaire by mail. In the instructions, respondents were asked to consider homemaker as an occupation if it takes up a major portion of their weekly activities. Finally, the format of the 32 items was altered from the original OM-EIS without
changing the scoring in order to allow for greater ease in answering the items and to condense the length of pages.

Validity of the OM-EISE Validation of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded was conducted as part of this study. The internal reliability of the scale items was tested by computing Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951). Internal consistency among the items was evident with coefficients of .68 for the diffusion scale, .78 for foreclosure scale, .75 for the moratorium scale, and .66 for the achieved scale. These were similar to the OM-EIS: .68, .76, .67 and .67 for diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achieved scales, respectively (Adams et al., 1979).

Scoring of the OM-EISE In the expanded version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status, eight items were constructed for each of the four identity status subscales, totaling 32 items. Each subscale has two items reflecting each of the four dimensions of religious beliefs, political ideology, occupation, and sex role attitudes. Items are scored by weighting the "strongly agree" with a value of 6 and the "strongly disagree" with a value of 1. Identity status subscales are derived by totaling all eight items, across the four content areas, into a summed subscale score. The range of scores is from 8 to 48.
The overall identity status for each subject is derived from the mean and standard deviation on each identity status subscale. Each subjects' scale score is compared to cut-off points based on the following rules developed by Adams et al., 1979:

1. Individuals with scores falling one standard deviation above the mean on a given scale were scored as being in that identity status if all remaining scores fell below that cutoff.

2. Individuals with scores falling less than 1 standard deviation above the mean on all four measures were scored as moratorium.

3. Individuals with more than one score above the standard deviation cutoff were scored as persons in transition and given a "transition stage" typology, e.g., diffusion-moratorium, diffusion-foreclosure, etc. (Adams et al., p. 227).

Biographical Information Sheet

The final page of the questionnaire mailed to the sample requested biographical information in the following areas: 1) age group, 2) population of community, 3) marital status, 4) work status, 5) highest level of education. In addition, participants were asked to "describe your reaction to an event(s) in your life within the past five years which
has caused you to rethink your personal values and priorities." The intent of this open-ended statement was to learn how and in which contextual settings adult women may find identity issues re-surfacing. The written responses were examined in terms of the areas within which the events occurred and what these events reveal regarding commitments women have in their lives. The three areas suggested by Loewenstein (1980) as drawn from the work of Levinson (1978) are biological events, family cycle events and work/career-related events. A copy of the Biographical Information Sheet can be found in Appendix D attached as part of the questionnaire.

Data Collection

Sampling process

A sample of 600 women was randomly selected from the membership mailing list of the United Church of Christ for the central region of a midwestern farm state. Permission had been granted by the UCC Board of Directors to access this list which was updated within the month in which questionnaires for this study were mailed to prospective subjects.

The mailing list was purchased in the form of address labels from the marketing firm handling the mail
distribution for the church state office. The labels were arranged in folds of ten names to a fold. Four random numbers and three alternates were generated from a calculator. If the names located on the list by the random numbers were male or had an address other than for the central association area of the church, they were omitted and the alternate numbers were used to select names. Approximately two female names were selected from each label list fold.

Administration of instruments

The two measures used in this research were placed within one questionnaire of three pages in length (backed) with a fourth page to collect biographical information. An attempt was made to have a concise and understandable questionnaire which would not appear lengthy to the respondents nor be confusing to answer. The order of placement in the questionnaire was: 1) The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded; 2) The Assertion Inventory; and 3) The Biographical Information Sheet (Appendix D).

The approach used for collecting the data was based on The Total Design Method (Dillman, 1978). Women selected in the random sample were invited to participate in the study by means of a letter (Appendix A) which explained the study
and requested they complete and return the enclosed questionnaire in the postage prepaid envelope. Each letter was signed by the researcher in blue ballpoint pen. Subjects were assured in the letter of confidentiality regarding their answers to the two measurements and the biographical information. The identification number on the questionnaire was also explained as a means of checking off their name from the mailing list once the questionnaire was returned. The questionnaires were mailed first class through the university mail system. A postage prepaid return envelope was enclosed with a university address. Return postage was charged to the researcher's postal account only for those questionnaires returned.

Two weeks following the initial mailing (which yielded 146 returns) a postcard reminder was mailed to those in the sample who had not yet returned a questionnaire. The card (Appendix B) served to thank those who had already returned questionnaires as well as to remind others who had not. The 454 postcards were personally signed by the researcher with a handwritten greeting to each subject. The postcard yielded 128 returns. A final reminder letter (Appendix C) was mailed two weeks after the postcard along with a second copy of the questionnaire in case the first copy was misplaced or destroyed. The importance of the respondent's
participation in the study was emphasized in this letter. The inside personal greeting was handwritten and each letter was signed in blue ballpoint pen by the researcher. The final mailing yielded 75 additional questionnaires.

TABLE 2. Return rate on questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing</th>
<th>No. mailed</th>
<th>No. returned</th>
<th>No. not returned</th>
<th>Percent return</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st mailing</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>24.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd mailing</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>28.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd mailing</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>23.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined mailings</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>245</td>
<td></td>
<td>59.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^1 Missing response to indicate when questionnaire was returned.

Data Analysis and Design

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSX) (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, & Bent, 1986) was used to analyze the data. A one-way analysis of variance procedure was used to statistically test the hypotheses. This was followed by the Duncan multiple range test. The analysis of variance permits simultaneous testing of the equality of all means and minimizes chance of Type I error (the error of
rejecting a true hypothesis). Multiple comparison tests allow the researcher to learn which mean or combination of means is creating the difference if there is any.

The study was a nonexperimental causal-comparative design. This type of research examines possible effects of variables which cannot be manipulated experimentally (Borg & Gall, 1979). Causal-comparative research is similar to correlational research but its emphasis is on investigation of differences in groups whereas correlational studies examine relationships. In conducting causal-comparative research, groups are selected which differ on some critical variable (in this study it would be identity status) and are studied to see how they differ on other variables (assertive response probability and feelings of discomfort in the present study).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand more completely the ways in which women cope with change by exploring the relationship of ego identity to assertive behavior. The sample consisted of 208 women between the ages of 25 and 64 which was selected from a random sample of 600 women.
The instrument used to measure the independent variable of ego identity was the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded, a modified and extended version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (Adams et al., 1979). The Gambrill Assertion Inventory (Gambrill & Richey, 1975) was the self-report measure for the two levels of assertiveness; behavior (probability of responding assertively); and affect (feelings of discomfort if behaving assertively). Background was presented on both instruments confirming their validity and usefulness for the present research.

The data collection was based on The Total Design Method (Dillman, 1978). A questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of 600 women selected from a church membership list for a midwestern farm state. Contained in the questionnaire were the two measurements mentioned previously and a Biographical Information Sheet. Three hundred fifty-five questionnaires were returned (59.2%) and 208 subjects were used for the analysis, eliminating those women younger than 25 (10) and older than 64 years (97).

Analysis of variance was used to test the hypotheses, followed by the Duncan Multiple Range Test. The study was a nonexperimental causal-comparative design.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The study focused on the ego identity statuses of adult women and their relationship to the way in which women cope with change in their lives. The construct of assertiveness was used as the dependent variable because it is an interpersonal skill viewed as a coping tool especially helpful in managing new situations which arise out of change. Assertiveness was measured by The Assertion Inventory and ego identity was measured by the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded. In addition, an open-ended question asked respondents to describe their reactions to events within the last 5 years which have caused them to reconsider their personal priorities and values.

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of the research conducted on a woman's ego identity status and its relationship to her probability of engaging in assertive behavior and her comfort in doing so. Results concerning the measurements will be presented first, followed by demographic information, and concluding with the statistical analyses of each of the hypotheses.
The Measurements

The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded

The OM-EISE consists of 32 statements, eight each pertaining to religious beliefs, political ideology, sex role attitude, and occupational concerns. Subjects responded on a 6-point Likert scale indicating the amount of agreement or disagreement to each item statement. The internal reliability of the four identity subscales was tested with Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The coefficients obtained in this study using the expanded version of the OM-EIS were similar to those found in the validation studies on the OM-EIS (Adams et al., 1979) as reported in Chapter 3. The coefficients in the present study are as follows: diffusion scale .68; foreclosure scale .78; moratorium scale .75; and achieved identity scale .66.

The overall identity status for each subject was derived from the mean and standard deviation on each identity status subscale. Each subject's score was compared to cutoff points (one standard deviation above the mean) based on the rules established for the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (Adams et al., 1979). Table 3 reports the means, standard deviations, and cutoff points for the identity statuses of this study.
TABLE 3. Means, standard deviations, and cutoff points on the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cutoff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved Identity</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Range = 40 (8 to 48)
n = 241

For comparison to the normative data means (Adams et al., 1979), the identity scale means in this study were recalculated to adjust for the 8 items per scale in the present study and the 6 items per scale in the original study. The means for each identity scale follow; those in parentheses are the normative data means: Diffusion M = 15.3 (15.6); Foreclosure M = 15.2 (16.3); Moratorium M = 15.1 (16.9); Achieved M = 25.9 (26.4). The means are found to be similar when comparing this study with the original study.

Using the cutoff points, the subjects were identified with one of the four identity statuses as shown in Table 4. Those subjects with more than one score above the cutoff
point are considered to be transitional in nature, on the border between one status and an adjacent status.

TABLE 4. Identity status categories on the OM-EISE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores of the transitional cases were examined to see if, indeed, they appeared to be theoretically appropriate transition statuses, i.e., diffusion-foreclosure, diffusion-moratorium, moratorium-achievement, or foreclosure-moratorium. Of the 32 transition cases (13%), only 4 were illogical theoretically—2 diffusion-foreclosure-achieved, 1 diffusion-achieved identity, and 1 foreclosure-achieved. (It is not possible to move directly to achieved identity without a moratorium.) Of the other cases, 9 were diffusion-foreclosure, 7 were diffusion-foreclosure-moratorium, 6 were diffusion-moratorium, and 6 were foreclosure-moratorium. Because there are no theoretically based predictions for the behavior and
perceptions of this group, those transition cases were dropped from analyses in this study. Similar decisions were made in previous studies using the OM-EIS (Adams & Jones, 1983; Adams et al., 1984).

Table 5 reports the identity status distribution across the four age groups included for this study. Because of the age range of this sample, it was possible to observe and analyze the identity status of women between 25 and 64, as they are alike and different across the four age groups. The large number of women in the moratorium status \((n=147)\) is fairly equally spread over the four age groups. There is a drop in number of women in the achieved status for the age group 35 to 44 years and 55 to 64 years as compared to the other two age groups. The foreclosure and diffusion identity statuses change very little across the age groups. Most of the fluctuation is with the identity achieved and moratorium statuses.

The Assertion Inventory

The Assertion Inventory contains two scales of 40 items each. One scale measures probability of response to specific situations and the second measures the level of discomfort experienced if one were to respond to the same assertive situations. The internal reliability of the two
TABLE 5. Identity status scores by age group (n=208)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>25 to 34</th>
<th>35 to 44</th>
<th>45 to 54</th>
<th>55 to 64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=47</td>
<td>n=62</td>
<td>n=43</td>
<td>n=56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>10¹</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>(22)²</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td>(73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Number of subjects in status.
²Percentage of subjects in status.

scales was found by computing Cronbach alpha coefficients for each scale. The alpha coefficient is an item analysis of how consistently the items are measuring the construct. The coefficients of reliability in this study were .91 for each scale, evidence of high reliability.

As was discussed in Chapter 3, item #29 for both assertive scales was omitted. Thirty-two questionnaires were recovered for analysis by omitting this item which presented the situation, "Accept a date (if you are or might be single)."
High and low values for each assertive scale were derived by using the mean of each scale as the cutoff point for category placement. Table 6 reports the means and standard deviations of discomfort scores and response probability scores.

**TABLE 6. Means and standard deviations of the discomfort scale and the response probability scale of The Assertion Inventory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Probability</td>
<td>105.5</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In transforming the means of this study for comparison with the means in the normative data (Gambrill & Richey, 1975), adjusting for the omission of item #29 in this study, it is noted that the assertive discomfort scale means are similar (M = 97.7 in present study; M = 96.3, 94.7, and 95.0 in the three samples of the original study). The means of the assertive response probability scale are less similar than for the discomfort scale (M = 108.2 in present study; M = 104.0, 102.7, and 106.2 in original study).
The sample was evenly divided between high and low response probability scores (see Table 7). There was a difference in the discomfort scores. Fifty-three percent reported low discomfort and 47 percent reported high discomfort in assertive situations. These figures reflect a sample equally divided in regard to responding with assertive behavior, and having a larger percentage who are not uncomfortable in responding assertively to specific situations.

TABLE 7. High and low values on the discomfort scale and on the response probability scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assertive Scale</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Probability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In examining these patterns across age groups (Table 8), it is noted that the percentage of women who report a high response probability decreases with age (from 66% to 34%). Regarding discomfort, a little more than half of the
subjects in each age group report a low level across the age
groups, with the exception of the 35 to 44 year old group
where slightly less than half (48%) reported low discomfort.
The result of this pattern indicates that the majority of
women in the older two age groups do not respond assertively
even though they report having less feelings of discomfort.

TABLE 8. High and low values on the assertive discomfort
scale and on the assertive response probability
scale across age groups (n=208)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups in Years</th>
<th>Assertive Scale</th>
<th>25 to 34</th>
<th>35 to 44</th>
<th>45 to 54</th>
<th>55 to 64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>21(^1)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(45)(^2)</td>
<td>(52)</td>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>(46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>(56)</td>
<td>(54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Probability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>(56)</td>
<td>(66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>(57)</td>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Number of subjects in category.
\(^2\)Percentage of subjects in category.

Four assertive status profiles were generated from the
high and low values of the discomfort and response
probability scales (Table 9). If an individual is in the low category of response probability and high category on the discomfort scale, her assertive profile is "unassertive." A low response probability value and a low discomfort value results in a "doesn't care" profile. These people are not interested or don't see any benefit from behaving assertively. Whereas, reporting a high response probability value and a high discomfort value would indicate an "anxious-performer", one who chooses assertive action even with feelings of discomfort. The profile of "assertive" is derived from a low discomfort value and a high response probability value.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Probability</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (95+) High (105-)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unassertive</td>
<td>73 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxious-performer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't care</td>
<td>31 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>104 (50%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 9. Frequency distribution of the sample into four assertive profiles (n=208)
Thirty-eight percent of the sample reflected an assertive profile while the remainder distributed themselves among dysfunctional categories. It appears that when women in this sample have feelings of discomfort they choose not to respond assertively (35%) to a greater degree than responding despite feelings of discomfort (12%).

Tables 10, 11, 12, and 13 present the assertive profile for each of the identity statuses. It had been predicted that those in the achieved identity status would have an "assertive profile"; those in the moratorium status would report an "anxious-performer" profile; those in foreclosure status would indicate a "doesn't care" profile; and those in the identity diffusion status would indicate an "unassertive" profile.

As the tables show, the outcome of the identity achieved status subjects was as expected. Fifty-six percent revealed an assertive profile. However, more women in the moratorium status preferred to respond unassertively when feeling discomfort (37%) than to respond as an anxious performer (13%). The majority of women in the foreclosure status (54%) reflect an "unassertive" rather than a "doesn't care" profile. The largest percentage of women in the diffusion status (36%) favor a "doesn't care" profile.
TABLE 10. Assertive profile of moratorium identity status (n=147)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Probability</th>
<th>Low (106+)</th>
<th>High (105-)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (95+)</td>
<td>Unassertive</td>
<td>Anxious-performer(^1)</td>
<td>73 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54(^2) (37)(^3)</td>
<td>19 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't care</td>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (94-)</td>
<td>19 (13)</td>
<td>55 (37)</td>
<td>74 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>73 (50)</td>
<td>74 (50)</td>
<td>147 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Predicted profile type for this status.
\(^2\)Number of subjects in profile.
\(^3\)Percentage of subjects in profile.

Demographic Information

The demographic data collected from the sample revealed a general character of traditionality. A large majority of the sample were married (79%), ten percent were divorced, and "homemaker" was the work status most frequently indicated as an appropriate description (71%). Less than half of the sample (46%) reported full time employment as one of the items describing their work status.

Table 14 reports the highest levels of education attained by the sample as a whole and according to their
TABLE 11. Assertive profile of achieved identity status (n=34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort</th>
<th>Low (106+)</th>
<th>High (105-)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (95+)</td>
<td>Unassertive</td>
<td>Anxious-performer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8^ (24)^2</td>
<td>3 (8)</td>
<td>11 (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't care</td>
<td>Assertive^3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (94-)</td>
<td>4 (12)</td>
<td>19 (56)</td>
<td>23 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12 (36)</td>
<td>22 (64)</td>
<td>34 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^1 Number of subjects in profile.
^2 Percentage of subjects in profile.
^3 Predicted profile type for this status.

identity statuses. Overall, twenty-four percent indicated a high school diploma as their highest level of education, 25 percent received a bachelor's degree, and 15 percent received a master's degree. Only 4 percent of the sample pursued formal education beyond the master's level. Regarding the identity statuses, 48% of those in moratorium and 48% in identity achieved statuses fell in the upper three levels of educational attainments. Whereas, only 14% of those in the diffusion status and 23% of those in the foreclosure status fell in the upper levels of education.
TABLE 12. Assertive profile of diffusion identity status (n=14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort Level</th>
<th>Low (106+)</th>
<th>High (105-)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (95+)</td>
<td>4² (29)³</td>
<td>3 (21)</td>
<td>7 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (94-)</td>
<td>5 (36)</td>
<td>2 (14)</td>
<td>7 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9 (65)</td>
<td>5 (35)</td>
<td>14 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Predicted profile type for this status.  
²Number of subjects in profile.  
³Percentage of subjects in profile.

Critical Life Event Question

At the conclusion of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to describe their reactions to any events within the past five years which caused them to rethink personal values and priorities. Of the subjects used for analysis (n=208), 150 (72%) completed this section. Their anecdotes were typed and coded into categories according to the kind of event described. The three categories used were: 1) biological events; 2) family cycle events; and 3) work/career related events. Respondents related 7 events in
TABLE 13. Assertive profile of foreclosure identity status (n=13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort</th>
<th>Low (106+)</th>
<th>High (105-)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unassertive</td>
<td>7^1 (54)^2</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>7 (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxious-performer</td>
<td>3 (23)</td>
<td>3 (23)</td>
<td>6 (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't care^3</td>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>10 (77)</td>
<td>3 (23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^1Number of subjects in profile.  
^2Percentage of subjects in profile.  
^3Predicted profile type for this status.

the biological category which were reported 15 times; 17 events in the family cycle category which were reported 111 times; and 7 events in the work/career category which were reported 37 times. A description of the particular types of events within each category can be found in Appendix E.

The Hypotheses

Hypotheses I, II, and III predicted a relationship between identity status and the dependent variable, assertive response probability. The alpha level was set at .05. These hypotheses read as follows:
TABLE 14. Highest education levels of the overall sample and by identity status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>Overall Sample</th>
<th>Diffusion</th>
<th>Foreclosure</th>
<th>Moratorium</th>
<th>Achieved Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school diploma/GED</td>
<td>7(^1) (3)^2</td>
<td>1 (7)</td>
<td>1 (8)</td>
<td>4 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma or GED</td>
<td>50 (24)</td>
<td>6 (43)</td>
<td>6 (46)</td>
<td>31 (21)</td>
<td>7 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended college</td>
<td>37 (18)</td>
<td>3 (21)</td>
<td>2 (15)</td>
<td>27 (18)</td>
<td>5 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-year associate degree or completed vocational training</td>
<td>22 (11)</td>
<td>2 (14)</td>
<td>1 (8)</td>
<td>15 (10)</td>
<td>5 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>51 (25)</td>
<td>2 (14)</td>
<td>2 (15)</td>
<td>38 (26)</td>
<td>8 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>32 (15)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (8)</td>
<td>23 (16)</td>
<td>8 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post master's/ professional degree</td>
<td>9 (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Number of subjects in category.
\(^2\)Percentage of subjects in category.
I: Women in either foreclosure or diffusion identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their response probability scores to assertive situations.

II: Women in either moratorium or achieved identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their response probability scores to assertive situations.

III: Women in either moratorium or achievement identity statuses will be significantly different from women in either diffusion or foreclosure statuses on response probability scores.

Upon examination, the pattern of the means of the four identity statuses in relation to assertive response probability was not as predicted (Table 15). It had been expected that the statuses would group themselves into two clusters--identity achieved and moratorium together and foreclosure and diffusion identity together. However, contrary to prediction, the moratorium status had a larger mean (106.42) than expected, showing a low response probability dissimilar to the achieved status mean (95.96) on the dependent variable of assertive response.

Because of this unexpected pattern of means, it was decided to compute only the one-way analysis of variance and
TABLE 15. Response probability means by identity status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>95.96</td>
<td>21.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>106.42</td>
<td>17.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>108.33</td>
<td>18.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>116.93</td>
<td>15.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

to omit doing a priori contrasts as originally planned. Instead, the analysis of variance was followed by a more conservative post hoc analysis, the Duncan multiple range test. Table 16 presents a summary of the findings. The F-value of 5.14 was significant at the .002 level of probability. The Cochrans and the Bartlett tests for homogeneity of variances reported no significant differences at the .05 level.

The Duncan test was used to learn where the difference in means occurred. It is one of the more powerful statistical posteriori contrasts (Nie et al., 1975). Results of this post hoc analysis revealed the achieved identity status mean to be significantly different from all three of the other status means on the response probability scores by indicating a higher degree of response (lower score).
TABLE 16. Analysis of variances on mean response probability scores by identity status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Identity Statuses</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5029.0310</td>
<td>1676.3437</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Identity Statuses</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>66584.2346</td>
<td>326.3933</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>71613.2656</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the inspection of means revealed patterns not predicted. They were not in the order which it was assumed would occur when the hypotheses were formulated.

Hypothesis One predicted that women in the foreclosure status would have a similar response probability rate in behaving assertively as do women in the diffusion identity status. This was supported. However, the mean of the foreclosure status (116.93) was higher than the diffusion status mean (108.33), an unexpected finding. It had been expected that individuals in the foreclosure status would be more likely to respond assertively than would those subjects in the diffusion identity status, but the reverse was found. The sample size may have been a contributing factor in this outcome. If the n's had been larger for each of these
statuses the foreclosure status may have had a lower mean than the diffusion status.

Hypothesis Two predicted that women in the achieved identity status would not be significantly different from women in the moratorium status in responding assertively. The Duncan test indicated this was not true. In fact, those in the achieved identity status reported a response probability that was significantly greater than the response probability of those in the moratorium status. Therefore, Hypothesis Two was not supported.

Hypothesis Three was based on the support of Hypothesis Two. Since there was evidence to contradict similarities between the moratorium status and the identity achieved status on response probability of assertive behavior, this hypothesis could only be partially supported. Women in the identity achieved status were found to be significantly different from women in the foreclosure and diffusion identity statuses in regard to response probability by reporting a higher level of response to assertiveness. However, women in the moratorium status were also found to be similar to those in the foreclosure and identity diffusion statuses by reporting a significantly lower level of response probability from those in the achieved identity status.
Hypotheses IV, V, and VI examined the relationships between identity status and feelings of discomfort toward assertive behaviors. The alpha level was set at .05. These hypotheses read as follows:

IV: Women in either moratorium or diffusion identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their level of discomfort scores in assertive situations.

V: Women in either foreclosure or achieved identity statuses will not be significantly different from each other on their level of discomfort scores in assertive situations.

VI: Women in either foreclosure or achieved statuses will be significantly different from women in either diffusion or moratorium statuses on their level of discomfort scores in assertive situations.

The order of means in the analysis of identity status with level of discomfort in assertiveness was not as predicted (Table 17). It was expected that women in the foreclosure status would feel less discomfort than women in the diffusion or moratorium statuses when considering assertive behaviors. In fact, the foreclosure mean score was highest of all the statuses on the discomfort scale (99.56); women in the foreclosure status reported the greatest amount of discomfort with assertive situations.
TABLE 17. Discomfort means by identity status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>85.07</td>
<td>19.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>96.70</td>
<td>19.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>97.06</td>
<td>21.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>99.56</td>
<td>25.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way analysis of variance was used to test for significance among the means. Summary of the analysis is found in Table 18. The F-value of 3.12 was significant at the .03 level of probability. Both the Cochrans and the Bartlett tests for homogeneity of variances reported no significant differences at the .05 level of probability.

TABLE 18. Analysis of variance on mean discomfort scores by identity status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Identity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4280.1288</td>
<td>1426.7096</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Identity</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>93370.3587</td>
<td>457.6978</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>97650.4875</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Duncan multiple range test was used again for the post hoc analysis. The test revealed that the achieved identity status was significantly different only from the moratorium status, but not significantly different from the foreclosure and diffusion statuses. In observing the order of the means for assertive discomfort (Table 17), it would appear there should also be significant difference between the achieved identity status and both the diffusion and foreclosure statuses. Because of the small size of the n in both the diffusion and foreclosure statuses (n=14; n=13), it is most likely that the Duncan test was unable to show a significant difference.

It is difficult to discuss the hypotheses regarding assertive discomfort from a statistical perspective in light of the outcome of the Duncan test. By observing the order of the means (Table 17), Hypothesis Four could be supported. Women in the moratorium or diffusion statuses do not appear to differ significantly on their feelings of discomfort with assertive behavior, as was predicted.

However, Hypothesis Five could not be supported. Although the Duncan test did not reveal significant differences, by observing the order of means women in the foreclosure and achieved identity statuses appear to differ significantly on their feelings of discomfort. In fact, the
order of means places the achieved and foreclosure statuses at opposite ends from each other, with the achieved status scoring the lowest or having the least amount of discomfort in assertive situations.

Hypothesis Six was based on the results of Hypothesis Five. Hypothesis Six can be partially supported because the identity achieved status was significantly different from the moratorium identity status as reported by the Duncan test. Although the Duncan test did not report significant differences between the achieved status and the diffusion status, the order of means would indicate a large difference between the two. However, contrary to prediction, by observing the order of the means, the foreclosure status is unlike the achieved status, and is more similar to the diffusion and moratorium statuses by reporting greater feelings of discomfort with assertive situations.

Summary

Results of the statistical analyses of the six hypotheses for this study were reported in this chapter. The findings supported two hypotheses, partially supported two hypotheses, and failed to support two hypotheses. A salient feature of the findings was the order of the means which did not fall in the pattern which had been predicted when the hypotheses were formulated.
A one-way analysis of variance computed on each dependent variable revealed a significant difference among the means. Concerning the assertive response probability scores, a Duncan test indicated the difference to occur between the identity achieved status and the other three identity statuses, with the achieved status having a significantly higher response probability score. Regarding the assertive discomfort scores, a Duncan test revealed a significant difference between the achieved status and the moratorium status, with the achieved status reporting significantly less discomfort. The scores of the diffusion and foreclosure statuses were not reported by the Duncan as being significantly different from the achieved status even though their means were clustered around the moratorium status mean. Most likely this was due to the small sample size in each of the foreclosure and diffusion statuses.

Contrary to expectations, the statuses did not cluster into two groupings. On the measure of response probability to assertiveness, it was expected that the identity achieved status and the moratorium status would cluster together with high response probability scores. On the measure of discomfort level with assertive behavior, it was anticipated that the identity achieved status and the foreclosure status would group together with low discomfort scores, in contrast
to the moratorium and diffusion statuses. Discussion will be presented in Chapter 5 as to possible reasons for this unexpected pattern of the means of the identity statuses in relation to the two measures of assertiveness.

In addition to reporting the results of the statistical analyses of the hypotheses, this chapter presented findings on an assertive profile, generated for each identity status and for the sample as a whole. The achieved identity status clearly reflected an assertive profile. The moratorium status was almost equally divided between being assertive and unassertive, with fewer than predicted having a profile of "anxious performer". The foreclosure status reported a strong unassertive profile with much higher discomfort level than expected. The diffusion status reported a "doesn't care" profile to a greater degree than the expected unassertive profile.

Demographic data from the sample were also reported. Highest level of education was given for each of the identity statuses and for the sample as a whole. Also, a brief review was given of the responses to the life events question asked of the sample in the questionnaire. Clearly, the greater share of events which caused respondents to rethink values and priorities fell in the category of family cycle events. Further discussion of these research findings
will be given in the next chapter, as well as implications and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent of this chapter is to summarize the research study, its methodology and the results of the analysis. In addition to this summary, discussion will be given to the study's outcome and the underlying implications of these findings. Finally, recommendations for future research in this area will be presented.

Summary of Research Study

Background of the study

The study of adult women and their life cycle is a recent undertaking in the social sciences. Previous to this, frameworks for understanding human development were based on men's lives, or if women's lives were examined, the focus was limited to their reproductive and family cycle. They were not studied in terms of themselves as individuals and their work lives.

As women's lives change due to shifting cultural role norms as well as expected or unexpected life events, it is of concern to know how women are managing those changes. This study focused on ego identity as a variable which might be related to the ways women adapt to change in their lives. Ego identity is the myriad of experiences both from within the self (psyche) and outside the self (social) which together shape the definition we give to ourselves.
The construct of assertiveness was the variable for examining styles of coping with change. Assertiveness is a resource tool to assist those groups in role flux to become more effective in their interpersonal negotiations. Women, as a group, are experiencing ambiguity in role definition.

A conceptual framework for observing adult development through the study of the ego was postulated by Erik Erikson (1963) and served as the theoretical underpinning for identity in this study. The theory base for assertiveness was the work of Wolpe (1958) and Wolpe and Lazarus (1966), both behavior therapists. It was of interest to the researcher to investigate whether a relationship exists between a woman's sense of identity and the degree of assertive behavior she feels comfortable using. The purpose of the study, therefore, was to investigate personal identity and the ways in which adult women cope with change in their lives by examining the relationship of ego identity status to a woman's probability of engaging in assertive behavior and her comfort in doing so.

Methodology

A questionnaire mailed to the sample consisted of two measurements, one to assess identity status and the other to assess assertiveness. In addition to completing demographic information, the respondents were asked to describe their
reactions to a life event or events occurring in the past five years which stimulated them to rethink their personal values and priorities.

The instrument measuring ego identity status was the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded, based on the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS) (Adams et al., 1979), and extended by the researcher for this study. It consists of four scales, each containing two item statements for each of four areas: 1) political ideology, 2) occupation, 3) religious beliefs, and 4) sex role attitudes. This measure identifies the statuses (identity achieved, moratorium, foreclosure, and identity diffusion) by organizing the subjects according to how they resolve the task of identity resolution. The presence or absence of crisis and commitment are the criteria used to decide in which status an individual's experience would place her. Reliability and validity have been identified on this measure as discussed in Chapter 3.

The Assertion Inventory (Gambrill & Richey, 1975) was the measure for the assertive construct. Two scales are included, one for probability of responding assertively to specific situations and the other for discomfort level in responding to the same situations.
The sample of 600 women was drawn from a church membership list of a midwestern farm state. They received by mail the questionnaires which contained the two measures in addition to the demographic sheet. The data collection process took six weeks, including an initial mailing followed by two reminder mailings. Questionnaires were returned from 355 subjects. Of these, 208 were used in the final analysis, eliminating ages older than 64 years and younger than 24 years.

The following procedures were used to analyze the data:

1. Frequencies and percentages calculated to obtain demographic descriptions of the subjects.

2. Analysis of variance was used to test for significant differences among the means of the four identity statuses in relation to response probability to acting assertively, and discomfort level with acting assertively. The alpha level was set at .05.

3. The Duncan Multiple Range Test was applied following the one-way ANOVA in order to find where differences were located.

Results of the study

Of the 208 subjects included in the sample for analysis, a disproportionate number (n=147) was reported to be in the moratorium identity status. This placement was
based on cut-off points as reported in Chapter 4. The distribution of subjects in the other three statuses was much smaller (Diffusion=14; Foreclosure=13; Achieved=34). The small number in three statuses and the large number in one status makes it difficult to generalize about the women in these statuses and may also have created a chance of error in the analysis.

The analysis of variance revealed a pattern of means on both measures of the dependent variable which was in some ways different than predicted. The means of the moratorium identity status and the foreclosure identity status were different than anticipated when drafting the hypotheses. The women in the moratorium status had been predicted to be similar to women in the achieved identity status on response probability (scoring a high level), and women in the foreclosure status had been predicted to be similar to women in the achieved identity status on discomfort scores (reporting a low level).

A post hoc analysis using the Duncan Multiple Range Test showed that women in the achieved identity status reported significantly higher response probability to assertive behavior than did women in the other three statuses. Regarding the level of discomfort with assertiveness, the Duncan revealed that women in the
identity achieved status reported significantly less discomfort with assertiveness than did women in the moratorium status. The Duncan was unable to show a significant difference between women in the achieved status and women in the foreclosure and diffusion statuses, most likely because the n's were very small for these latter two statuses. Observing the means of the statuses (Table 17, p. 118) would lead one to think there should be significant differences here as well.

It was not predicted that women in the achieved identity status would have a significantly higher response probability to assertiveness than women in the moratorium status, nor was it predicted that women in the identity achieved status would have significantly less discomfort than women in the foreclosure status. It had been expected that similarities would exist between those in identity achieved status and those in the moratorium status on the response probability measure (both reporting high levels), and between women in the identity achieved and women in the foreclosure statuses on the discomfort measure (both reporting low levels).

The ANOVA also revealed patterns among the statuses which were predicted. Women in the foreclosure status were similar to women in the diffusion status in that they both
reported low response probability to assertive behavior. Women in both of these statuses were expected to be unassertive. Another expected pattern supported in the analysis was the similarity between women in the moratorium status and women in the diffusion status regarding their level of discomfort with assertiveness. This had been expected.

When the hypotheses were tested, the findings indicated that:

1. There were no significant differences between women in either foreclosure or diffusion identity statuses regarding their response probability to assertive situations (both were low as expected); therefore, this hypothesis was supported.

2. There were significant differences in the response probability to assertive situations between women in the achieved identity status and women in the moratorium status, with women in the achieved identity status reporting higher response probability; therefore, this hypothesis was not supported.

3. There were significant differences between women in the identity achieved status and those in the other three statuses regarding probability of response to assertive situations, with women in the achieved status reporting
higher response probability, but women in the moratorium status were not significantly different from women in the foreclosure or diffusion identity statuses; therefore, this hypothesis was only partially supported.

4. There were no significant differences in level of discomfort experienced in assertive situations between women in the moratorium status and women in the diffusion identity status (both reported high levels as expected); therefore, this hypothesis was supported.

5. There were significant differences in the level of discomfort experienced in assertive situations between women in the foreclosure identity status and women in the achieved identity status, with women in the foreclosure status reporting significantly more discomfort; therefore, this hypothesis was not supported.

6. There were significant differences between women in the achieved identity status and those in the other three statuses regarding level of discomfort with assertiveness, with women in the achieved status reporting less discomfort; but women in the foreclosure status were not significantly different from women in the moratorium or diffusion identity statuses; therefore, this hypothesis was only partially supported.
Discussion of Study Results

It had been conjectured that women with an achieved or moratorium status of identity would be more likely to respond assertively to given situations and that women in a diffusion identity status or in a foreclosure status would be less likely to choose assertion. Secondly, the conjecture was made that the discomfort level with assertiveness would be greatest with those subjects in a moratorium status or in a diffusion identity status, and would be least with subjects in the foreclosure or achieved identity status. As was discussed earlier, the pattern of means which were revealed in the analysis agreed in part with these conjectures. Similarities were found among women in the foreclosure and diffusion statuses. Both groups reported being mostly unassertive which had been predicted. Regarding both conjectures, women in the moratorium or foreclosure statuses reported being significantly different from those women in the achieved identity status which was not predicted.

The following discussion of the study results will address 1) the identity status paradigm and its measurement; and 2) the assertion construct and its measurement.
The identity status paradigm

Research on the identity statuses consistently reports that those in the identity achieved and those in diffusion statuses are in contrast with one another on other personality measures, such as anxiety, interpersonal social relations, and cognitive style. Those in the identity achieved status are known to exhibit relatively good adaptive capacities and those in the diffusion status find difficulties with coping (Waterman, 1982). However, the research results have been mixed in presenting profiles of individuals in the foreclosure and moratorium statuses as they relate to the achieved identity statuses, particularly in studies of females. In regard to this study, what was thought to be true about these statuses when formulating the hypotheses turned out to be different in some respects.

The foreclosure status Women in the foreclosure status reported the highest level of discomfort of all the statuses, contrary to predictions. The initial reasoning behind the hypothesis that women in the foreclosure status would be similar to women in the achieved status in having low levels of discomfort with assertion was threefold: 1) women in the foreclosure status, like those in the achieved status, have made a commitment and are considered more settled and stable, allowing for feelings of security; 2)
those in the foreclosure status measured high on self-esteem and these good feelings of self could minimize feelings of discomfort; 3) women in this status prefer the status quo and have made their commitments within a traditional realm.

It was thought that those in the foreclosure status would not see a need or desire to function assertively, as their achievement strivings do not take them into non-traditional arenas where they might experience conflict. Assertive behavior is not associated with traditional feminine role qualities, so it was believed that those women in the foreclosure status would not relate to the utility of assertion (this was supported), and would be less aware of any discomfort in being assertive (this was not corroborated).

On the other hand, the content of the items on the assertive measure may have been interpreted by women in the foreclosure status as placing themselves out of their traditional milieu, which might then elicit feelings of discomfort. Putting themselves hypothetically in the situations suggested by the items in the assertion measure may cause them discomfort as they might meet with disapproval from others. Individuals in the foreclosure status have been characterized as being highly approval oriented and favoring obedience. Though women in the
foreclosure status reportedly scored high on self-esteem measures, their source of validation tends to be external, rather than internal. They gain a good feeling about themselves by pleasing others, and being assertive may not gain everyone's approval.

In light of these latter speculations, should we have expected what was reported by the foreclosure status—-that they feel discomfort with being assertive? If the researcher had viewed the status from this perspective, the hypothesis would not have associated the foreclosure status with the achieved identity status in having a low discomfort level. In fact, discomfort may be the reason for not responding assertively. In addition, the small number in this status (n=13) makes it difficult to know for certain the adequacy and accuracy of the measurements with this group. It is difficult to make conclusive statements when so few subjects are in this status.

The moratorium status Women in the moratorium status reported less response probability of assertive behavior than was expected when formulating the hypothesis, and, therefore, were not found to be similar to women in the achieved identity status on this dependent variable. It had been expected, and was supported, that women in the moratorium status would report high discomfort with
assertiveness. In addition, it was expected, but not found, that these same women would choose assertive behavior to a greater degree than unassertive behavior, regardless of their discomfort.

The reasoning behind the formulation of the hypothesis linking women in the achieved and moratorium statuses on response probability to assertiveness was threefold: 1) individuals in the moratorium status are known for challenging the status quo as they are in a period of breaking away from expectations of others and forming their own; 2) women in the moratorium status are willing to express disagreement and confront conflict, so that rejecting traditional feminine role behavior to be assertive would seem viable to most individuals in this status; 3) those in the moratorium status are in the process of rejecting dependency and approval needs as they are drawn toward establishing a firm sense of self; hence, behaving assertively could be viewed as enhancing their effort.

Looking at the present findings from another perspective, we are reminded of studies of late adolescence which found the moratorium status the least stable of the statuses with a tendency to fluctuate. This is partly a result of being in a crisis phase, and exploring new alternatives. There is consensus in the literature that
this kind of situation creates stress for women. Traditionally, women have not been mandated to search and question their role in the world, which may result in their being different from traditional expectations. Going "against the grain," individuals in the moratorium status may tend to respond in a manner similar to individuals in the diffusion status (anxious, lacking confidence, intensity of affect). Assertion calls for behaviors that are not typically feminine and which involve risk-taking. Considering the more traditional background of the sample, women in this status might be expected not to choose assertion when feeling discomfort. Little support may exist for being "anxious performers" in this sample, although this was not expected when forming the hypothesis.

The measure of identity statuses There is ambiguity surrounding the rather sizeable proportion of subjects in the moratorium status (n=147). A question is raised as to whether this disproportionate number has confounded the data in any way. Other studies have reported higher n's for this status compared to the other statuses, but not to such a large proportion as in the present study. Was the larger number of subjects in the moratorium status due to the inadequacy of the measure to differentiate among the statuses or due to other factors? In observing the
frequency distribution of the women in the moratorium status across age groups, we find a fairly even spread from women 25 to 64 years. It would appear that age is not a factor in the size of the moratorium status.

One reason for the larger size in the moratorium status may have to do with the cut-offs in the scoring method. As was presented in Chapter 3, there are two ways of being assigned to the moratorium status. It may be that the second way for assigning subjects to this status creates a group that has a lower moratorium profile, as they did not score high enough on the moratorium status scale to fall above the cut-off as did the first group.

This research project was the initial application of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Expanded, and the first time an adult population of women was sampled with this measurement. Even the instrument from which the OM-EISE was adapted--The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status--had been administered only to adolescent age groups. The item statements on the OM-EISE appear to be consistent. The internal reliability of the moratorium status scale (.75) indicates the items are measuring the moratorium status scale in a similar way. Care was given to construct the items so that they would be meaningful to an adult sample of women. Also, the content area of sex role
attitudes was added to the OM-EIS in an effort to tap an area meaningful to women's lives.

In addition, respondents were encouraged to consider homemaker as an occupation when answering items related to that area. Even then, women in the upper age category (55 to 64 years) seemed to have difficulty relating to homemaker as a "job" and left some items blank in the occupational area to a greater extent than did the younger age groups. With attention given to these factors, it would seem that the measure itself is adequate except regarding items on occupation as they pertain to an older age cohort.

From another perspective, one could speculate that the large number of women in the moratorium identity status is indicative of the current period, one which Neugarten suggests as fluid and "marked by an increasing number of role transitions and by the disappearance of traditional timetables, or what may also be described as the proliferation of timetables and the lack of synchrony among age-related roles" (Neugarten, 1979, p. 889). The moratorium status is associated with an expressed desire to make changes in one's life. Perhaps the ambiguity of women's role definition today leads to increased searching with a number of viable alternatives present, and, therefore, to less final commitment, resulting in a greater
proportion of adult women in the moratorium status than in the achieved or foreclosure statuses.

The assertive construct

The dependent variable used in this study—the assertiveness construct—needs to be discussed in light of the outcomes of this study. As was noted in earlier chapters, training in assertive skills allows groups who are experiencing change in lifestyle (such as women) to acquire more effective social skills in order to cope with new situations and challenges in their lives.

It is of interest to note the age differences in the reportings of discomfort level and response probability to assertive behavior (Table 8). Over half of the women in each of the older two age groups of the total sample (45 to 54 years and 55 to 64 years) reported low feelings of discomfort, but over half (56% and 66%, respectively) still chose not to respond assertively. So, in some cases, women, because of their age cohort value system, may not view assertive behavior as an appropriate option for themselves even when they feel comfortable with assertiveness.

Regarding women in the youngest age group (25 to 34 years), over half also reported low feelings of discomfort with assertiveness. However, only 34 percent still chose not to be assertive. The youngest age group presents a contrasting
picture to the older two age groups regarding assertive behavior in that they behave assertively. This would support the idea that changing cultural norms—in this case, the social sanction for assertiveness in female behavior—impacts the younger age cohort first.

In reviewing the literature on assertive training and research, Linehan and Egan (1979) and Linehan (1984) discuss the difficulty with analyzing what has been accomplished in the field mainly due to the unwieldly and global nature of the assertive construct. Working with such a multidimensional concept makes comparisons and generalizations in the research findings difficult to summarize. Linehan recommends that "the general construct of assertion should be discarded in favor of more restrictive labels, subsumed under the more general construct of social skills" (1979, p. 252).

Using a more precise part of assertiveness rather than the global aspect may have permitted a more accurate measure of this construct in relation to the identity statuses in this study. Read et al. (1984), caution against using broad personality constructs to examine how the statuses are alike and different. Also, they suggest that observable social behavior is a more precise means of measuring characteristics of the statuses rather than using a global self-report measurement.
In retrospect regarding this study, we may have had a more accurate picture of the assertive behaviors of the moratorium and foreclosure statuses if a less global measure of assertiveness had been used and if observable social behaviors had been examined, rather than self-reported behaviors. This approach could permit the researcher to impose greater control over the variables and, perhaps, to comprehend more correctly the way in which identity statuses differentiate among themselves.

Implications

The findings of this study provide evidence of a relationship between identity status and two measures of assertiveness—one of affect and one of behavior. As has been discussed, the relationship was not entirely as expected. Women in the achieved identity status are significantly different from those in moratorium, diffusion, and foreclosure statuses in that they are less likely to experience feelings of discomfort in behaving assertively and are more likely to be assertive in their interpersonal interactions. Expected findings related to the nonassertiveness of women in the foreclosure and diffusion statuses were supported, as were the expected high discomfort levels of women in the moratorium and diffusion
statuses. In answering the original research question concerning the relationship between these two variables, caution must be taken in the interpretation because of the small size of the samples in three of the identity statuses.

These results lend support to an interaction between assertive behavior and identity status. Without the benefit of longitudinal research, we do not know if assertive behavior leads one to move toward an achieved identity status from a moratorium, or if an achieved identity status encourages assertive behavior. What is a more accurate and helpful view, however, is to understand the relationship between these two variables as a transactional one in which assertive behavior and one's identity status together contribute one to the other. As a woman becomes more achieved in her sense of identity, she behaves more assertively which in turn supports and builds her identity.

What are the implications of this relationship regarding the way women manage transitions in their adult lives? Obviously, those women with an achieved identity status will most likely use assertive behavior with less discomfort than women in the other three statuses, and will do so more frequently. This would give an indication that women with an achieved status of identity would manage change and transition more effectively than those in other statuses.
Of women in the moratorium status in this sample, we might anticipate half of them using assertive behavior to cope with the challenges of transition. As the literature on assertiveness reports, women who are reluctant to use assertive behavior could have greater difficulty dealing with changes to their lives. Such could be the case for women in the foreclosure and diffusion statuses of this sample.

The majority of this sample reported a moratorium identity status \( (n=147) \), and 50 percent of that status indicated high discomfort with assertiveness. The large number in this category is noteworthy as we consider implications for how women cope with transition. The experience of being in a moratorium status is stressful for women, as the culture historically has not encouraged women to question and explore their abilities and talents. Research on coping and transitions found that women reported greater stress than men during transitions (Lowenthal, Thurnher, & Chiriboga, 1975), and that women employ coping mechanisms that result in more stress, whereas men more often use coping responses that inhibit stressful outcomes (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). In both studies, age was not related to the ability to adapt to transitions. In light of this, it may be that a large number of women in the
moratorium status of this sample are experiencing quite a bit of stress, especially those not choosing assertive behavior. Nonassertion often manifests in decreased self-esteem and increased powerlessness (Jakubowski, 1977). These women may not have acquired the assertive skill repertoire to help them employ assertiveness even when feeling discomfort, and, therefore, may not recognize the value of assertiveness as a coping tool.

The findings of this study on identity statuses reveal seventy-one percent of women in the sample to be in moratorium concerning their sense of self—a period of exploration and seeking answers. These results have implications for teachers, program planners, and counselors of adult women. As noted earlier, Aslanian and Brickell (1980) learned from adults that it is during times of change that they tend to seek out educational support and counsel. In recognizing that women are in transition, meaningful educational experiences and supportive counseling which explore the self in a psychosocial context are necessary. This requires adult educators and counselors to comprehend the nature of women's development, particularly as it relates to identity formation.

Professionals in the field need to help women negotiate times of transition by assisting them to clarify their
options in order to make effective decisions. In so doing, women will build confidence and assume more responsibility for self. With these skills, women can anticipate and be better prepared for future crises and transitions in their lives.

This study indicated that the majority of women in moratorium who felt discomfort with assertiveness chose not to be assertive. Perhaps, with external support from adult educators and counselors, women in the moratorium identity status can be encouraged to acquire assertive skills and feel enough at ease to be an "anxious performer" and eventually an "assertive performer." Findings from the study supported the hypothesis that women with an achieved sense of identity who had experienced moratorium (working through crisis and reaching commitment), tended to be comfortable with being assertive.

Recommendations for Future Research

The research experience this study has provided would suggest pursuing further studies on ego identity of women. In considering directions for subsequent research, several suggestions are offered.

It would be of interest and utility in future studies to learn more about the developmental pathways of identity
status formation which women have followed to the present
time, rather than observing identity within a single
timeframe. The cross-sectional design for this research did not tell us the identity formation path women in the sample have taken over their adult years, nor where they will be in the future. Without longitudinal data, we can only speculate about the ways in which women's identity is formed over time. What events and experiences have they encountered which brought identity issues to the forefront again? What were their strategies or styles of coping with these issues? How has their identity formation evolved?

Observing identity process over time allows the researcher to understand the identity statuses not as a static typology but as a developmental process in which the individual is continually shaping and re-shaping a sense of self in the context of other developmental tasks.

One means of gathering these data, ideally, would be a longitudinal study of a group of women over a period of years. Another less time consuming approach would be to conduct retrospective interviews with a subsample of the women from each of the identity statuses in this sample who responded to the life events question. In exploring these past events, we may gain more insight to the questions that are raised in the literature about women and the contexts
within which they deal with their evolving identity. The responses gathered from the life events question in this study suggest that it is events within the family life cycle category which most frequently cause them to rethink their values and priorities, rather than events in the categories related to work/career or to biological changes.

As further research is conducted using the identity status paradigm and the OM-EISE measurement, it is important to consider carefully those content areas around which crisis and commitment occur in women's lives. It is these two criteria which identify the coping style for dealing with identity resolution. The responses to the life events question in the present study clearly indicate that relational/family cycle events are the context which have meaning for women in this sample, as they reflect and struggle with identity issues. This finding supports the literature which suggests that interpersonal issues are salient to women and are the primary context within which female identity formation occurs.

An effort was made in this study to address this concern by expanding the content area of The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status to include sex-role attitude and to re-word the original items on the scale to relate more appropriately to an older population beyond late
adolescence. Further refinement is needed on the OM-EISE concerning items related to occupation. Frequently, women in the oldest age group could not answer items in the occupational area of the OM-EISE because they reported being retired. Perhaps they also had difficulty viewing "homemaker" as an occupational area and could not answer for this reason. In sampling this age group in the future, these concerns need to be taken into consideration in re-phrasing occupation items. Otherwise, this age group may not be an appropriate one to use the OM-EISE as an identity status measurement.

It would also be of interest to examine the questionnaires returned by women in the sample who were over 64 years (n=97). These were not included in analysis of the present study, as they were considered to be qualitatively different from the rest of the sample. Another study could examine this age group with more appropriate identity measures. The importance of studying this age group stems from the fact that the life expectancy of our population has greatly increased, especially among women. We need to learn what inhibits and what sustains older women as they come to terms with their lives, confronting the final developmental task of integrity vs. despair (the eighth stage of Erikson's developmental framework).
Conclusion

As this study is concluded, we are reminded that the study of adult development is surrounded by many unresolved issues due, in part, to the newness of this research area. Part of the complexity lies with women's identity formation. This study applied the identity status paradigm to a population of women beyond adolescence, the group most frequently examined regarding identity. Questions concerning the relationship between identity status and assertive behavior were explored with research results supporting a relationship.

We have gone a step toward understanding the variability in coping responses among women in this sample. Assertiveness, employed as a coping response, was endorsed by a majority of those women reporting an achieved identity status. Half of the women reporting a moratorium identity status would utilize assertive behaviors. Women in the diffusion and foreclosure statuses clearly preferred not to be assertive.

The level of discomfort with assertiveness also varied among women in this sample. Clearly, women in the achieved identity status reported significantly less discomfort with assertiveness than did women in the other three statuses. Only twelve percent of the overall sample utilized assertive
behavior when feeling discomfort, and the majority of these were women in the moratorium status.

This picture of the relationship between identity status and assertive behavior is not altogether what we thought. There were some questions raised concerning the responses of women in the foreclosure and moratorium statuses. Upon closer scrutiny of the theory, we have discovered some reasons why women in the foreclosure status tend to feel discomfort with assertiveness and why women in the moratorium status may hesitate to respond assertively even when feeling discomfort.

Future research is needed to test the unexpected findings from this study with other populations of women and to compare the outcomes. In so doing, we can continue to expand the knowledge base of women's psychosocial development—how they perceive themselves, and how they cope with transitions in their lives.


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Iowa State University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research reviewed this project and concluded that the rights and welfare of the human subjects were adequately protected, that risks were outweighed by the potential benefits and expected value of the knowledge sought, that confidentiality of data was assured and that informed consent was obtained by appropriate procedures.

The work involved in conceptualizing, planning, and writing a research study seemed overwhelming to me at many points during the process. It is not an effort that can be done entirely alone. Support and encouragement are needed from others, though ultimately the results came from my own solitary persistence. I would like to acknowledge some of those people who helped me.

Thank you, Dr. John Wilson, for your guidance and thorough critique of my progress and unfailing belief in my abilities to produce a dissertation. As my major professor, this support and care was essential.

Thank you, Dr. Mary Huba, for consultation beyond that required of a thesis committee member. You created opportunities for me to further my understanding of statistical concepts and the research process. To the other members of the thesis committee—Dr. Pat Keith, Dr. George Kizer, Dr. Rosalie Norem, Dr. Judith Krulewitz—I also
express appreciation for assistance in evaluating this study. I am grateful for the computer expertise and good humor of Beth Ruiz in the RISE Resource Office, and for the careful technical work of Rose Wirth in typing the dissertation into the computer system.

Thank you, Don and Daniel Christensen. As husband and son, you endured years of demands made on my time and temperament. You, along with my special friends, were patient and steadfast in believing I would complete the project.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this work to my mother, the main source for my identity quest. She had a strong desire to go to college and pursued her desire without help until life's circumstances interrupted her dream. With this legacy and my own good fortune, I was able to pick up where she left off. At 81 years, she is teaching me how to grow old gracefully. "Jessie, this one's for you!"
APPENDIX A:

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING FIRST MAILING OF QUESTIONNAIRE
May 28, 1985

Dear UCC Church Member:

You have been selected to participate in a study of adult women I am conducting. The purpose of the study is to understand more fully the development of personal identity in women and the ways in which women cope with change in their adult lives. Your name was drawn from a random sample of women who are members of the United Church of Christ in Iowa.

Your contribution is critical to this study and is greatly appreciated. The information you provide will assist educational institutions and teachers of adults to respond more effectively to women as learners.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and respond to the requested information on your background. This should require approximately thirty minutes of your time. Please answer without assistance from others. A business reply envelope is enclosed for you to return the questionnaire. No postage is required.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. As soon as all analysis of the questionnaire is complete, they and any materials revealing your identity will be destroyed. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. It allows us to check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire nor mentioned in any reports.

If you have any questions about this study, please call or write. The telephone number is (515) 292-9356.

Thank you very much for your contribution.

Sincerely,

Rachel S. Christensen
Graduate Student
Professional Studies/Adult Education

Enclosure
APPENDIX B:

POSTCARD REMINDER FOR SECOND MAILING
Last week a questionnaire seeking information about the lives of adult women was mailed to you.

If the questionnaire has been completed and returned, please accept my sincere thanks.

If it has not, I would greatly appreciate it if you would complete and mail the questionnaire as soon as possible. It was sent only to a small number of women so it is extremely important that yours be included if the results are to accurately represent the feelings of women such as you.

Sincerely,

Rachel Christensen, Professional Studies/Adult Education
APPENDIX C:

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING SECOND MAILING OF QUESTIONNAIRE
About three weeks ago you received a questionnaire seeking information about the attitudes and behaviors of adult women. As of today, I have not yet received a completed questionnaire from you.

The study was undertaken with the belief that to better understand the concerns of women it is best to go directly to women like yourself for the information. I am writing to you again because of the importance each questionnaire has to the outcome of this study. Past experiences suggest that those of you who have not yet sent in your questionnaire may hold quite different opinions than those who have returned it.

If your questionnaire has been misplaced, I have enclosed a replacement and a business reply envelope for returning the completed questionnaire. No postage is required. As I mentioned in my first letter, you may be assured of complete confidentiality.

Thank you for your generous assistance in this project. The results will be useful to teachers and counselors as they work with adults going through life changes. Call or write if you have any questions. The telephone number is (515) 292-9356.

Sincerely,

Rachel Christensen
Graduate Student
Professional Studies/Adult Education

Enclosure
APPENDIX D:

QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO SAMPLE
Instructions: Please indicate your opinion of the following items by circling the number which best describes your personal attitude. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. Please respond to every item. In answering statements about occupation, consider homemaker as an occupation if it takes up a major portion of your weekly activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When it comes to women's liberation, I've never bothered to find out what all the fuss is about.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The choice of my present job was made without much consideration of any other alternative.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Since there are so many different political groups and ideals, I can't decide now which to follow until I do some more thinking.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I've considered and reconsidered different ways of viewing religion in my life and know now what I believe.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I don't really take an interest in political issues, as they aren't of concern to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have considered job options and how they would fit my life, and realize now the work area that is best for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I really find it hard to know who I am as a person separate from my role as daughter or wife or mother.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I'm not sure what religion means to me but I will continue to think about it until I can decide.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I haven't found the kind of work I really want, but I'll continue with what I'm doing until something better comes along.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I follow what my parents have done in terms of political concerns and haven't bothered to question their views.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. I'm sure it will be pretty easy for me to change my job plans when something more interesting is available.

12. Since I have thought carefully about my own political beliefs, I don't always agree with political opinions of people close to me.

13. When I try to figure out what I think about the roles of men and women in today's society, I count on important people in my life to guide me.

14. At this point I don't give much thought or attention to the role of religion in my life.

15. There are so many different careers that I can't decide which one I would do best in.

16. I've accepted the religious beliefs I was brought up with and have not had any doubts about them.

17. Although at one time I was less certain, I now have a firm belief about what the status of women in society should be.

18. On political matters, I tend to accept the views held by important people in my life without bothering to figure out my own.

19. After exploring alternative career choices, I am certain now of the vocational area which suits my interest and skills.

20. Religion is confusing to me right now and I keep changing my views on what is best for me.

21. I have definite opinions about the social and political issues I have considered, although it's possible my opinion will change later on.
22. Whether or not women's roles are changing in our society doesn't interest me very much. 1 2 3 4 5 6

23. I am not too sure about my job skills and where I can work most satisfactorily, but I am trying to come up with an answer. 1 2 3 4 5 6

24. When it comes to thinking about women's liberation, I haven't looked at other views and attitudes toward women than those I was brought up with. 1 2 3 4 5 6

25. I am not involved in political issues enough to discuss them or take political action of any kind. 1 2 3 4 5 6

26. I've gone through a period of serious questioning about religious concerns and can now say I understand what I believe. 1 2 3 4 5 6

27. My mind keeps changing on what I believe about women's role and behavior and I haven't yet decided what I think. 1 2 3 4 5 6

28. I have adopted the religious values I learned as a child and have never really questioned them. 1 2 3 4 5 6

29. After careful thinking and wrestling with the topic, I have established my own convictions about the rights and roles of women. 1 2 3 4 5 6

30. I am trying to figure out my political philosophy so I will be more certain of my views in this area. 1 2 3 4 5 6

31. The fact that I don't give religious questions much thought doesn't bother me one way or another. 1 2 3 4 5 6

32. My present occupation is what my parents really wanted me to do, so I haven't seriously looked at any other work options. 1 2 3 4 5 6
PLEASE NOTE:

Copyrighted materials in this document have not been filmed at the request of the author. They are available for consultation, however, in the author's university library.

These consist of pages:

180-182; Assertion Inventory
Please answer the following:

What is your present age? 183

1. _____ under 24 years
2. _____ 25-34 years
3. _____ 35-44 years
4. _____ 45-54 years
5. _____ 55-64 years
6. _____ over 64 years

What is the population of your community?

1. _____ 10,000 or less
2. _____ greater than 10,000

Check the item that describes your marital status.

1. _____ never married
2. _____ married
3. _____ divorced or separated
4. _____ widowed
5. _____ other (specify)

Check all of the following items that describe your work status.

1. _____ homemaker
2. _____ employed full-time outside home (30 hours or more/week; 8 months or more/year)
3. _____ employed part-time outside home (less than 30 hours/week; 8 months or more/year)
4. _____ seasonal part-time employment outside home
5. _____ student
6. _____ volunteer (10 or more hours/week on average)
7. _____ other (specify)

Check the highest education level reached.

1. _____ attended high school or less
2. _____ received high school diploma or GED
3. _____ attended college
4. _____ received 2-year associate degree or completed vocational training
5. _____ received bachelor's degree
6. _____ received master's degree
7. _____ received post master's degree or professional degree

Please describe your reaction to an event(s) in your life within the past five years which has caused you to rethink your personal values and priorities.

Thank you for your assistance!
APPENDIX E:

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AREAS FOR LIFE EVENT QUESTION
Summary of Content Areas for Life Event Question

Following are the kinds of events which respondents related when answering this statement at the conclusion of the questionnaire: "Please describe your reaction to an event(s) in your life within the past five years which has caused you to rethink your personal values and priorities."

The number in parentheses following each item refers to the frequency of the item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Cycle Events</th>
<th>Work/Career Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>children growing up (9)</td>
<td>quitting job (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>childbirth (15)</td>
<td>return to school/work (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death of sibling (4)</td>
<td>changing jobs (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>husband's job loss; financial stress (11)</td>
<td>looking for work (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death of spouse (7)</td>
<td>job stress (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death of child (5)</td>
<td>being laid off (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death of parent (6)</td>
<td>job harassment (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divorce (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marital discord (8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illness of spouse or relative (13)</td>
<td>Biological Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6 of these were alcohol related)</td>
<td>major surgery (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marriage (2)</td>
<td>arthritis affiliation (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illness of child (4)</td>
<td>serious illness (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependent parent (5)</td>
<td>recovered alcoholic (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divorce of children (3)</td>
<td>processing of aging (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>birth of grandchildren (2)</td>
<td>regain of mental health (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving/buying house (3)</td>
<td>disability (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child ran away (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>