

BLACK ADOLESCENT IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT:  
EFFECTS OF SELF-ESTEEM AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

by

Marlene F. Watson

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Family and Child Development

APPROVED:

---

Howard O. Protinsky, Chair

---

Gloria W. Bilo

---

Kenneth V. Hardy

---

Dennis E. Hinkle

---

James F. Keller

May, 1987

Blacksburg, Virginia

BLACK ADOLESCENT IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT:  
EFFECTS OF SELF-ESTEEM AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

by

Marlene F. Watson

Howard O. Protinsky, Ph.D.

Family and Child Development

(ABSTRACT)

Black adolescent identity formation was studied within the frameworks of Erikson's psychosocial theory and structural family systems theory. Ego identity was measured by the Revised Version of the EOM-EIS, an instrument based on Erikson's theoretical formulations. Family structure was measured by FACES III and a measure of self-esteem was obtained using Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale. It was hypothesized that a significant relationship would exist between ego identity and family structure after controlling for self-esteem and demographic variables. Two hundred thirty-seven urban black adolescents participated in the study. Multiple regression analysis was utilized to test the hypotheses in this study. The results supported a relationship between ego identity and family structure. The results further revealed a positive relationship between high family cohesion (enmeshment) and high identity which was surprising from both Eriksonian and structural perspectives. On the other hand, this finding offered support for the

14-24-91  
HGA

cultural component of ego identity and underscored the importance of recognizing strengths in family structures even if they differ from those which family theorists and clinicians expect would work best. Self-esteem was found to be a significant predictor of ego identity but failed to differentiate among the four ego identity statuses. Females reported significantly less identity diffusion than males, providing evidence that gender differences exist in ego identity development.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am especially grateful to Kenneth V. Hardy who, in many ways, is responsible for my achieving this significant milestone in my life. Dr. Hardy inspired within me his passion and commitment to the field and practice of Marriage and Family Therapy. I hope to light the way for others.

I am also grateful to Gloria W. Bird for providing consistent support and encouragement during my tenure at Virginia Tech. Dr. Bird's expertise in family and child development was further enhanced by her regard for my personhood.

I wish to thank Dennis E. Hinkle. Dr. Hinkle's wit and humor coupled with his expertise in statistics is an unbeatable combination.

I am also thankful to James F. Keller for working so hard to assure my evolvement into a competent family therapist at both the individual and program levels.

It is with much feeling that I acknowledge the guidance, supervision, and training from my chairperson, Howard O. Protinsky. The dissertation process was merely the culmination of Dr. Protinsky's leadership and direction and, once again, I must leave home.

Personal thanks are due family members. A very special thank you goes to my grandmother, , whose strength and determination wave like a banner, always

ahead of me and beckoning me forward. I am thankful to my mother, \_\_\_\_\_, who taught me to be self-sufficient and whose arms are always there if needed. I am also thankful to my aunt, \_\_\_\_\_, who is always there to cheer, protect, and spread the news of my successes. A most heartfelt thanks is given to my aunt, \_\_\_\_\_, for accepting me and demonstrating her faith and support in so many ways.

Finally, thank you to \_\_\_\_\_ and the students at Chester High School. This study was made possible through their support and participation. As an alumna of Chester High School, I hope that my achievement will inspire the students to "climb though the rocks be rugged".

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late  
grandfather, \_\_\_\_\_, whose smile and pride in my  
educational accomplishments continue to be a guiding force.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	--
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Purpose .....	7
Theoretical Frameworks .....	7
Erikson's Psychosocial Theory .....	7
Structural Family Systems Theory .....	18
Rationale and Hypotheses .....	26
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	30
Ego Identity .....	30
Family Structure .....	57
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	62
Sample .....	62
Instrumentation .....	62
Scoring of Instruments .....	70
Data Collection .....	72
Data Analysis .....	72
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....	77
Description of the Sample .....	77
Frequency Distributions .....	80
Multiple Regression Analysis .....	93
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis .....	99

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	Page
Discussion of Multiple Regression Analysis .....	110
SUMMARY .....	116
Procedure .....	116
Significant Findings .....	118
Descriptive Results .....	118
Significant Relationships .....	119
Predictive Relationships .....	121
Implications and Recommendations .....	125
Limitations.....	128
REFERENCES .....	129
APPENDICES .....	138
VITA .....	147

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges, and Cutoff Points .....	76
2 Frequency of Age .....	78
3 Frequency of Identity Status Groups .....	81
4 Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Age .....	84
5 Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Sex .....	86
6 Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Curriculum .....	87
7 Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Self-Esteem .....	89
8 Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Cohesion .....	91
9 Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Adaptability .....	92
10 Summary of Forward Multiple Regression Analysis .....	97
11 Correlation Matrix of All Variables .....	100
12 Regression of Diffusion on Predictor Variables .....	103
13 Regression of Foreclosure on Predictor Variables .....	105
14 Regression of Moratorium on Predictor Variables .....	107
15 Regression of Achievement on Predictor Variables .....	109

## Chapter I

The primary task during adolescence is the achievement of a sense of ego identity (Juhasz, 1982; Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, & Nielsen, 1985). According to Protinsky (1975), ego identity is both a conscious and unconscious awareness of the continuity in one's interpersonal life and intra-psychic existence which therefore creates a sense of coherence, relatedness, and integration. Erikson (1980) described the evolution of ego identity as the merging of past and present identifications, future aspirations, and contemporary societal values.

The adolescent, more than any other family member, represents a bridge between the old and the new (Ackerman, 1980). For successful resolution of the identity crisis, it is critically important for the adolescent to achieve an inner sameness and continuity that will bridge what one was as a child and what one is about to become as an adult (Erikson, 1968). In developing a sense of ego identity, the adolescent must make basic life commitments. The adolescent must decide on a sexual orientation, an ideological stance, and a vocational direction that will permit him or her to become a productive member of society (Bourne, 1978a; Marcia, 1980).

It is important to consider that as the identity crisis of adolescence is being resolved, changes are simultaneously occurring at both the individual and the family levels (Newman & Murray, 1983). The change sought by the adolescent typically involves increased autonomy and a more peer-like relationship with parents (Youniss, 1980). Consequently, adolescents become more assertive in family interaction (Steinberg, 1981) and look for new attachment objects outside the family (Blos, 1979). The dynamic tension of family relations during adolescence is the extent to which the family system can grant the adolescent autonomy without feeling threatened by disintegration. For the adolescent, the dynamic tension is the extent to which he or she can become autonomous without losing the support of the family (Newman & Murray, 1983).

In the field of family therapy theory, family structure is hypothesized to be an important predictor of the psychological adjustment of individual family members (Minuchin, 1974; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981). Structural theory, which has its roots in systems theory, argues that the individual's personal identity is developed mainly in interaction with the interpersonal context of the family. Thus, the psychological structure of the individual and his or her family structure are interdependent. As the medium through which the individual expresses himself or herself,

family structure is a determinant for healthy and pathological functioning (Aponte & VanDeusen, 1981; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981; Unbarger, 1983).

Epstein, Bishop, and Levin (1978) postulated that the chief function of the family is to support the development of its members. To do so, the family must be willing to renegotiate family rules and roles according to the developmental needs of its members (Carter & McGoldrick, 1980). The family that cannot or will not change in response to the adolescent's desire for increased autonomy will seriously complicate the process of identity formation (Grotevant, 1983). As proposed by Erikson (1968):

should a young person feel that the environment tries to deprive him too radically of all forms of expression which permit him to develop and integrate the next step, he may resist with the wild strength encountered in animals who are suddenly forced to defend their lives (p. 130).

The adolescent's identity exploration is influenced by a family feedback process that either encourages or discourages separateness and innovation. The feedback may come in the form of emotional detachment, family discord, increased responsibilities and privileges, or greater rigidity of interactions. Overall, the family group sends messages to the adolescent about the degree to which separateness is desirable or possible (Newman & Murray, 1983).

In more controlling and rigid families, the adolescent's quest for autonomy may be met with repeated efforts by parents to retain power. These families resist restructuring family relationships even when faced with a challenge to change by maturational forces. When the family's structural organization no longer fits the adolescent's needs, the adolescent may respond by becoming either rebellious or submissive. In either case, there is a threat to the adolescent's developing sense of ego identity (Newman & Murray, 1983).

In families that are sensitive to the adolescent's need for more autonomy, identity formation is promoted in at least two ways. First, autonomy permits the adolescent the freedom to explore identity-relevant options. The information the adolescent receives from his or her identity exploration can then be used for the integration of a personal identity. Second, autonomy permits the adolescent to become involved with peers (Grotevant, 1983). The peer group is helpful in evolving an identity because it provides an arena for adolescents to try on new roles (Erikson, 1968).

According to Grotevant (1983), both connectedness and autonomy in family interaction are related to identity formation in adolescence. In addition, the dimension of connectedness is related in a curvilinear manner, with a

moderate degree of connectedness being most positively related to ego identity.

The identity crisis of adolescence is a highly creative task that involves the cooperative efforts of both the adolescent and the family system (Newman & Murray, 1983). Thus, "an individual's psychic life is not entirely an internal process. The individual influences his context and is influenced by it in constantly recurring sequences of interaction. His actions are governed by the characteristics of the system" (Minuchin, 1974, p. 9). In addition to family interaction and structure, other major variables reported in the literature that are related to the development of ego identity are: (a) self-esteem (Cabin, 1966; Gruen, 1960; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Rosenfeld, 1972), (b) sex (Bell, 1969; Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Matteson, 1972, 1975; Orlofsky, 1977), (c) age (Adams & Jones, 1983; LaVoie, 1976; Meilman, 1979; Protinsky, 1975; Stark & Traxler, 1974), (d) cognition (Cross & Allen, 1970; Orlofsky, 1977), and (e) race (Hauser, 1972).

Self-esteem has been proposed to be a common denominator in ego identity achievement. Self-esteem is regarded as necessary to permit the risk-taking involved in identity exploration (Grotevant, 1983). Gruen (1960) found that subjects with a poorly defined sense of self were more willing to accept false information about themselves.

The process of ego identity formation differs for males and females. Males tend to develop their identity primarily around occupational choice, whereas females tend to structure their identity around interpersonal relationships. Thus, sex is associated with the development of ego identity (Matteson, 1975).

Age is also a contributing factor in the formulation of ego identity. The adolescent is not expected to achieve ego identity during the early adolescent period. Instead, the adolescent is expected to begin the process of separating from his or her family toward the development of ego identity in later adolescence and early adulthood (Newman & Murray, 1983).

There is evidence to suggest that a relationship exists between identity achievement and intellectual performance. Cross and Allen (1970) found that identity achievers obtained higher grades. In a survey of college women, Marcia and Friedman (1970) discovered that identity achievers chose more difficult majors. Moreover, identity achievers have shown a greater need for achievement (Orlofsky, 1978).

The accomplishment of ego identity is influenced by race. Hauser (1972) studied black and white adolescents over a three year period. The findings of this study revealed distinct race differences with blacks falling more often in

the identity foreclosure status while whites were more often identity achievers.

### Purpose

While there is a moderate degree of research that associates self-esteem, sex, age, cognition, and race to identity, few studies have been conducted about the relationship of ego identity and family structure. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the adolescent's development of ego identity and family structure after controlling for demographic and personality variables. The specific demographic and personality variables that will be considered in relation to ego identity development are age, sex, high school curriculum, and self-esteem.

### Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks that will be used in this study are Erik Erikson's theory of ego identity development and the structural model of family systems theory.

#### Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

Erikson is regarded as one of the most influential theorists on ego identity. Erikson views identity as the epigenetically based psychosocial task distinctive, but not

exclusive, to adolescence (Marcia, 1980). The psychosocial theory of Erikson (1959, 1968) involves eight bipolar stages. For Erikson, the stages are hierarchical and the successful resolution of the psychosocial crisis of any one stage is dependent upon previous successes. The psychosocial crisis of each stage is resolved between a positive-negative dichotomy. A positive outcome is predictive of subsequent healthy personality growth while a negative outcome tends to produce a chaotic, alienated, and bizzare personality (Onyehalu, 1981).

Each of Erikson's (1968) eight stages of human development contains a crisis. The word crisis is used in a developmental sense to connote a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential. These stages are organized according to the epigenetic principle. The epigenetic principle states that "anything that grows has a ground plan, and that 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" (p. 92). Since the four stages preceding adolescence contribute significantly to the identity crisis of adolescence, a brief summary of these stages will be presented.

Trust vs. Mistrust (0-1 1/2). The first stage of development involves basic trust or mistrust. The infant's

sense of trust is an attitude toward oneself and the world. If the infant's needs are consistently satisfied, he or she develops an essential trustfulness of others as well as a fundamental sense of one's own trustworthiness and security. If not, the infant comes to regard those around him as unpredictable and may develop a general fear and suspicion of people (Erikson, 1968).

Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt (2-3). In the second stage, the child begins to experience himself or herself as a separate entity. This stage therefore becomes a battle for autonomy. The child may become a creative, autonomous individual or an inhibited, fearful, and dependent person. The child emerges with feelings of competence, self-confidence and self-assurance if the crisis of this stage is positively resolved. A negative outcome results in low self-esteem, shame, and self-consciousness (Erikson, 1968).

Initiative vs. Guilt (3 1/2 - 5). The psychosocial crisis of the third stage involves activity, curiosity, and exploratory behavior or immobility, fear, and guilt. The child's developing sense of initiative provides a basis for later ambition and purpose. Initiative is therefore critical to the identity crisis of adolescence. A negative consequence of this stage is inhibition due to fear and guilt (Erikson, 1968).

Industry vs. Inferiority (6-11). The fourth stage involves a desire to make things and to make them well. The child develops a sense of himself or herself as a worker. At the positive pole, the child learns to accomplish tasks and to win recognition through his or her accomplishments. A potential danger of this stage is a feeling of uselessness and a sense of futility (Erikson, 1968).

### Erikson's Theory of Ego Development

Erikson (1968) stressed the importance of recognizing the ego as one of three essential and continual processes by which man develops a "sense of being". The three processes, biological, social, and individual, function simultaneously and interdependently. Thus, any changes observed in one will cause and again be influenced by changes in the other. Moreover, a danger signal in any one process announces a threat to all.

The biological process develops in a predictable fashion according to an innate maturational factor. The bodily experiences of the infant which consist of drives and impulses are the beginnings of the infant's ego. The infant thus becomes a maturing organism who continues to unfold by means of a prescribed sequence of locomotor, sensory, and social capacities (Erikson, 1968).

Just as the individual influences his or her social environment, he or she is also influenced by it. The social process is therefore an integral part of ego development. Since the infant is dependent upon significant others to meet his or her needs, the infant must coordinate his or her means of getting with the caretaker's means of giving. Thus, the social process involves the mutual accommodation of family and child and may vary according to culture (Erikson, 1968).

The individual process involves the unique characteristics of the infant. Another aspect of the individual process is the demands made upon the social environment by the infant. The infant's growth consists of a series of challenges to the family to meet his or her newly evolving potentialities for social interaction (Erikson, 1968).

### Ego Identity of Adolescence

A distinct personal identity is expected to crystallize in adolescence (Onyehalu, 1981). According to Protinsky (1975), the identity crisis is the most crucial of all the psychosocial crises as it reawakens the issues of the preceding four stages and serves as a bridge between them and the three stages to follow.

There are specific contributions which previous stages make directly to the development of identity and those

aspects of identity formation which anticipate future development. Each of these issues will be discussed below.

Temporal Perspective vs. Time Confusion. The adolescent must reexamine past experiences and evaluate present goals as he or she prepares for the future. If the first stage contributed to the identity crisis an important need for trust in oneself and in others, the adolescent will clearly look for others and ideas to have faith in, and in whose service it becomes necessary to prove oneself trustworthy. On the other hand, the adolescent may lack the self-confidence to pursue goals (Erikson, 1968).

Self-Certainty vs. Self-Consciousness. The adolescent may become self-conscious of the past and fearful of the future as he or she tries to integrate a sense of self. If, however, the second stage was positively resolved, the adolescent is certain that he or she can become whatever he or she chooses to be. As noted by Erikson (1968), the adolescent ". . . would rather act shamelessly in the eyes of his elders, out of free choice, than be forced into activities which would be shameful in his own eyes or in those of his peers" (p. 129).

Role Experimentation vs. Role Fixation. In preparation for adulthood, the adolescent must envision and try out different roles. If a ceaseless imagination as to what one might become is developed in stage three, the

adolescent will be ambitious and experiment with various roles. A negative outcome of the third stage results in role fixation and dependency (Erikson, 1968).

Apprenticeship vs. Work Paralysis. A vocational choice is especially important to the adolescent who developed a need for work accomplishment in the fourth stage. It is for this reason that some adolescents prefer not to work for a while than be forced into a promising but dissatisfying career. An unsuccessful resolution of this stage may produce feelings of restlessness and futility (Erikson, 1968).

Sexual Polarization vs. Bisexual Confusion. Adolescence is a time when most people establish intimate relations with those of the opposite sex. It is also a time when the individual decides what it means to be male or female. In developing a sexual identity, the adolescent may become unsure of himself or herself and engage in early sexual activities or withdraw from any sexual encounter (Erikson, 1968).

Ideological Commitment vs. Confusion of Values. The adolescent is faced with a system of ideals. Thus, the adolescent must combine the past and present together with future aspirations to form an ideological stance. In the absence of an ideological commitment the adolescent suffers a confusion of values.

### Identity Diffusion

Identity diffusion involves a fragmented self-image and results from an unsuccessful resolution of the identity crisis (Erikson, 1968). The diffused adolescent is unable to relinquish the parents as psychosexual objects, relinquish childhood ideology based on one's position as a taker, and relinquish the imagined possibilities of multiple, glamorous life styles. Moreover, these adolescents have difficulty giving up the certainties of the past for the uncertainty of the future (Marcia, 1980).

### Identity Foreclosure

Identity foreclosure results from the traumatic and unresolved conflicts of previous stages. The adolescent is therefore unable to achieve a sense of personal identity. Since there is no developing sense of the self as unique, the adolescent's identity may become permanently foreclosed and the adolescent may never develop a personal philosophy of life (Erikson, 1968).

### Identity Moratorium

In identity moratorium, the adolescent delays stepping into adulthood. For Erikson (1968), identity moratorium is a healthy period for those adolescents not yet ready to accept adult responsibility. Such adolescents

engage in "provocative playfulness" that later leads to a deep commitment regarding goals and values.

#### Summary

Erikson's (1950, 1959, 1968) psychosocial theory of human development emphasizes the concept of identity as the common theme involving changes in personality from birth to death. For Erikson (1956), human development is viewed as ". . . a gradual unfolding of the personality through phase-specific psychosocial crises" (p. 74). Human development is thus a continuous process whereby the individual must master a central task in each phase of development before moving on to the next psychosocial stage. The period of adolescence contains the most crucial psychosocial crisis because ego identity processes either crystallize or remain diffused. Ego identity involves the process of testing, selecting, and integrating self-images derived from previous psychosocial crises given the adolescent's social environment (Stark & Traxler, 1974). The adolescent confronts the task of bringing together the many elements of his or her experience into a coordinated, clear self-definition while gaining recognition as a productive member of society (Newman & Newman, 1978).

Erikson (1968) theorized that the individual does not develop in vacuo but is constantly being influenced by the social environment which plays an integral part in personality development. The individual's drives and instincts are satisfied and maintained in the presence of other people. The unique potential of each individual is therefore manifested in the presence of those around him or her and involves the mutual accommodation of family and child.

In the first stage (trust vs. mistrust) of development, the infant is dependent upon significant others to assure his or her survival. If the infant's needs are satisfied on a regular basis by the caretaker(s), the infant learns trust in self as well as others. If the infant's needs are not satisfied on a regular basis, the infant learns not to trust oneself or those around him or her. Consequently, the infant becomes insecure and fearful (Erikson, 1968).

In the second stage (autonomy vs. shame/doubt) of development, the child learns to become a creative, autonomous individual if he or she is permitted to explore and to exercise his or her own will. If the child is not permitted to explore and develop a sense of mastery over tasks, the outcome can result in low self-esteem and self-consciousness (Erikson, 1968).

The child becomes more exploratory and curious in the third stage (initiative vs. guilt) of development. If the family provides a secure environment for the child to explore and satisfy his or her curiosity, the child learns ambition and goal directedness. Otherwise, the child learns fear and guilt due to inhibition at this stage. The child learns to depend heavily on adults as well (Erikson, 1968).

In the fourth stage (industry vs. inferiority) of development, the child desires to make things. If the child's efforts are encouraged and recognized by significant others, the child learns to accomplish tasks. If the child's efforts are unnoticed by significant others, the child may develop a feeling of uselessness and a sense of futility (Erikson, 1968).

The interaction between the individual and the social environment is a major contribution of Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory. Moreover, it supports the thesis that the social settings with which an individual interacts on a daily basis serve as an important determinant of his or her psychological growth and development, his or her adaptation or maladaptation (Newman, 1976). Since the family continues to be the most important social context for the adolescent, it is important to understand the family processes that contribute to the adolescent's ability to select and direct the course of his or her adult life (Newman & Murray, 1983).

According to Erikson (1968), identity development is influenced by child-rearing experiences. Erikson further proposed that identity development is a process of increasing differentiation. In order for qualitative growth in ego identity development to occur, the adolescent must have options from which to choose and a family that values self-direction and internal control rather than conformity and obedience to external authority.

From a structural perspective, identity development is facilitated by a balance between family connectedness and the encouragement of individuality. Furthermore, ego identity formation is promoted in families that are willing to renegotiate family rules and roles according to the adolescent's needs. According to Minuchin (1974), dysfunctional families continually fail to adapt to the developmental needs of its members.

### Structural Family Systems Theory

Structural family systems theory views the family as both a whole and a part. For Minuchin and Fishman (1981), "each whole contains the part, and each part also contains the program that the whole imposes" (p. 13). The family is influenced by the adolescent's process of identity formation. The family experiences developmental stress as a result of the adolescent's needs. The family responds to the

developmental stress by either altering its structure to accommodate the adolescent's needs or by maintaining the old structure and hindering the process of identity formation. By the same token, the adolescent's identity formation reflects the input he or she receives from the family in particular and the culture in general. Erikson (1968) thus evolved a concept of identity as the merging of past identifications, future aspirations, and contemporary cultural values.

The present study approached and conceptualized adolescent ego identity formation from a structural family systems perspective as described above. However, the unit of analysis was linear as it was only the adolescent's perception of his or her family system that was measured in this study.

Structural family systems theory has stressed the importance of concepts such as boundary, alignment, power, and hierarchy. Each and every family transaction has three structural dimensions: boundary, alignment and power (Aponte & VanDeusen, 1981). The present study focused on one aspect of the boundary dimension in family transactions. More specifically, cohesion and adaptability were used to reflect an emphasis on the boundary dimension in family transactions. In describing a family along the cohesion and adaptability dimension, one is addressing questions of differentiation among and between individuals in a family and

the family's ability to change rules and roles in response to situational and developmental stress.

Since the adolescent, in developing ego identity, is dependent upon the family to accommodate his or her needs, the structural variables of cohesion and adaptability have implications for adolescent ego identity formation. These variables have implications for the role experimentation and exploration that is necessary for adolescent identity development, especially since the adolescent is dependent upon a secure family environment to develop the self-confidence and autonomy that permit him or her to develop a personal philosophy of life.

The theoretical and clinical literature in family therapy has emphasized cohesion and adaptability as the two central properties of family structure. Olson, Sprenkle, and Russell (1979) defined cohesion as "the emotional bonding members have toward one another and the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system" (p. 5). There are four levels of family cohesion, ranging from disengaged (very low) to separated (low to moderate) to connected (moderate to high) to enmeshed (very high). At the extreme of high family cohesion, enmeshment, there is excessive closeness and restricted individual autonomy that prevent individuation of family members. The low extreme, disengagement, is distinguished by little attachment or

commitment to the family and high levels of autonomy that result in emotional, intellectual, and/or physical isolation from the family (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979; Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1983).

Similarly, Minuchin (1974) labeled the opposite ends of the cohesion dimension as "enmeshed" and "disengaged". Dysfunctional families are viewed as being either too enmeshed (lacking necessary subsystem differentiation) or disengaged (lacking necessary subsystem connection). Moreover, parents and children are likely to be overly involved in an enmeshed family while they have too little to do with each other in a disengaged family.

Family adaptability is defined as "the ability of a marital or family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress" (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979, p. 12). Family adaptability has four levels extending from rigid (very low) to structured (low to moderate) to flexible (moderate to high) to chaotic (very high). When adaptability levels are low (rigid systems), families are unable to change even though it appears necessary. At the other extreme (chaotic systems), families make radical changes (too much change) that also result in problems dealing with stress (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979; Russell, 1979).

Minuchin (1974), a major proponent of structural family therapy, stressed the importance of the family cohesion dimension at various stages of the family life cycle. For example, a healthy family that is enmeshed during the early child rearing years will move toward disengagement during adolescence. In dysfunctional families, there is a persistent failure to adapt to the developmental needs of its members.

Structural family systems theory is composed of three essential constructs: structure, subsystems, and boundaries. Family structure is a deterministic concept that refers to "the invisible set of functional demands that organizes the ways in which family members interact" (Minuchin, 1974, p. 51). Family structure does not prescribe or legislate behaviors. It does however describe sequences that are predictable and repeated over time to form family transactional patterns. Family transactional patterns determine how, when, and to whom family members relate. Family structure consists of a set of implicit rules which govern family transaction (Nichols, 1984).

Family structure is shaped by both universal and idiosyncratic forces. For instance, all families have some type of hierarchical organization that bequeaths parents and children different amounts of authority. Moreover, family members have reciprocal and complementary functions. Family

structure is contingent upon the unique history of each family. Transactional patterns in the family promote expectations that determine future responses (Nichols, 1984).

The family system is differentiated into subsystems of individuals who join together to perform various tasks. Each individual is a subsystem and each subsystem is both a part and a whole. Subsystems may be determined by generation, gender, or mutual interests. Individual family members play many roles in several subgroups (Minuchin & Fishman, 1981; Nichols, 1984).

Interpersonal boundaries determine the individual, the subsystem, and the family group. Boundaries are those invisible barriers that surround individuals and subsystems and regulate the amount of contact with others. They function to defend the separateness and autonomy of the family system and its subsystems. Subsystems which are not sufficiently protected by boundaries restrict the development of interpersonal skills achievable in these subsystems (Nichols, 1984).

Interpersonal boundaries range from being rigid to diffuse. Rigid boundaries are overly restrictive and grant little contact with the outside world, resulting in disengagement. Disengaged individuals or subsystems are generally isolated and autonomous. On the positive side, disengagement fosters independence, growth and mastery. The

negative consequence of disengagement is limited warmth, affection, and nurturance (Nichols, 1984).

Enmeshed subsystems provide an increased sense of mutual support, but at the expense of individuation and separation. Enmeshed parents discourage their children from developing their own resources. Thus, enmeshed children learn to rely on their parents and to be dependent. These children are less comfortable by themselves and may be impaired in their dealings with people outside the family (Nichols, 1984).

#### Summary

Structural family theory posits four main developmental stages around which the family must reorganize to accommodate the needs of its individual members. These stages are organized around the growth of children, including couple formation, families with young children, families with adolescent children, and families with adult children. In the third stage, families with adolescent children, issues of autonomy and control must be renegotiated on all levels. Moreover, the process of separation begins at this stage, requiring the family system to move toward disengagement in order to facilitate the adolescent's emancipation from the family (Minuchin & Fishman, 1981).

The adolescent's task of establishing a personal identity implies changes in family functioning. The family system must alter its structure to create room for the adolescent's identity exploration without losing either its own continuity or its affective function for the adolescent (Bosma & Gerrits, 1985). Overall, structural theory argues that functional and dysfunctional families are determined by the adequacy of the fit of a family's structural organization to the requirements and needs of its members (Aponte & VanDeusen, 1981; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981). Dysfunctional families therefore fail to adapt to the inevitable changes of individual members in a way that preserves family continuity while facilitating restructuring (Unbarger, 1983).

### Erikson's Psychosocial Theory and Structural Family Systems Theory

Erikson's psychosocial theory and structural family systems theory are two major theories that lend understanding to the adolescent process. Erikson's psychosocial theory is important because it describes the identity crisis that an adolescent must experience before achieving adulthood. Psychosocial theory is also important because it stresses that identity formation is not an exclusive product of adolescence since it involves a structural synthesis and resynthesis of childhood identifications and experiences.

Structural family systems theory is important because it helps to understand the psychosocial context in which the adolescent's developing sense of identity is constructed. Both psychosocial theory and structural family systems theory view development from a life span perspective. While psychosocial theory focuses primarily on the tasks that the individual must accomplish at each stage of development, structural theory focuses on the changes that the family must make along the developmental life cycle in order to accommodate the needs of its individual members.

#### Rationale and Hypotheses

A voluminous amount of research on ego identity has appeared over the last two decades. Studies have included many variables that can be grouped under the broad headings of cognitive, behavioral, personality, and developmental (Bourne, 1978a). Yet there is an absence of considerations of the family system in the work on identity formation. A family systems perspective can contribute to understanding the role of the broader family configuration in the process of identity achievement. That is, a family systems perspective can contribute to understanding the complementary relationship that exists between the adolescent and his or her family with each simultaneously influencing the other. In addition to the parents' influence on the adolescent's

identity development, changes in the adolescent may promote changes in the parents, siblings, or family rules. Thus, a systems perspective can aid in understanding the role of the family as a unit, not just the adolescent (Newman & Murray, 1983).

Families possess a shared paradigm (Reiss & Oliveri, 1980) that influences family members in their responses to new or changing situations, such as the advent of adolescence. The family itself appears to have an identity as evidenced by family rules. Family rules govern the group and determine the extent to which family members are permitted to interact outside of the family unit as well as provide norms for interacting within the family unit (Kantor & Lehr, 1975).

Since family structure is hypothesized to be an important predictor of the psychological adjustment of individual family members, it was expected that family structure would be a significant predictor of adolescent ego identity achievement. In addition to family structure, it was expected that age, sex, high school curriculum, and self-esteem would have predictive utility for the adolescent's development of ego identity. The variables: age, sex, and self-esteem were included in this study because they were supported in the literature on ego identity. The variable, high school curriculum, was included because the

literature supported a relationship between ego identity and academic motivation.

Although structural theory has proposed a relationship between the individual's personal identity and the social context of the family, there were no studies in the literature reviewed that approached ego identity formation from the structural family systems framework. Thus, the present study approached identity formation from a family structural perspective.

The research question that was addressed in this study was whether a relationship existed between ego identity development and family structure after controlling for age, sex, high school curriculum, and self-esteem. Three multiple regression models were tested sequentially. The hypothesis that was tested in the first model stated that there is a relationship between ego identity status and the demographic variables of age, sex, and high school curriculum. The model was as follows:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$$

where  $Y$  = ego identity status

$X_1$  = age

$X_2$  = sex

$X_3$  = high school curriculum

For the second model, the hypothesis that was tested stated that there is a relationship between ego identity status and

self-esteem after controlling for age, sex, and high school curriculum. The model was as follows:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4$$

where  $Y$  = ego identity status

$X_1$  = age

$X_2$  = sex

$X_3$  = high school curriculum

$X_4$  = self-esteem

In the third model, the hypothesis that was tested stated that there is a relationship between ego identity status and family structure after controlling for age, sex, high school curriculum, and self-esteem. The model was as follows:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5$$

where  $Y$  = ego identity status

$X_1$  = age

$X_2$  = sex

$X_3$  = high school curriculum

$X_4$  = self-esteem

$X_5$  = family structure

Further discussion of the regression models, including the various subscales of the variables, will occur in the third chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of the Literature

The following review examined the process of ego identity formation in adolescence. The empirical research will be presented according to the type of variable explored in relation to the adolescent's developing sense of ego identity. Since James Marcia's (1966) concept of "identity statuses" dominated empirical research on ego identity after its introduction (Bourne, 1978b), a summary of the identity status paradigm will be presented first.

#### The Identity Status Paradigm

After becoming dissatisfied with existing measures of ego identity, Marcia (1966) developed the Identity Status Interview. For Marcia, none of the existing measures dealt explicitly with the psychosocial criteria for determining ego identity as espoused by Erikson. Marcia thus proposed two psychosocial criteria for ego identity formation: (a) the adolescent has experienced a period of crisis and role experimentation, and (b) has subsequently made basic life commitments which serve both to complete his or her personal identity and to promote his or her acceptance by society.

The Identity Status Interview is a semistructured interview that focuses on the adolescent's degree of crisis

and commitment. The interview is divided into three areas, each of which attempts to discover the adolescent's past or present experience of crisis and his or her commitment to work, politics, and religion. The Identity Status Interview determines which identity status characterizes the adolescent. The four identity statuses describe the various response patterns to the identity crisis of adolescence. The statuses may be regarded as different degrees along a continuum, ending in identity formation. According to Marcia (1966), the identity statuses are:

1. Identity diffusion is the status that results when the adolescent fails to make basic life commitments. Moreover, the adolescent appears apathetic and confused with respect to making a vocational and/or ideological commitment.

2. Identity foreclosure is the status reserved for those adolescents having achieved an identity through assimilation of parental standards, values, and ideology without prior crisis or role experimentation.

3. Identity moratorium is the status used to describe the adolescent who is presently in a state of crisis, exploring alternative commitments, and has not yet made up his or her mind.

4. Identity achievement is the status that represents successful resolution of the identity crisis. The adolescent has made a vocational and ideological commitment.

#### Personality Correlates

A number of investigators have explored the relationship between ego identity and various personality constructs. The five personality characteristics that received the most attention were: (a) authoritarianism, (b) anxiety, (c) internal-external locus of control, (d) cooperativeness-competitiveness, and (e) self-esteem (Bourne, 1978a).

From his review of the literature on identity status, Bourne (1978a) discovered that the most highly replicated finding was that foreclosure subjects scored significantly higher than the other statuses on measures of authoritarianism (Marcia, 1966; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Matteson, 1974; Schenkel & Marcia, 1972). Marcia (1966) sampled 86 college males. Marcia and Friedman (1970) used college females in their study, and Matteson's (1974) subjects were 99 Danish youth, age 17-18. Schenkel and Marcia (1972) studied both males and females in their research. A subscale (authoritarian submission and conventionality) of the California F Scale was used to measure authoritarianism in all of these studies and the Identity Status Interview was used to determine subject's status.

Foreclosures tended to retain a strong identification with parental standards and values and were therefore more likely to endorse statements favoring obedience, loyalty to conventional societal standards, and respect for authority. To the contrary, moratorium subjects scored significantly lower in authoritarianism than the other statuses.

In studying ego identity and anxiety, Marcia (1966, 1967) and Mahler (1969) employed the Welsh Anxiety Scale in their survey of college males. Both researchers concluded that moratorium subjects scored significantly higher than the other statuses. Similarly, Oshman and Manosevitz (1974) found that moratorium college males tended to score significantly higher than the other statuses on the MMPI Pt scale. However, among college females, identity diffusion subjects scored significantly higher on the Welsh Anxiety Scale than the other statuses (Marcia & Friedman, 1970). Again the Identity Status Interview was used to determine subject's status in each of the above studies.

Kroger (1985) studied intrapsychic structures underlying Marcia's ego identity statuses in terms of separation-individuation patterns. Marcia's Ego identity Status Interview and Hansburg's Separation Anxiety Test were administered to 80 female and 60 male students at a New Zealand university. The findings indicated that subjects in

the high statuses demonstrated less anxious attachment, reflecting greater intrapsychic differentiation.

Waterman, Buebel, and Waterman (1970) used Rotter's Internal-External Scale to assess locus of control in college males. They found that subjects high in ego identity scored significantly higher in internal control than those low in ego identity. Neuber and Genthner (1977) sampled 49 male and female college students in a study designed to evaluate the relationship between ego identity and psychological adjustment. The Identity Status Interview was used to establish subject's status. Intrapersonal adjustment was measured by Genthner's Personal Responsibility Scale, and interpersonal adjustment was measured by Carhuff's levels of facilitation. The overall results pointed to identity achievers and moratoriums taking more personal responsibility for their lives than either foreclosure or diffuse subjects.

Podd, Marcia, and Rubin (1970) explored the relationship between identity status and behavior in a prisoner's dilemma game. Half of the participants were told that they were playing with a peer (another student) and half with an authority (professor). Although no significant differences in competitive or cooperative responses appeared among the four identity statuses under either condition, the study yielded behavioral evidence for the hypothesized ambivalence of moratoriums. Moratorium subjects were more

cooperative with peers than authority figures, yet showed a tendency to match their responses to those of the person with whom they played, reflecting needs for both rebellion and conformity.

Although it has been difficult to demonstrate consistent differences in self-esteem among the four identity statuses (Bourne, 1978a), self-esteem is generally regarded as an important resource in achieving a sense of personal identity (Grotevant, 1983). In his original study, Marcia (1966) discovered no differences among the four identity statuses using the DeCharms and Rosenbaum Self-Esteem Questionnaire. Marcia (1967) repeated the study with the added dimension of positive and negative feedback conditions. Still, no significant differences were found regarding self-esteem among the statuses. However, comparisons of average variability of self-esteem, regardless of feedback condition, revealed that foreclosures and diffusions fluctuated considerably more than achievers and moratoriums. Cabin (1966) reported that high identity status college males rated themselves more positively in an ambiguous social situation than low identity status college males. Rosenfeld (1972) found that high identity college males reported

greater self-ideal similarity with self than low identity males.

Marcia and Friedman (1970) found that college female identity achievers scored significantly lower on the Self-Esteem Questionnaire than the other identity statuses. From this finding, the investigators theorized that achieving a separate identity contradicted conventional sex role stereotypes and was likely to alienate female identity achievers from same sex peers. Schenkel and Marcia (1972), however, did not observe low self-esteem among female identity achievers in their study.

Hauser (1976) found a positive correlation between increasing stability of self-image and progress toward identity formation when studying a group of non-psychotic adolescent psychiatric patients and a control group of high school and college students. Orlofsky (1977) was unable to differentiate among the statuses with regard to self-esteem for either college males or females.

Bunt (1968) sampled 109 high school males and discovered a greater discrepancy among identity diffused subjects with respect to self-concept and their perceptions of how they were perceived by others. LaVoie (1976) administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale to 120 middle-class white high school students. The findings

revealed that self-concept was more positive among the high identity statuses.

In summarizing the research on ego identity and personality correlates, the most consistent finding was that foreclosed adolescents scored higher on measures of authoritarianism and moratorium adolescents scored lower than the other identity status adolescents. High identity status adolescents tended to be less anxious and to have greater self-esteem despite inconsistent findings. High identity status adolescents also demonstrated more internal control and assumed more responsibility for their lives than low identity status adolescents.

### Cognitive Differences

Marcia (1966), in studying differences in intelligence among the identity statuses for 86 college males, found no significant differences. In a subsequent study with 49 college female seniors, Marcia and Friedman's (1970) findings were consistent with Marcia (1966). Both studies used the Shipley-Hartford Intelligence Scale as a measure of intelligence. Schenkel (1975) tested 55 college female seniors using the Ghiselli Analysis of Relationship Test as a measure of IQ but failed to show a significant relationship between identity status and intelligence.

However, a relationship between ego identity and academic achievement was supported in the literature. Cross and Allen (1970), controlling for scholastic aptitude in 81 college males, reported a significant relationship between ego identity status and grade point average. Orlofsky (1977), using the TAT with 111 male and female college students, discovered that achievers and moratoriums displayed higher achievement motivation than foreclosed and diffused subjects. Further analyses of the data revealed that fear of success was greatest among high identity females and low identity males.

Berzonsky (1985) studied 98 first semester college freshmen across six semesters. The Identity Status Interview and an index of conceptual level were administered to the participants. SAT scores were available for all the participants. The hypothesized relationship between diffusion and academic underachievement was not supported by the data. However, a significant association was found between foreclosure and underachievement among college males and females.

Hurtig, Petersen, Richards, and Gitelson (1985) explored the relationship between ego functioning and two areas of operational thinking (social-interpersonal reasoning and physical-mathematical reasoning) in 139 high school seniors. The Sentence Completion Test was used as a measure

of ego development. Physical-mathematical reasoning was measured by the Equilibrium-in-a-Balance Test and the License Plates Test. Social-interpersonal reasoning was measured by the Interpersonal Awareness Scale and the Interpersonal Perception Scale. The results yielded significant differences between males and females in the correlations among ego functioning, social-interpersonal reasoning, and physical-mathematical reasoning. For females, ego functioning was predicted by interpersonal reasoning. For males, ego functioning was predicted by physical-mathematical reasoning and verbal intelligence.

In summary, research failed to substantiate a relationship between ego identity and intelligence. Research, however, revealed a relationship between ego identity and academic achievement. Furthermore, high identity adolescents were found to have higher academic motivation than their low identity counterparts.

### Sex Differences

The single area concentrated on most by researchers was the difference between males and females in their movement toward identity formation (Bernard, 1981). Douvan and Adelson (1966) reported that identity formation was more related to the process of affiliation in women than in men. This finding was based on a representative, middle-class population of the late 1950s. Bell (1969) reported that

identity formation was related to occupational choice for males. ✓ Matteson (1972) reported that more females than males seemed to undergo an exploration of sexual identity.

✓ According to Matteson (1975), the path toward identity formation in males reflected the cultural expectation of autonomy and personality differentiation, whereas in females it reflected the cultural expectation that intimate relationships should be established. Josselson, Greenberger, and McConochie (1977) also found that the process of identity formation in females was facilitated by the establishment of interpersonal relationships while males focused on issues related to autonomy. ✓ Orlofsky (1977), in studying the relationship between sex role orientation, identity formation, and self-esteem, found that masculine traits such as autonomy and assertiveness were more crucial to identity formation than feminine traits such as understanding and warmth. Gilligan (1982) reported sex differences in patterns of both personal identity and moral reasoning. Females emphasized connection with others in offering self-descriptions and solutions to moral dilemmas, whereas males emphasized personal autonomy on such issues.

✓ Fitch and Adams (1983) administered the Identity Status Interview and the Intimacy Interview in 78 college students. The study evaluated the identity-intimacy relationship over a one year period. The findings indicated

that the moratorium status was more stable for females and the achievement status was more stable for males. Moreover, moratorium and achievement statuses were indicative of deeper levels of intimacy, regardless of sex. Another finding of this study indicated that occupational identity in males and religious identity in females contributed most to advanced intimacy. Overall, the study provided support for the thesis that males and females negotiate the psychosocial tasks of adolescence in a different manner.

✓ Selva and Dusek (1984) examined the relative influence of masculinity and femininity with regard to resolution of the Eriksonian crises. The Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) and the Industry versus Inferiority and Identity versus Identity Diffusion scales from Constantinople's Inventory of Psychosocial Development (IPD) were administered to 404 college students. The results revealed that the androgynous subjects had the highest mean scores on the IPD scales, with the masculine, feminine, and undifferentiated subjects scoring progressively lower. The data supported the argument that an androgynous sex role leads to better adjustment. Further analyses of the data indicated that the masculine component of the sex role was a better predictor of resolution of the two crises.

Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, and Nielsen (1985) conducted three related studies to test the relationship

between identity status, personality, and conformity behavior. Study I consisted of 80 college students and employed the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS), Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Style (TAIS), and the Asch conformity task. Study II was designed to assess the reliability between the Identity Status Interview and the OM-EIS. One hundred thirty-eight college freshmen participated in the second study. Study III was made up of 84 subjects. The OM-EIS, Dilemmas Test for College Students (DCIS), California Psychological Inventory, and a peer rating scale were the assessment tools employed in this study. An analysis of the data from studies I and III suggested that identity status differences existed on personality and social behavior indices. Diffusion subjects were most affected by peer pressure conformity while identity achieved subjects tended to engage in conformity behavior for achievement gains. Furthermore, the results indicated similarity of identity formation to social behavior for both males and females.

✓ Schiedel and Marcia (1985) administered the Identity Status Interview, Intimacy Interview, and the Bem Sex Role Inventory to 40 college males and 40 college females. The results indicated that identity was related to masculinity and intimacy was related to femininity for both males and females. Also, a greater number of females than males were

in the higher intimacy statuses.

In summary, males and females demonstrated different patterns of identity formation. For males, occupational choice was a better predictor of ego identity. For females, ego identity was related more to intimate relationships. For both males and females, identity was regarded as a masculine trait while intimacy was viewed as a feminine trait.

### Age Differences

A number of studies have explored the relationship between age and identity formation. Stark and Traxler (1974) hypothesized that youth ranging in age from 17-20 would have lower ego identities than youth ranging in age from 21-24. The Dignan Ego Identity Scale was used to measure ego identity in 507 subjects. Significant differences occurred with respect to ego identity across age and grade. Thus, the hypothesis that identity becomes more crystallized in later adolescence was supported by the data. Protinsky (1975) measured 203 subjects, ranging in age from 13-24, on Rasmussen's Ego Identity Scale. Older adolescents were found to have significantly higher identity than younger adolescents. LaVoie (1976), testing 120 high school students, using the Identity Status Interview, Meilbrun Masculinity-Femininity Scale, Erikson Measure of Personality Development, Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, and a

questionnaire adapted from the Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire, found that subjects scored higher in ego identity with age as well. However, the increase in ego identity with age was not found to be statistically significant.

Meilman (1979) discovered large increases in identity with age when studying 25 white males in five age groups (12, 15, 18, 21, and 24). Moreover, the percentage of subjects in the achievement status increased with age, whereas subjects in the diffusion status decreased with age. Adams and Jones (1983) sampled 82 females from 10th, 11th, and 12th grades with regard to identity status development. The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Scales was used to define identity status for subjects. Age difference comparisons indicated that middle adolescence was not a period of identity crystallization.

Freilino and Hummel (1985) studied the relationship between Fear of Success (FOS) and Identity Status. Subjects were 40 college females, equally divided into two groups of regular age college females (18-23) and adult college females (over 30). Fear of Success was assessed using a multiple-choice and a projective measure, and identity status was determined by a semistructured interview. The findings indicated that adult students exhibited less FOS than their college age counterparts. Also, a significantly higher

proportion of the adult college subjects was classified as identity achieved and a lower proportion as identity diffused than college age subjects.

Whitbourne and Tesch (1985) investigated the effect of college graduation on the identity and intimacy crises using Waterman and Waterman's Identity Status Interview and the Intimacy Status Interview. Ninety-three college seniors and 66 alumni from the same university participated in the study. As hypothesized, alumni were characterized by more mature psychosocial development in the identity and intimacy crises than college seniors.

Protinsky and Wilkerson (1986) examined the relationship between ego identity, formal operations, and egocentrism in adolescents, ranging in ages from 13-24. A significant positive relationship was found between grade and ego identity, indicating that identity becomes more finalized during late adolescence.

In summarizing the research on age and ego identity, age was found to be positively correlated with ego identity. Ego identity was therefore higher in older adolescents than in younger adolescents. The process of establishing an identity begins in early adolescence but identity achievement occurs in later adolescence or early adulthood.

### Racial Differences

Hauser (1972) compared identity formation in 22 lower class black and white high school males over a period of three years. The subjects were asked to sort self-descriptive statements according to eight different types of self-images. The intercorrelation among sorts within any year was referred to as the "structural integration" of identity, whereas the intercorrelation between two sorts of the same type between two or more successive years was called the "temporal stability" of identity. The results yielded clear racial differences for both variables. Blacks were identified as foreclosed because of little variability among sorts within or between years while whites demonstrated progressive movement toward identity formation.

McClain (1975), in a cross-cultural study, explored the degree of success related to the first six Eriksonian psychosocial crises. The Self-Description Blank, a 70-item scale designed to measure the proportion of success to failure for each of the first six psychosocial stages, was administered to 2,609 subjects. The subjects selected from the various communities were as follows: Brussels, Belgium (400); Munich, Germany (447); white Knoxville, Tennessee (420); black Knoxville, Tennessee (310); Charleville-Mezieres, France (398); and Malaga, Spain (634). The subjects ranged in age from 12-18. The results of this

study revealed that the subjects from Brussels, Munich, and white Knoxville had higher mean scores on each of the six measures than those from black Knoxville, Charleville-Mezieres, and Malaga. Thus, the higher scoring subjects were more successful in resolving the first six Eriksonian psychosocial crises than their lower scoring counterparts.

In summary, racial differences were found to be associated with ego identity development. Blacks were identified as identity foreclosed while whites demonstrated progressive movement toward identity achievement. Overall, whites tended to be more successful than blacks in resolving Eriksonian psychosocial crises.

#### Interpersonal Relations and Intimacy

Research indicated that subjects in the identity achiever and moratorium statuses had more satisfactory interpersonal relationships. Orlofsky, Marcia, and Lesser (1973), utilizing the Identity Status Interview, Intimacy Interview, and Edwards Personal Preference Schedule scales, assigned subjects to one of five intimacy statuses and then compared subjects' intimacy statuses with subjects' identity statuses. Fifty-three college males participated in the study. The investigators concluded that a significantly greater proportion of subjects in the high identity statuses

were also in the high intimacy statuses (intimate and preintimate). On the other hand, a greater number of foreclosure and diffusion subjects were in the stereotyped and pseudo-intimate statuses (low intimacy). Further, subjects in the identity diffused status appeared more often in the isolate status (lack of relationships).

Marcia (1976) administered the Intimacy Interview to 86 males who had completed the Identity Status Interview in his original study. Marcia found that more than half of the subjects previously rated as high identity were presently high in intimacy status. Of those subjects previously rated as low identity, three-fourths were presently in low intimacy statuses. Thus, the data supported the connection between identity achievement and interpersonal intimacy (Bourne, 1978a).

Fitch and Adams (1983) conducted a one year longitudinal study to assess the identity-intimacy relationship in 78 male and female college undergraduates. The Identity Status Interview and the Intimacy Interview were used to measure subjects' statuses on the two psychosocial constructs. An analysis of the data revealed that identity formation maintained a trend for time-lagged and concurrent associations with intimacy development. Occupational identity was the most noticeable factor that contributed to advanced intimacy in males, whereas religious identity was

more influential with respect to advanced intimacy in females.

Overall, identity and intimacy have been found to be significantly related. High identity subjects were found to also be high in intimacy. By the same token, low identity subjects scored low in intimacy.

### Peer Influences

According to Newman (1976), social settings serve as an important determinant of the individual's pattern of psychosocial growth and development. Thus, the social setting becomes an important unit for analysis when studying the individual.

Clasen and Brown (1985) obtained data from 689 adolescents (grades 7-12) in their investigation of the process of peer influence in adolescent socialization and identity development. The respondents were all identified by peers as belonging to one of their school's major peer groups through a modified version of Schwendinger and Schwendinger's Social Type Rating (STR) procedure. Respondents completed a self-report questionnaire measuring perceptions of peer pressure in five areas of behavior: (a) involvement with peers; (b) school environment; (c) family involvement; (d) conformity to peer norms; and (e) misconduct. The results revealed significant variation in the degree and direction

of peer pressures. Perceived pressures toward peer involvement were especially strong, whereas peer pressures regarding misconduct were relatively weak. Across grades, adolescents perceived less pressures from friends toward conformity to peer norms and increased pressures to engage in misconduct. Perceived peer pressures regarding family involvement were community specific. Of the major crowd types, jock-populars perceived stronger peer pressures toward school and family involvement, and less pressures toward misconduct when compared to druggie-toughs.

Overall, the findings indicated that peers helped to foster the process of identity formation. For example, peers seemed to promote autonomy development by easing pressures toward conformity to peer norms during the adolescents period.

In preparation for a longitudinal study on the development of antisocial behavior, Snyder, Dishion, and Patterson (1986) studied 210 families with boys in the 4th, 7th, and 10th grades. The study utilized teacher ratings, structured interviews, and various measures of parenting and child behavior and attitudes. An analysis of the data supported the model that family and peers both contributed to the child's performance of antisocial, delinquent behavior. However, the impact of the family and peer group shifted as the child moved from preadolescence to late adolescence.

In general, peers were found to be significant to the adolescent's process of identity achievement. However, the significance of the peer group tended to decrease as the adolescent moved from early to later adolescence.

### Parental Influences

Cushing (1971) obtained data from 147 college males using Marcia's Identity Status Interview and Incomplete Sentences Blank, and Schaefer's Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory. The findings indicated that foreclosed males regarded their parents as accepting and positively involved, yet controlling and possessive. Still, foreclosed males reported feeling very close to their parents. The diffused males viewed their mothers as least possessive and intrusive, whereas fathers were viewed as least accepting and high in rejection and withdrawal. The moratorium males perceived their mothers as intrusive, controlling, inconsistent, and rejecting, whereas fathers were perceived to have moderate positive involvement and acceptance. At the same time, fathers were regarded as moderately rejecting by moratorium males. Finally, identity achievers saw their mothers as moderately accepting and positively involved, whereas fathers were moderately involved but low in acceptance.

LaVoie (1976) administered Marcia's Identity Status Interview and Incomplete Sentences Blank along with an 18-item questionnaire concerning parental behavior to 120 high school students. High identity males reported less control by both parents and more praise from fathers than low identity males. High identity females reported less maternal restriction and more freedom to discuss problems with both parents than low identity females.

Enright, Lapsley, Drivas, and Fehr (1980) undertook two studies to examine parental influences on autonomy and identity development. In the first study, 262 adolescents (7th and 11th grades) completed Kurtine's autonomy measure, Simmon's identity measure, and Elder's questions concerning adolescents' perceptions of their parents' autocratic, democratic, or permissive parenting styles. The second study was a replication of the first with 168 subjects. Across both studies, sex role socialization had a greater impact on autonomy development than did level of parental power or age. For identity development, both age and father's use of democracy were more influential variables.

Adams and Jones (1983), employing the Objective Measure of Ego Identity, studied the relationship between identity status and perceived current parental socialization styles. Subjects were 82 females from 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. The results revealed that moratorium and identity achievement statuses were associated with low maternal

control. Identity achievement was also linked to a moderate degree of maternal encouragement of independence. Diffused subjects reported the highest rating for maternal encouragement of independence, perhaps reflecting perceived lack of maternal involvement.

Litovsky and Dusek (1985) examined the relationship between aspects of child rearing and adolescent self-concept in 130 adolescents from the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades. Data were obtained using Schaefer's Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory and Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory. The investigators found that 9th graders perceived their parents to be less accepting than 7th and 8th graders. Furthermore, high self-esteem subjects perceived their parents as more accepting, using less psychological control, and not overly firm in making and enforcing rules and regulating the child's behavior. The findings supported the argument that optimal self-concept development occurs in an atmosphere of acceptance that grants the adolescent both autonomy and the opportunity to learn competencies.

Smollar and Youniss (1985) administered a one hour questionnaire, covering several aspects of relationships with parents and friends, to 48 adolescents (15-18 years old). Subjects were placed into three groups based on positive and negative adjectives for parent-self relationships. The results indicated that the mother-positive, father-negative

subjects were overly connected and too close to mothers. These adolescents were therefore more likely to experience problems with separation. The mother-negative, father-mixed subjects were also likely to experience problems because of their lack of connectedness. The mother-mixed, father-mixed group seemed to be more conducive to separation of self while remaining connected to the family.

In summary, high identity was associated with a democratic style of parenting. High identity adolescents had parents who were less controlling and more accepting of their need for autonomy. The parents of high identity adolescents encouraged them to learn competencies and to express their opinions.

### Familial Correlates

Himes-Chapman and Hansen (1983) contrasted adolescents in youth homes and mental health institutions to a normal control group with respect to family relations and self-concept. The three instruments employed in the study were Family Environment Scale, Parent-Child Relations Questionnaire, and Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. There were 20 subjects in each of the three groups. The results yielded significant differences in family environments, parent-child relations, and adolescents' self-concepts between the normal control group and the other two groups. The normal group

reported an overall healthier family environment. The adolescents in the normal group perceived more cohesion and unity among family members and had significantly higher self-concepts than adolescents in the other groups.

✓Campbell, Adams, and Dobson (1984) studied the predictive utility of measures of family connectedness and individuality in differentiating among the four identity statuses. Data were obtained from 286 college students and their parents, using the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status and the Parent-Adolescent Relationship Questionnaire. The results indicated that foreclosed subjects were most strongly bonded to their parents and overly dependent upon parents for a self-definition. The family environment of foreclosed subjects was characterized by strong emotional attachment and a low level of independence. By comparison, identity achieved and moratorium subjects were highly attached to their mothers but experienced greater levels of independence from parents. Diffused subjects had the least emotional attachment to their parents but were granted limited independence.

Cooper, Grotevant, and Condon (1983) examined family process correlates of identity formation in 121 families of high school seniors. Families were asked to participate in a decision making task, and the data were then coded for communication behaviors that might reflect family

individuation. The consistent dimensions of family communication that emerged from the data were self-assertion, separateness, permeability, and mutuality. The investigators found that adolescents who were high in identity exploration expressed higher levels of separateness (through disagreements) and permeability (open to viewpoints of others) in the family interaction task. A positive relationship was found between father's expression of mutuality (sensitivity to the needs of others) and high identity exploration in adolescents. High identity exploration adolescents also had fathers who were willing to express separateness to their wives. Thus, the father's openness to the adolescent and his willingness to disagree with his wife provided a context conducive to the adolescent's identity exploration.

Richardson, Galambos, Schulenberg, and Petersen (1984) studied the family environments of 335 early adolescents. Subjects were interviewed twice a year during the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades concerning family affect and closeness, satisfactions and dissatisfactions with the family, family time and activities, and conflict and discipline. The overall results suggested that the parents of the sample adolescents were successful at achieving an appropriate balance of restrictiveness and permissiveness.

✓ Bosma and Gerrits (1985) explored the relationship between family functioning and identity formation. Data were obtained from 27 families (parents and adolescent) observed during a problem solving task. An extended version of the Identity Status Interview was used as a measure of identity status. The investigators discovered that identity achieved adolescents were more autonomous and active in discussions. Also, there was more dialogue in families of identity achieved adolescents.

In summary, the family environment found to be most conducive to the formulation of ego identity was balanced between restrictiveness and permissiveness. Foreclosed adolescents were enmeshed with their parents and relied on parents for a self-definition. Identity achieved and moratorium adolescents were connected to their parents but demonstrated greater levels of independence. High identity adolescents were more active in family discussions. In addition, families of high identity adolescents had more verbal communication.

### Family Structure

Since there were no studies in the literature that examined ego identity from a structural family systems approach, studies were reviewed that explored the relationship between psychological adjustment of adolescents and family structure. In structural family theory, healthy

adolescents have families in which the marital alliance is the primary emotional bond (Teyber, 1981).

Madanes, Dukes, and Harbin (1980) compared families of black, lower-class, male heroin addicts with families of schizophrenics and high achieving normal controls. The findings indicated that heroin addicts were more enmeshed with their parents, and families of heroin addicts reported more reversed hierarchical arrangements and cross generational coalitions. Of the three groups, high achieving normal families had the lowest scores on the Proverb Task, Family Rorschach Test, and Family Hierarchy Test. The results supported the contention that the addict was involved with his family in a way that helped to maintain the addiction.

Kleiman (1981) explored the relationship of family structure to psychosocial health in adolescent males. The study was composed of 20 white intact families with an adolescent male. Adolescents were divided into healthy or maladjusted groups based on their total score on the Offer Self-Image Questionnaire. Kleiman found that healthy families had an effective parental coalition and generational boundaries. Moreover, parents in the healthy group were more involved with each other in a trusting and intimate relationship. These findings supported Minuchin's (1974) hypothesis that the child's positive emotional health was

determined by a parental coalition and the presence of generational boundaries.

Bell and Bell (1982) investigated the relationship between family climate and adolescent functioning. Families were divided into groups based on scores (high and low) obtained by female adolescents on a number of psychological and social measures which reflected general maturity, including Loevinger's measurement of ego development, a sociometric questionnaire, and selected scales from the California Psychological Inventory. Ninety-nine white, middle-class, intact families with two or three children participated in the study. The results indicated that high scoring adolescent females belonged to families that were more cohesive, expressive of feelings, independent, and less organized and controlled. Low scoring adolescent females tended to serve as a scapegoat or to participate in a cross generational coalition.

Maden and Harbin (1983), utilizing the Ferreira-Winter Decision Making Questionnaire and the Madanes Family Hierarchy Test, compared 17 assaultive adolescents and 12 non-assaultive adolescents. The investigators found that reversed generational hierarchies were present more often in families of assaultive adolescents than non-assaultive adolescents. Thus, family structure had implications for

functional and dysfunctional behaviors of individual family members.

Teyber (1983) investigated the relationship between adolescents' perception of their parents' marital coalition and academic success as a college freshman. Subjects were equally divided into two groups of 36 males each. One group consisted of students placed on academic probation, whereas the second group was comprised of passing students. Subjects in the two groups were matched on ethnicity and SAT scores. Academic success was used as a measure of success in separating from the family of origin. Teyber found that subjects reporting a primary marital alliance were more likely to succeed academically. These subjects were also more internal on the Rotter Internal-External Scale.

Fleming and Anderson (1986) studied the relationship between adolescents' self-reported personal adjustment and individuation from family of origin. The study consisted of 126 college students (age 16-21) and employed two sub-scales (Intergenerational Fusion and Intergenerational Triangulation) from the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS), college Maladjustment Scale (MT), Mastery Scale, and Self-Esteem Scale. The results indicated that the adolescent's perceived involvement in the family triangulation process was significantly related to his or her perceptions of self-esteem and mastery.

Long (1986) studied the relationship between family structure and self-esteem. Subjects were 199 college females. Subjects were asked to rate parents' marital happiness on a 6-point scale (very happy to very unhappy). Self-esteem was measured by Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale. The findings revealed that family structure and happiness ratings were significantly related, with those separated as less happy. Self-esteem was significantly related to parental happiness with family structure controlled, but not to family structure when controlling parental happiness. Of the three groups (happy-together, unhappy-together, and separated), the unhappy-together group reported significantly lower self-esteem than the other two groups. Thus, the unhappy-together group had a negative effect on daughter's self-esteem, whereas separation of parents did not.

In summary, healthy functioning adolescents' families were characterized by an effective parental coalition and generational boundaries. Maladjusted adolescents were enmeshed with their parents and participated in cross generational coalitions.

CHAPTER III  
Research Methodology

Sample

The sample for this study consisted of black high school students from the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. The sample was drawn from a high school in a predominantly low income community in the Philadelphia area. Permission to conduct the study in the high school was obtained from the principal. Fifteen out of 67 social studies classes were randomly selected for participation in the study by the chairperson of that department. Cluster sampling was utilized whereby all the members of selected classes were invited to participate.

A total of 277 students participated in the study. Of the 277 participants, data were used from 237. Data from 27 students were discarded for failure to complete the instruments while data from 13 non-black students were discarded due to their small percentage (5.2%).

Instrumentation

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES III). FACES III was used to assess the adolescent's perception of his or her family. FACES III is the third

version in a series of FACES scales (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985). The FACES scales were designed to test the two central dimensions, cohesion and adaptability, of family functioning identified in the Circumplex Model (Olson, Portner, & Bell, 1982).

The Circumplex Model is based on the premise that a curvilinear relationship exists between the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability and effective family functioning. According to the Circumplex Model, effective family functioning is achieved when families are balanced between the dysfunctional extremes of both cohesion and adaptability. A family system is considered balanced when it can experience the extreme levels of cohesion and adaptability when appropriate without remaining at these levels (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979).

Sixteen family types were created by classifying the cohesion and adaptability dimensions into four levels: very low, low to moderate, moderate to high, and very high. The levels form a 4x4 matrix that consists of 16 cells. Each cell describes one possible family type. Of the 16 family types, four reflect balanced levels of cohesion and adaptability, eight are extreme on one dimension and moderate on the other (midrange types), and four represent extreme levels of cohesion and adaptability. Since the eight midrange types are rarely used because families appearing

extreme on one dimension tend to also be extreme on the other, the four central (balanced) and the four extreme types are the most common (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979).

The Circumplex Model is dynamic in that it postulates that changes can occur in family types over time. Families are free to move in any direction that the situation, stage of life cycle, or development of individual members may require (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979).

FACES III is a 20-item, self-report scale containing 10 cohesion items and 10 adaptability items. There are two items for each of the concepts related to cohesion: emotional bonding, supportiveness, family boundaries, time and friends, and interest in recreation. There are also two items for each of the following concepts on the adaptability dimension: leadership, control, and discipline; and four items for the combined concept of roles and rules (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985).

FACES III was designed to measure both perceived (Appendix A) and ideal family functioning. The perceived and ideal scales contain the same items and together yield a measure of family satisfaction (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985). The ideal scale was not used in this study.

FACES III has been normed on 2,453 adults and 412 adolescents across the life span. The items were developed to be readable and understandable to anyone 12 years old or

with a seventh grade reading level. The internal consistency reliability for both cohesion and adaptability is .68. Both face and content validity are reported to be very good. The correlation between cohesion and adaptability is almost zero ( $r = .03$ ), resulting in two clearly independent dimensions. Since the 10 cohesion items are all highly correlated with the total score on cohesion and the 10 adaptability items are all highly correlated with the total adaptability score, it is easier to identify extreme family types. The correlation between adaptability and social desirability is zero.

"Because high cohesion is a characteristic that is more embedded into our culture as an ideal for families, it was not desirable to reduce the correlation between cohesion and social desirability to zero ( $r = .35$ )" (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985, p. 23).

Self-Esteem Scale. The Self-Esteem Scale (Appendix B) is a 10-item Guttman Scale that was developed by Rosenberg (1965) to measure global positive or negative attitudes toward the self. It has been reported to be one of the most frequently used and well validated measures of global self-esteem (McCarthy & Hoge, 1982). The Self-Esteem Scale is unidimensional in that subjects are ranked along a single continuum, ranging from low to high self-esteem. High self-esteem, as reflected in this scale, means that the adolescent respects himself or herself and feels that he or

she is good enough. To the contrary, low self-esteem implies a lack of self-respect, self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction, and self-contempt (Rosenberg, 1965).

The Self-Esteem Scale consists of positive and negative statements presented alternately in order to reduce the danger of respondent set. The Self-Esteem Scale was administered to 5,024 high school juniors and seniors from 10 randomly selected public high schools in New York and found to have internal reliability (Cronbach alpha = .85); reproducibility was 92% and scalability was 72%. The Self-Esteem Scale was also found to have construct validity as evidenced by its high correlation with measures of depression and anxiety (Rosenberg, 1965). For the present study, using Cronbach alpha, internal consistency was .78.

Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS). The revised version of the EOM-EIS is the latest attempt to establish a psychometrically sound self-report measure by building on earlier attempts (Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979; Grotevant & Adams, 1984). The Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS) was developed by Adams, Shea, and Fitch (1979) as an alternative to Marcia's (1966) Ego Identity Status Interview. The OM-EIS was conceptually based on Erikson's (1956) theory of ego identity development and can be used to classify subjects into one of Marcia's (1966) four identity statuses. Marcia's

four identity statuses provide an operationalized measure of Erikson's theory of ego identity development. The OM-EIS has greater flexibility for assessing large numbers of subjects and can easily be administered in groups. The potential for rater bias and interviewer effects has been eliminated with the OM-EIS in comparison to the Ego Identity Status Interview.

The Extended Version of the OM-EIS (EOM-EIS) was designed by Grotevant and Adams (1984) to measure ego identity status in ideological domains (occupation, politics, religion, and philosophical lifestyle) and in interpersonal domains (friendship, dating, sex roles, and recreation). The EOM-EIS therefore broadened the OM-EIS by adding a fourth new dimension of philosophical lifestyle to the original three domains of occupation, politics, and religion and an interpersonal aspect of identity.

The EOM-EIS is composed of 64 items to which a subject responds on a Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The EOM-EIS includes eight items relevant to each of eight domains: occupation, religion, politics, philosophical lifestyle, friendship, dating, sex roles, and recreation. Within each of the eight domains are two items for each of the four identity statuses: achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion.

The EOM-EIS was administered to college students in Texas and Utah in two separate but parallel studies. The Texas sample consisted of 317 college students enrolled in courses in introductory psychology and family relationships. The subjects included 113 males and 204 females. Of the 317 students, there were 195 freshmen, 57 sophomores, 32 juniors, and 24 seniors. Juniors and seniors were combined for data analysis. Internal consistency, using Cronbach alphas, for the ideological and interpersonal scales ranged from .51 to .77 in the Texas sample. The EOM-EIS was therefore found to have acceptable reliability; it was also found to have content, factorial, discriminant, and concurrent validity.

The Utah sample included 274 students in introductory sociology, psychology, child development, family relations, and education courses. Included in the Utah sample were 138 males and 135 females, with 177 freshmen, 50 sophomores, and a total of 46 juniors and seniors. Internal consistency, using Cronbach alphas, ranged from .37 to .77 for the Utah sample on the ideological and interpersonal scales. The EOM-EIS was also reported to have acceptable reliability and validity for the Utah sample.

The revised version of the EOM-EIS was developed by Bennion and Adams (1986) to improve the interpersonal identity domain and to strengthen the overall identification of identity status by the EOM-EIS. The revised version of

the EOM-EIS is a 64-item, self-report measure that contains an ideological scale and an interpersonal scale, each consisting of 32 items. The ideological scale is composed of four content areas (occupation, politics, religion, and philosophical lifestyle) as is the interpersonal scale (friendship, dating, sex roles, and recreation). Each of the eight content areas is measured by eight items, with two items for each of the four identity statuses delineated by Marcia (1966).

One hundred six college students were used to establish reliability and validity for the revised version of the EOM-EIS. Internal consistency, using Cronbach alphas, ranged from .62 to .75 for the four identity statuses on the ideological scale and from .58 to .80 on the interpersonal scale. The revised version of the EOM-EIS showed discriminant, convergent, concurrent, and predictive validities; and correlational analyses with a social desirability scale showed no significant correlations (Bennion & Adams, 1986).

A modified version (Appendix C) of the ideological scale contained in the the revised version of the EOM-EIS was used to measure ego identity. The 32 items that make up the ideological scale were reworded by the author to ensure comprehension by black adolescents in an urban high school. The modified items were agreed upon as having face validity

by three professors in family and child development. Using Cronbach alphas, internal consistency ranged from .55 to .67 in the present study (diffusion = .55, foreclosure = .59, moratorium = .66, and achievement = .67).

### Scoring of Instruments

FACES III. A total score was obtained for cohesion by summing the raw scores on the cohesion dimension and, likewise, for adaptability. The total cohesion score was used to classify adolescents as disengaged (10-31), separated (32-37), connected (38-43), and enmeshed (44-50). Similarly, adolescents were identified by the total score on the adaptability dimension as rigid (10-19), structured (20-24), flexible (25-29), and chaotic (30-50). The total score obtained on both the cohesion and adaptability dimensions was then coded as balanced or extreme (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985).

Self-Esteem Scale. The Self-Esteem Scale was used as a single scale. Since the Self-Esteem Scale could be divided into two factors largely defined by the direction in which the items were stated, reverse coding was used for the negative items to assure its use as a single scale. Using the individual's total raw score, a mean score with a possible range of 1 to 6 was obtained for each individual.

The mean score was used to identify individuals with low (1.0 - 3.5) and high (3.6 to 6.0) self-esteem.

The Revised Version of the EOM-EIS. A total score was obtained for each of the four identity statuses by summing the raw scores for that status. An overall identity status category was then computed for each subject using a series of categorization rules:

1. Subjects with scores greater than or equal to the cutoff point on a given identity status were classified as being in that identity status category if the remaining identity status scores were below their respective cutoff points.
2. Subjects with scores falling below the cutoff points for each of the four identity statuses were placed in a low-profile moratorium category.
3. Subjects with scores greater than or equal to the cutoff point on more than one identity status were categorized as transitional (Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979).

The cutoff points utilized for the present study were those obtained by Grotevant and Adams (1984) in their validation studies of the EOM-EIS. Specifically, the scores obtained on the four identity statuses in the present study were compared with the cutoff points established in the Texas

sample. Further discussion of the present sample in comparison to the Texas sample will occur at the end of this chapter.

### Data Collection

Participating adolescents and their parents were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix E) prior to data collection. The consent form identified the parameters of the adolescent's involvement and assured each participant of confidentiality. Confidentiality of data was assured in that it was impossible to associate individual participants with their responses. Student identification numbers were used to track the questionnaires. The testing measures were administered on a group basis in two sessions with a one-week interval. FACES III and a demographic questionnaire (Appendix D) were administered in the first session and the Self-Esteem Scale and the revised version of the EOM-EIS were administered in the final session.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis consisted of correlational and multiple regression analyses. The correlation matrix was examined to assess the relationship between the variables and to determine the presence of multicollinearity.

For the multiple regression analysis, predictor variables were grouped in three blocks: (a) demographic, (b) personality, and (c) family structure. The blocks were entered in the regression model in the order indicated above. The specific variables in each block were tested sequentially using forward multiple regression at the .05 level of significance. The regression models were as follows:

$$1. Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$$

where  $Y$  = ego identity status

$X_1$  = age

$X_2$  = sex

$X_3$  = high school curriculum

$$2. Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4$$

where  $Y$  = ego identity status

$X_1$  = age

$X_2$  = sex

$X_3$  = high school curriculum

$X_4$  = self-esteem

$$3. Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5$$

where Y = ego identity status

X<sub>1</sub> = age

X<sub>2</sub> = sex

X<sub>3</sub> = high school curriculum

X<sub>4</sub> = self-esteem

X<sub>5</sub> = family structure

For inclusion in the multiple regression model, it was necessary to dummy code the categorical variable of high school curriculum. Self-esteem was entered in the multiple regression model as the mean score obtained on the Self-Esteem Scale. Family structure was defined in two parts: (a) cohesion and (b) adaptability. The total scores for both cohesion and adaptability were then entered into the multiple regression model. The criterion variable, ego identity status, was included in the multiple regression model as the total score obtained on each of the four identity statuses (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement).

A comparison of this study with the Texas sample reported in the validation studies of the EOM-EIS (Grotevant & Adams, 1984) revealed higher cutoff points for the present sample. As Table 1 reveals, the present study contained higher cutoff points for the diffusion, foreclosure, and achievement statuses. No difference was found between the

cutoff points for the moratorium status. The descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and ranges) for these two studies varied slightly. These differences may be due to a number of reasons: (a) the studies were completed in different geographic locations; (b) the Texas study was comprised of college students in comparison to high school students in the present study; and (c) the present study was composed of black students.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges, and Cutoff Points<sup>a</sup> for the  
Four Identity Status Subscales<sup>b</sup>

	<u>Grotevant and Adam's Study</u>				<u>Present Study</u>			
	Mean	SD	Range	Cutoff	Mean	SD	Range	Cutoff
Achievement	32.8	5.3	20-47	38	34.2	6.2	14-48	40
Moratorium	26.5	6.3	8-44	33	27.1	6.1	8-46	33
Foreclosure	19.6	6.3	8-36	26	23.9	5.7	10-39	30
Diffusion	22.1	5.7	10-41	28	25.8	5.7	8-39	32

<sup>a</sup>Cutoff points were obtained by adding the means and standard deviations for the Four Identity Status Scales and rounding the products to the nearest number.

<sup>b</sup>Each subscale ranges from a low of 8 to a high of 48 points.

## CHAPTER IV

### Research Findings and Discussion

#### Description of the Sample

The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES III), the Self-Esteem Scale, the Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM -EIS), and a demographic questionnaire were administered to 237 black high school students in the Philadelphia area. Since the data were collected in two sessions, a follow-up procedure was implemented for students absent during one of the sessions. The follow-up procedure involved arranging a time for students to complete the study.

Age and Sex. Participants ranged in age from 14-20 (see Table 2), with a mean of 16. The mode was 15. Forty-four percent (104) of the sample was male and 56% (133) was female.

High School Curriculum and Grade. The three programs of study offered by the high school were represented with the following percentage of students in each: 58% college preparatory, 29% business education, and 13% vocational. The percentage of students in each of the four grades was: 17% freshmen, 38% sophomores, 23% juniors, and 22% seniors.

Place of Residence and Parents' Marital Status. Forty-six percent of the sampled adolescents lived in

Table 2

Frequency of Age

Age	f	%
14	20	8.4
15	72	30.4
16	68	28.7
17	47	19.8
18	25	10.5
19	4	1.7
20	1	.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>100.0</b>

single-parent families, with the mother as the single parent. Thirty percent of the adolescents lived with both parents. Another 11% resided with the mother and stepfather, while still another 2% resided with the father and stepmother. Six percent reported living with a grandmother and/or grandfather and the remaining 4% reported their residence as "other".

Participants were asked to indicate the current marital status of each parent. For mothers' marital status, the percentages were: 44% married, 32% separated or divorced, 19% single, and 6% other. The percentages for fathers' marital status were: 48% married, 26% separated or divorced, 15% single, and 11% other.

Siblings. Ninety-two percent of the participants reported having siblings. The number of siblings ranged from 1 - 8 and siblings' ages ranged from 1 - 39.

Parents' Educational Attainment and Employment. Mothers' educational attainment was reported as: 65% high school, 4% elementary or middle school, 11% technical-vocational training, 11% some college, 9% completed college, and less than 1% graduate school. Fathers' educational attainment was: 61% high school, 6% middle school, 11% vocational-technical training, 11% some college, 11% completed college, and less than 1% graduate school. The majority of mothers (76%) and fathers (87%) were employed.

### Ego Identity

Participants were classified into identity status groups according to categorization rules (Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979) and specified cutoff points (Grotevant & Adams, 1984). The categorization rules and the cutoff points (see Table 1) were provided in Chapter 3. Six identity status groups were delineated according to the categorization rules: achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, diffusion, low profile moratorium, and transitional. With respect to occupation, politics, religion, and philosophical lifestyle, adolescents in the achievement identity status group demonstrated commitment to a choice based on exploration of alternatives. Moratorium adolescents were currently involved in the exploration of choices but remained uncommitted. Foreclosed adolescents expressed commitment based on little or no exploration of alternatives. Diffused adolescents were neither in the process of exploring nor committed. Low profile moratoriums were similar in exploration and commitment to moratoriums. The low profile moratorium and moratorium groups were therefore combined as the moratorium identity status group (G.R. Adams, personal communication, April 7, 1987). Transitional adolescents represented two identity statuses (e.g., diffusion- foreclosure, moratorium-achievement, etc.).

Frequency of Identity Status Groups. As shown in Table 3, the transitional group contained the greatest

Table 3

Frequency of Identity Status Groups

Identity Status Category	f	%
Achievement	33	13.9
Moratorium	50	21.1
Foreclosure	16	6.8
Diffusion	27	11.4
Transitional	111	46.8
Total	237	100.0

percentage (46.8%) of participants. This is likely due to the present sample consisting of mostly (97.8%) middle adolescents (14-18), especially since middle adolescence has not been found to be a period of identity crystallization (Adams & Jones, 1983).

Contrary to Hauser's (1972) study, black adolescents were not in the identity foreclosed status more often than any other status. Only 6.8% of the present sample was identity foreclosed. Moreover, the large percentage (46.8%) of participants in the transitional group reflects movement toward ego identity development by black adolescents. The difference in findings may be due to expanding opportunities and choices for contemporary black youth in comparison to those in Hauser's study.

The moratorium group accounted for 21.1% of the sample. The achievement identity status group contained 13.9% of the total sample, and the diffusion identity status group was comprised of 11.4% of the sample. In contrasting the high (achievement and moratorium) and low (foreclosure and diffusion) identity statuses, participants were more often in the higher identity statuses (see Table 3).

In summary, an examination of the frequency distribution for the ego identity status groups indicates a general trend toward not finalizing ego identity during middle adolescence. A preponderance of adolescents were in

the transitional and uncommitted status groups which supports Erikson's (1968) thesis that late adolescence is the critical period for solidifying identity.

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Age. In comparing the achievement and diffusion identity statuses, a pattern emerged whereby an increase occurred in the achievement identity status with age followed by a decrease in the diffusion identity status (see Table 4). This pattern was similar to past research that found younger adolescents to be more identity diffused and less identity achieved than older adolescents (LaVoie, 1976; Meilman, 1979; Protinsky, 1975). However, most adolescents were either in the transitional group (46.8%) or the moratorium group (21.1%). Moreover, the majority (79.3%) of adolescents had not yet succeeded in solidifying an identity as evidenced by their membership in the transitional, moratorium, and diffusion groups (see Table 4). In other words, only a small percentage (20.7%) of adolescents were in the committed statuses (achievement and foreclosure). These findings are consistent with those of previous researchers who found that identity becomes finalized in late adolescence (Adams & Jones, 1983; Protinsky & Wilkerson, 1986; Stark & Traxler, 1974).

The relationship between ego identity status groups and age was tested for significance using the chi-square test

Table 4

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Age

	<u>Age</u>					Row Total	Row %
	14	15	16	17	18 <sup>a</sup>		
Achievement	2	8	12	7	4	33	13.9
Moratorium	3	16	16	10	5	50	21.1
Foreclosure	1	5	2	5	3	16	6.8
Diffusion	5	9	6	3	4	27	11.4
Transitional	9	34	32	22	14	111	46.8
Column Total	20	72	68	47	30	237	
Column %	8.4	30.4	28.7	19.8	12.7		100

Note.  $\chi^2(20, N = 237) = 14.416; p > .05.$

<sup>a</sup>Subjects aged 18-20 were combined for chi-square analysis as age 18.

of independence. The result was nonsignificant [ $\chi^2(20, N = 237) = 14.416; p > .05$ ].

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Sex. Females accounted for 78.8% of the achieved identity status in comparison to males (21.2%). Females, in general, were in the higher identity statuses (see Table 5). Grotevant and Adams (1984) also found that females were more identity achieved than males. Similarly, Stark and Traxler (1974) found that females were less identity diffused than males.

The relationship between ego identity status groups and sex was tested for significance using the chi-square test of independence. The result was significant [ $\chi^2(5, N = 237) = 14.482; p < .05$ ].

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Curriculum. The three groups (college preparatory, business education, and vocational) each contained adolescents who were in the higher identity statuses more frequently than those in the lower identity statuses. The high identity statuses were composed of 52 college preparatory students, 21 business education students, and 10 vocational students, whereas the low identity statuses were composed of 29 college preparatory students, 11 business education students, and 3 vocational students. These results are reported in Table 6.

The relationship between ego identity status groups and high school curriculum was tested for significance using

Table 5

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Sex

	Males	Females	Row Total	Row %
Achievement	7	26	33	13.9
Moratorium	17	33	50	21.1
Foreclosure	8	8	16	6.8
Diffusion	16	11	27	11.4
Transitional	56	55	111	46.8
Column Total	104	133	237	
Column %	43.9	56.1		100.0

Note.  $\chi^2(5, N = 237) = 14.482; p < .05.$

Table 6

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Curriculum

	Curriculum			Row Total	Row %
	College Prep	Business Ed	Vocational		
Achievement	24	6	3	33	13.9
Moratorium	28	15	7	50	21.1
Foreclosure	10	6		16	6.8
Diffusion	19	5	3	27	11.4
Transitional	57	36	18	111	46.8
Column Total	138	68	31	237	
Column %	58.2	28.7	13.1		100.0

Note.  $\chi^2(10, N = 237) = 11.148; p > .05.$

the chi-square test of independence. The result was nonsignificant [ $\chi^2(10, N = 237) = 11.148; p > .05$ ].

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Self-Esteem.

Ninety-seven percent of the sample reported high self-esteem regardless of identity status (see Table 7). Of those reporting high self-esteem, the frequencies for the five identity status groups were: 32 achievement, 47 moratorium, 15 foreclosure, 27 diffusion, and 108 transitional. The present investigation is therefore consistent with prior research in that it failed to demonstrate differences in self-esteem among the identity statuses. For example, Marcia (1966) was unable to demonstrate differences among the four identity statuses (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement) using the DeCharms and Rosenbaum Self-Esteem Questionnaire. In a follow-up study using positive and negative feedback conditions, Marcia (1967) again failed to demonstrate differences among the identity statuses on the basis of high and low self-esteem. Orlofsky (1977) also failed to differentiate among the identity statuses with regard to self-esteem for either college males or females.

The relationship between ego identity status groups and self-esteem was tested for significance using the chi-square test of independence. The result was nonsignificant [ $\chi^2(5, N = 236) = 4.381; p > .05$ ].

Table 7

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Self-Esteem

	<u>Self-Esteem</u>		Row Total	Row %
	Low	High		
Achievement	1	32	33	14.0
Moratorium	3	47	50	21.1
Foreclosure	1	15	16	6.8
Diffusion	-	27	27	11.4
Transitional	2	108	110	46.6
Column Total	7	229	236	
Column %	3.0	97.0		100.0

Note.  $\chi^2(5, N = 236) = 4.381; p > .05.$

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Cohesion.

The majority (62.6%) of adolescents perceived their families as having balanced cohesion in comparison to 37.5% who viewed their families as having extreme cohesion (see Table 8). Of the 142 adolescents who reported having balanced family cohesion, there were 22 achievers, 22 moratoriums, 14 foreclosures, 13 diffusions, and 71 transitionals. Of the 85 adolescents in the extreme family cohesion category, there were 11 achievers, 25 moratoriums, 2 foreclosures, 12 diffusions, and 35 transitionals. Overall, no clear pattern evolved concerning identity status and degree of family cohesion.

The relationship between ego identity status groups and cohesion was tested for significance using the chi-square test of independence. The result was nonsignificant [ $\chi^2(10, N = 227) = 16.182; p > .05$ ].

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Adaptability.

Most adolescents (63.3%) perceived their families as balanced on the adaptability dimension in contrast to 36.7% who perceived their families as extreme (see Table 9). Of the 143 adolescents in the balanced group, there were 22 achievers, 35 moratoriums, 9 foreclosures, 16 diffusions, and 61 transitionals. Of the 83 adolescents in the extreme group, there were 10 achievers, 13 moratoriums, 7 foreclosures, 10 diffusions, and 43 transitionals. Thus, the

Table 8

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Cohesion

	Cohesion		Row Total	Row %
	Balanced	Extreme		
Achievement	22	11	33	14.5
Moratorium	22	25	47	20.7
Foreclosure	14	2	16	7.0
Diffusion	13	12	25	11.0
Transitional	71	35	106	46.7
Column Total	142	85	227	
Column %	62.6	37.5		100.0

Note.  $\chi^2(10, N = 227) = 16.182; p > .05.$

Table 9

Frequency of Identity Status Groups by Adaptability

	<u>Adaptability</u>		Row Total	Row %
	Balanced	Extreme		
Achievement	22	10	32	14.2
Moratorium	35	13	48	21.3
Foreclosure	9	7	16	7.1
Diffusion	16	10	26	11.5
Transitional	61	43	104	46.0
Column Total	143	83	226	
Column %	63.3	36.7		100.0

Note.  $\chi^2(10, N = 226) = 12.206; p > .05.$

data failed to indicate a specific pattern regarding identity status and level of family adaptability.

The relationship between ego identity status groups and adaptability was tested using the chi-square test of independence. The result was nonsignificant [ $\chi^2(10, N = 226) = 12.206; p > .05$ ].

The fact that the data failed to reveal a strong trend with respect to extreme levels of cohesion and adaptability and low identity may be related to the strong emphasis on family ties and role flexibility in black families. In a study of black families, Hill (1972) identified the following strengths: adaptability of family roles, strong kinship bonds, and strong work orientation. Hill operationally defined as strengths those traits which facilitated the ability of the family to meet the needs of its members and the demands made upon it by systems outside the family unit. Billingsly (1968) noted that there was a fluid interchanging of roles by black family members in an effort to stay out of poverty.

#### Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA)

Multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between ego identity status and age, sex, high school curriculum, self-esteem, cohesion, and adaptability. The predictor variables (age, sex, high school

grouped in blocks on the basis of theoretical and research considerations in the literature on ego identity formation. Three blocks (demographic, personality, and family structure) of predictor variables were formulated and tested sequentially using the forward selection method.

Hypothesis One. The first hypothesis stated that a relationship exists between ego identity status and age, sex, and high school curriculum. The criterion variable, ego identity status, was composed of the four identity statuses (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement) described by Marcia (1966). The four regression models employed to examine the first hypothesis were as follows:

$$\text{Diffusion Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2$$

$$\text{Foreclosure Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2$$

$$\text{Moratorium Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2$$

$$\text{Achievement Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2$$

The results of the MRA yielded a statistically significant relationship ( $R = .233$ ;  $F = 3.134$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the diffusion identity status and the linear combination of the predictor variables (age, sex, D1, and D2). The predictor variables, combined, explained 5.4% ( $R^2 = .054$ ;  $p < .05$ ) of the variance in the diffusion identity status score, providing support for hypothesis one. The MRA failed to support a statistically significant relationship

between the foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement identity statuses and the predictor variables.

Hypothesis Two. The second hypothesis stated that a relationship exists between ego identity status and self-esteem after controlling for age, sex, and high school curriculum. The resultant regression models were as follows:

$$\text{Diffusion Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2 + \text{Self-Esteem}$$

$$\text{Foreclosure Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2 + \text{Self-Esteem}$$

$$\text{Moratorium Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2 + \text{Self-Esteem}$$

$$\text{Achievement Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2 + \text{Self-Esteem}$$

The MRA demonstrated that a statistically significant relationship exists between each of the four identity statuses and the linear combination of the predictor variables (age, sex, D1, D2, and self-esteem). The multiple correlation coefficients for the four identity statuses were: diffusion ( $R = .343$ ;  $F = 5.823$ ;  $p < .01$ ), foreclosure ( $R = .242$ ;  $F = 2.760$ ;  $p < .05$ ), moratorium ( $R = .351$ ;  $F = 6.300$ ;  $p < .01$ ), and achievement ( $R = .337$ ;  $F = 5.633$ ;  $p < .01$ ). The percentage of criterion variance that could be attributed to the predictor variables was: 11.8% diffusion ( $R^2 = .118$ ;  $p > .01$ ), 5.9% foreclosure ( $R^2 = .059$ ;  $p < .05$ ), 12.3% moratorium ( $R^2 = .123$ ;  $p < .01$ ), and 11.4% achievement ( $R^2 = .114$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

In order to determine the effect of self-esteem in relation to ego identity status, tests of significance were

conducted. The tests of significance indicated that self-esteem was a significant contributor to the regression after controlling for age, sex, and high school curriculum. The second hypothesis was therefore supported for each of the four identity statuses. The F values were: diffusion [ $F(1,218) = 15.734; p < .01$ ], foreclosure [ $F(1,222) = 7.765; p < .01$ ], moratorium [ $F(1,225) = 22.525; p < .01$ ], and achievement [ $F(1,221) = 22.484; p < .01$ ]. The percentage of criterion variance explained by self-esteem beyond that explained by the demographic variables (age, sex, D1 and D2) was: 6.4% diffusion, 3.3% foreclosure, 8.8% moratorium, and 9% achievement (see Table 10).

Hypothesis Three. The third hypothesis stated that a relationship exists between ego identity status and cohesion and adaptability after controlling for age, sex, high school curriculum, and self-esteem. The resultant regression models were as follows:

$$\text{Diffusion Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

$$\text{Foreclosure Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

$$\text{Moratorium Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

$$\text{Achievement Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

Table 10

Summary of Forward MRA for the Four Identity Statuses

Diffusion				Foreclosure			
Block	Variables	R Square	R Square Change	Block	Variables	R Square	R Square Change
1 a	Age, Sex	.033	--	1 a	Age, Sex	.021	--
1 b	Age, Sex, D1, D2	.054	.021	1 b	Age, Sex, D1, D2	.026	.004
2	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem	.118	.064*	2	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem	.059	.033*
3	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem, Cohesion, Adaptability	.129	.006	3	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem, Cohesion, Adaptability	.114	.028*

  

Moratorium				Achievement			
Block	Variables	R Square	R Square Change	Block	Variables	R Square	R Square Change
1 a	Age, Sex	.008	--	1 a	Age, Sex	.016	--
1 b	Age, Sex, D1, D2	.036	.028*	1 b	Age, Sex, D1, D2	.023	.007
2	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem	.123	.088*	2	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem	.114	.090*
3	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem, Cohesion, Adaptability	.126	.001	3	Age, Sex, D1, D2, Self-Esteem, Cohesion, Adaptability	.126	.006

\* $p < .05$

The MRA revealed statistically significant relationships between each of the four identity statuses and the linear combination of the predictor variables (age, sex, D1, D2, self-esteem, cohesion, and adaptability). The multiple correlation coefficients for the four identity statuses were: diffusion ( $R = .359$ ;  $F = 4.239$ ;  $p < .01$ ), foreclosure ( $R = .338$ ;  $F = 3.692$ ;  $p < .01$ ), moratorium ( $R = .355$ ;  $F = 4.179$ ;  $p < .01$ ), and achievement ( $R = .355$ ;  $F = 4.118$ ;  $p < .01$ ). The percentage of criterion variance that could be attributed to the predictor variables was: 12.9% diffusion ( $R^2 = .129$ ;  $p < .01$ ), 11.4% foreclosure ( $R^2 = .114$ ;  $p < .01$ ), 12.6% moratorium ( $R^2 = .126$ ;  $p < .01$ ), and 12.6% achievement ( $R^2 = .126$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

To examine the effect of cohesion and adaptability in relation to ego identity status, tests of significance were conducted. The tests of significance showed that cohesion and adaptability were significant contributors to the regression of the foreclosure identity status [ $F(2,220) = 6.913$ ;  $p < .01$ ], explaining 2.8% of the variance in the foreclosure identity status beyond that explained by the other variables (age, sex, D1, D2, and self-esteem). Hence the third hypothesis was supported for the foreclosure identity status only. The third hypothesis was not supported for the diffusion, moratorium, and achievement identity statuses. These results are reported in Table 10.

### Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA)

On the basis of the theoretical frameworks used in this study and prior research, it was expected that the four ego identity statuses (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement) would be significantly correlated with age, sex, high school curriculum, self-esteem, cohesion, and adaptability. The relationships between the criterion and predictor variables were explored using the Pearson product-moment correlation procedure. This procedure was also employed to assess the interrelationships among all the variables. Since the predictor variables were not highly correlated with each other, multicollinearity was not a factor in the present research. Note that the correlation matrix (see Table 11) contains the multiple correlation coefficients (R) between high school curriculum and the remaining variables because high school curriculum is a categorical variable (Hinkle & Oliver, 1986).

Two of the three demographic variables were significantly correlated with ego identity status. A significant positive relationship ( $r = .119$ ;  $p < .05$ ) was found between the foreclosure identity status and age, indicating that there is a slight increase in the foreclosure identity status score as age increases. A significant negative relationship ( $r = -.181$ ;  $p < .01$ ) was found between

Table 11  
Correlation Matrix of All Variables

	Age	Sex	Curriculum	Self-Esteem	Cohesion	Adaptability	Diffusion	Foreclosure	Moratorium	Achievement
Age	1.000	-.046	.229*	.042	-.012	.036	.005	.119**	-.057	.008
Sex		1.000	.089	-.003	-.072	.003	-.181*	-.091	-.066	.125**
Curriculum			1.000	.296*	.056	.039	.158	.091	.159	.095
Self-Esteem				1.000	.187*	.041	-.284*	-.196*	-.331*	.308*
Cohesion					1.000	.155**	.075	.196*	-.028	.176**
Adaptability						1.000	.051	-.009	.106	-.003
Diffusion							1.000	.206*	.539*	-.313*
Foreclosure								1.000	.176*	.098
Moratorium									1.000	-.276*
Achievement										1.000

\*  $p < .01$

\*\*  $p < .05$

the diffusion identity status and sex, suggesting that males had slightly higher diffusion scores than females. A significant positive relationship ( $r = .125$ ;  $p < .05$ ) was found between the achievement identity status and sex, reflecting that females had slightly higher achievement scores than males. The four identity statuses were not significantly correlated with high school curriculum. These results are reported in Table 11.

Statistically significant correlations were found between each of the four identity statuses and self-esteem. A significant negative relationship ( $r = -.284$ ;  $p < .01$ ) was found between the diffusion identity status score and self-esteem, suggesting a slight relationship between low diffusion scores and high self-esteem scores. A significant negative relationship ( $r = -.196$ ;  $p < .01$ ) was also found between the foreclosure identity status and self-esteem, indicating a slight relationship between low foreclosure scores and high self-esteem scores. Similarly, a significant negative relationship ( $r = -.331$ ;  $p < .01$ ) was found between the moratorium identity status and self-esteem, indicating a weak relationship between the lower moratorium scores and the higher self-esteem scores. A significant positive relationship ( $r = .308$ ;  $p < .01$ ) was found between the achievement identity status and self-esteem, reflecting a weak relationship between the higher achievement scores and

the higher self-esteem scores. These results are contained in Table 11.

A statistically significant, but small, positive relationship was found between the foreclosure identity status and cohesion ( $r = .196$ ;  $p < .01$ ) and the achievement identity status and cohesion ( $r = .176$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Hence, high cohesion scores were associated with high achievement and foreclosure scores. The four identity statuses were not significantly correlated with adaptability. These results are reported in Table 11.

Diffusion. The full regression model for the diffusion identity status was as follows:

$$\text{Diffusion} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

The results of the MRA revealed that high school curriculum did not contribute significantly to the prediction of the diffusion identity status when added to the regression equation in the first block. To the contrary, self-esteem did contribute significantly to the prediction equation when added in the second block. The addition of cohesion and adaptability in the third block failed to significantly increase the prediction of the diffusion identity status. These results are found in Table 10. As Table 12 reveals, sex and self-esteem were the only two significant predictor variables in the full model for the diffusion identity

Table 12

Regression of Diffusion On Predictor Variables

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	T	SIG T
Age	.182	.341	.037	.532	.595
Sex	-1.744	.744	-.150	-2.252	.025**
D1	-1.793	1.179	-.154	-1.520	.130
D2	-1.340	1.279	-.106	-1.048	.296
Self-Esteem	-2.352	.591	-.280	-3.981	.000*
Cohesion	.078	.056	.095	1.397	.164
Adaptability	.063	.070	.060	.899	.370
(Constant)	34.256	6.360		5.386	.000
			R = .359		
			R <sup>2</sup> = .129		

\*p &lt; .01

\*\*p &lt; .05

Note. N = 224

status. The fact that sex was a significant contributor to the regression equation offers support for hypothesis one. The negative regression coefficient ( $\beta = -.150$ ;  $p < .05$ ) for sex indicates that the higher diffusion scores were associated with males, which is consistent with past research (Stark & Traxler, 1974). The negative regression coefficient ( $\beta = -.280$ ;  $p < .01$ ) for self-esteem indicates that the lower diffusion scores were associated with the higher self-esteem scores. Hypothesis two was, thus, supported. Hypothesis three received no support for the diffusion identity status.

Foreclosure. The full regression model for the foreclosure identity status was as follows:

$$\text{Foreclosure Score} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + D1 + D2 + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

High school curriculum did not add significantly to the prediction of the foreclosure identity status in block one. Self-esteem, however, significantly enhanced the prediction of the foreclosure identity status in the second block. Likewise, cohesion and adaptability significantly increased the prediction of the foreclosure identity status when added to the equation in the third block. These results are contained in Table 10. As shown in Table 13, self-esteem and cohesion were the only two predictor variables that significantly contributed to the regression. The negative regression coefficient ( $\beta = -.232$ ;  $p < .01$ ) for self-esteem

Table 13

Regression of Foreclosure On Predictor Variables

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	T	SIG T
Age	.637	.332	.133	1.915	.057
Sex	-.409	.776	-.035	-.527	.599
D1	.340	1.218	.029	.279	.780
D2	.548	1.314	.044	.417	.677
Self-Esteem	-1.926	.589	-.232	-3.271	.001*
Cohesion	.202	.056	.249	3.636	.000*
Adaptability	-.057	.070	-.056	-.829	.408
(Constant)	17.846	6.221		2.869	.005
			R = .338		
			R <sup>2</sup> = .114		

\*p &lt; .01

Note. N = 228

indicates that low foreclosure scores were associated with high self-esteem scores. The positive regression coefficient ( $\beta = .249$ ;  $p < .01$ ) for cohesion indicates that the higher foreclosure scores were associated with the higher cohesion scores as expected from Erikson's psychosocial theory of ego identity and structural family systems theory. Overall, the second and third hypotheses received support while the first hypothesis received no support.

Moratorium. The full regression model for the moratorium identity status was as follows:

$$\text{Moratorium} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

High school curriculum contributed significantly to the prediction of the moratorium identity status when added to the equation in the first block. The presence of self-esteem in the second block significantly contributed to the predictive value of the equation as well. The inclusion of cohesion and adaptability in the third block did not contribute significantly to the predictive ability of the equation. These results are reported in Table 10. As indicated in Table 14, the only significant predictor variable in the full model was self-esteem. The negative regression coefficient ( $\beta = -.283$ ;  $p < .01$ ) for self-esteem reflects that the lower moratorium scores were associated with the higher self-esteem scores. Although high school

Table 14

Regression of Moratorium On Predictor Variables

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	T	SIG T
Age	-.453	.364	-.085	-1.246	.214
Sex	-.908	.835	-.072	-1.088	.278
D1	-1.581	1.282	-.125	-1.234	.219
D2	-.546	1.393	-.040	-.392	.696
Self-Esteem	-2.582	.635	-.283	-4.065	.000*
Cohesion	.001	.060	.001	.024	.981
Adaptability	.147	.075	.131	1.965	.051
.(Constant)	45.532	6.815		6.681	.000
			R = .355		
			R <sup>2</sup> = .126		

\*p &lt; .01

Note. N = 231

curriculum added significantly to the prediction equation when added in the first block, it did not contribute significantly to the full regression model. In general, the second hypothesis received support, whereas the first and third hypotheses received no support.

Achievement. The full regression model for the achievement identity status was as follows:

$$\text{Achievement} = \text{Age} + \text{Sex} + \text{D1} + \text{D2} + \text{Self-Esteem} \\ + \text{Cohesion} + \text{Adaptability}$$

High school curriculum did not contribute significantly to the prediction of the achievement identity status when added to the equation in the first block. Self-esteem, on the other hand, significantly enhanced the prediction of the achievement identity status in the second block. Cohesion and adaptability failed to significantly enhance the prediction of the achievement identity status in the third block. These results are provided in Table 10. Self-esteem and cohesion were the only significant predictor variables in the full model (see Table 15). The positive regression coefficient ( $\beta = .284; p < .01$ ) for self-esteem indicates that the higher achievement scores were associated with the higher self-esteem scores. The positive regression coefficient ( $\beta = .153; p < .05$ ) for cohesion indicates that the higher achievement scores were associated with the higher cohesion

Table 15

Regression of Achievement On Predictor Variables

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	T	SIG T
Age	-.183	.363	-.035	-.503	.616
Sex	1.443	.843	.114	1.712	.089
D1	.600	1.280	.048	.468	.640
D2	1.432	1.391	.105	1.030	.305
Self-Esteem	2.581	.635	.284	4.063	.000*
Cohesion	.135	.061	.153	2.234	.027**
Adaptability	-.066	.076	-.059	-.869	.386
(Constant)	18.582	6.785		2.739	.007
			R = .355		
			R <sup>2</sup> = .126		

\*p &lt; .01

\*\*p &lt; .05

Note. N = 227

scores. Overall, hypothesis two was supported, whereas the first and third hypotheses were not supported.

### Discussion of Multiple Regression Analysis

Age was not found to be a significant predictor of ego identity status. This finding contradicts past research which found that as adolescents progressed in age they attained a greater degree of ego identity (Meilman, 1979; Protinsky, 1975; Protinsky & Wilkerson, 1986; Stark & Traxler, 1974). One possible reason for the present study's finding may be due to the homogeneity of the sample. The present sample was composed of middle adolescents, whereas past research that found a significant increase in identity across age sampled both middle and late adolescents (Meilman, 1979; Protinsky, 1975; Protinsky & Wilkerson, 1986; Stark & Traxler, 1974). Furthermore, LaVoie (1976) found that the increase in ego identity across age for the high school students in his study was statistically nonsignificant. Similarly, Adams and Jones (1983) found no significant age differences among high school females in terms of ego identity status.

Sex was found to be a significant predictor of the diffusion identity status. Females reported significantly less identity diffusion than males. This finding is consistent with previous research which found that females reported significantly less ego diffusion than males (Stark &

Traxler, 1974). The present study's finding implies that gender is an important factor in the resolution of the identity crisis. Previously cited literature and research which found that males and females demonstrated different patterns of identity formation (Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Josselson, Greenberger, & McConochie, 1977; Matteson, 1975) attest to the importance of gender in the resolution of the identity crisis. According to Matteson (1975), the process of identity formation in males reflected the cultural expectation of autonomy and personality differentiation, whereas in females it reflected the cultural expectation that intimate relationships should be established.

The hypothesized relationship between high school curriculum and ego identity status was not supported by the data. The students in the three programs of study demonstrated no significant difference with respect to ego identity status. The present finding lends support to past research that failed to substantiate a relationship between ego identity status and intelligence (Marcia, 1966; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel, 1975).

Self-esteem was a significant predictor of ego identity status but did not differentiate among the four identity statuses. Previous research findings also failed to demonstrate significant differences among the identity statuses on the basis of self-esteem (Marcia, 1966, 1967; Orlofsky, 1977). However, the present and past research

finding that self-esteem failed to differentiate among the identity statuses seems antithetical to Erikson's (1968) epigenetic model. In Erikson's model, a predominantly positive outcome of the polar conflict posed at each developmental stage further enhances personality structure. Thus, high identity suggests the presence of high self-esteem while low identity implies the accompaniment of low self-esteem. One possible explanation for this apparent discrepancy may be related to the conceptual-operational measures of ego identity. The operational measures of ego identity may not incorporate the full scope of Erikson's concept of epigenesis. A second possible explanation may be related to the measures of self-esteem. The measures of self-esteem may be positively correlated with social desirability. A third possible explanation may be related to the reliance on self-report measures for accuracy.

The finding that high family cohesion (enmeshment) was a significant predictor of the foreclosure identity status provides empirical support for both Erikson's psychosocial theory and structural theory. Erikson (1968) posited that identity development is influenced by child-rearing experiences. Erikson further proposed that identity "at its best . . . is a process of increasing differentiation" (p. 23). Structural theory has argued that enmeshed family systems fail to provide adequately for the developmental needs of its adolescent members, indicating a

threat to the adolescent's personal identity and his or her emancipation from the family (Minuchin, 1974; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981). Identity development is therefore hindered in enmeshed families where individuation is restricted. In enmeshed families, parents discourage their children from developing their own resources. Consequently, the children learn to rely on their parents and to be dependent which supports Erikson's (1968) position that foreclosed adolescents lack the ability to define their sense of self as distinctive from others.

The present study's finding that a significant predictive relationship exists between the foreclosure identity status and enmeshment is also consistent with prior research. Campbell, Adams, and Dobson (1984) found that foreclosed adolescents were most strongly bonded to their parents and overly dependent upon parents for a self-definition.

The finding that a significant predictive relationship exists between the achievement identity status and enmeshment is surprising from both Eriksonian and structural perspectives. As cited above, Erikson views ego identity as a process of increasing differentiation and structural theory views enmeshment as a predictor of maladjustment. One possible reason for the present study's finding may be related to the adolescent's perception of cohesion in his or her family. The adolescent may perceive

his or her family as enmeshed when, in fact, the family is not enmeshed. Furthermore, the adolescent may have responded in a socially desirable manner, especially since the correlation between cohesion and social desirability was not reduced to zero in FACES III. Another reason may be related to the strong emphasis on family ties in many black families (McAdoo, 1981) and the possibility that FACES III's norms for well functioning families are not adequate for black families. Moreover, FACES III may not differentiate well enough between high levels of attachment or connectedness and enmeshment, especially since Campbell, Adams, and Dobson (1984) found that achieved adolescents were highly attached to their mothers but experienced greater levels of autonomy.

Since females accounted for nearly 80% of the achievement identity status in this study, still another reason may be related to past research findings that ego identity in females was related to intimate relationships (Gilligan, 1982; Josselson, Greenberger, & McConochie, 1977). Gilligan (1982) found that females emphasized connection with others in developing ego identity and Josselson et al. (1977) found that the process of identity development in females was facilitated by the establishment of intimate relationships.

The finding that enmeshment was a predictor of the achievement identity status may also be related to the large percentage (46%) of adolescents who came from single-parent families. Single-parent families may become more cohesive as

an adaptive response to stress, such as economic, social, and/or emotional stress (Thompson & Congla, 1983; Weiss, 1979). This finding is especially noteworthy since it emphasizes the importance of recognizing and utilizing strengths inherent in family structures even if the structures differ from those which family theorists and clinicians expect would work satisfactorily (Hines & Boyd-Franklin, 1982).

Family adaptability was not found to be a significant predictor of ego identity status. Furthermore, no statistically significant correlations were found between the ego identity statuses and adaptability. The finding that family adaptability was not an influential factor in identity development for the present sample as hypothesized from family theory may be due to the lack of research on the norms and patterns that influence effective black family functioning. A second reason for this finding may be that family adaptability is not related to ego identity formation.

## Chapter V

### Summary

#### Procedure

While past research has associated age, sex, cognition, and self-esteem with ego identity formation, few studies have explored the relationship between family structure and ego identity. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the adolescent's development of ego identity and family structure after controlling for demographic and personality variables. Erikson's psychosocial theory was used as the theoretical framework for understanding the identity crisis of adolescence, whereas the structural model of family systems theory was used as the framework for understanding the psychosocial context in which the adolescent's developing sense of identity is developed.

The instruments employed in this study were aimed at assessing the relationships between the four ego identity statuses (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement) and demographic (age, sex, and high school curriculum), personality (self-esteem), and family structure (cohesion and adaptability) variables. The instruments were administered to 15 randomly selected Social Studies classes

by the author during the regular class period. In a brief introduction, students were asked to participate in the study and were assured that their answers would be both confidential and anonymous. The instruments were administered in two sessions. The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES III) and a demographic questionnaire devised by the author were given during the first week. During the second week, the Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS) and the Self-Esteem Scale were administered.

Data from 237 black high school students were analyzed. Data analysis consisted of frequency distributions utilized to describe the number of adolescents contained in each of the identity status groups identified by Adams, Shea, and Fitch (1979); and to determine the number of adolescents in each of these groups (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, achievement, and transitional) on the basis of age, sex, high school curriculum, self-esteem, cohesion, and adaptability. The Pearson product-moment correlation procedure was utilized to examine the significant relationships between the criterion (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement) and predictor (age, sex, high school curriculum, self-esteem, cohesion, and adaptability) variables and to determine the presence of multicollinearity. Multiple

regression analysis (MRA) was used to test the relationships between the criterion and predictor variables.

### Significant Findings

Descriptive Results. The following descriptive characteristics resulted from an analysis of the frequency distributions:

1. While the transitional group contained the greatest percentage (46.8%) of participants, the foreclosure group contained the least (6.8%). Other percentages were: 21.1% moratorium; 13.9% achievement, and 11.4% diffusion.
2. There was an increase in identity achievement with age accompanied by a decrease in identity diffusion.
3. The majority (79.3%) of adolescents were uncommitted in comparison to 20.7% who were committed.
4. Females accounted for 78.8% of the achieved identity status in comparison to males (21.2%).
5. Each of the three groups (college preparatory, business education, and vocational) in the high school curriculum variable contained fewer adolescents with low identity (diffusion and foreclosure).
6. Ninety-seven percent of the sample reported high self-esteem regardless of identity status.

7. Most (62.2%) adolescents reported balanced family cohesion in comparison to 37.5% with extreme family cohesion regardless of identity status.
8. Most adolescents (63.3%) reported balanced family adaptability in comparison to 32.8% with extreme family adaptability regardless of identity status.

Significant Relationships. On the basis of the theoretical frameworks used in this study and past research, it was expected that the criterion variables would be significantly correlated with the predictor variables. Prior to employing multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses in this study, the Pearson product-moment correlation procedure was utilized to determine if significant relationships did exist between the criterion and predictor variables. The resultant significant relationships, using the Pearson product-moment correlation procedure (see Table 11), were as follows:

1. There was a significant positive relationship ( $r = .119$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the foreclosure identity status and age.
2. There were no significant relationships between the diffusion, moratorium, and achievement identity statuses and age.

3. There was a significant negative relationship ( $r = -.181$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the diffusion identity status and sex.
4. There was a significant positive relationship ( $r = .125$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the achievement identity status and sex.
5. There were no significant relationships between the foreclosure and moratorium identity statuses and sex.
6. There were no significant relationships between the four identity statuses and high school curriculum.
7. There was a significant negative relationship ( $r = -.284$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the diffusion identity status and self-esteem.
8. There was a significant negative relationship ( $r = -.196$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the foreclosure identity status and self-esteem.
9. There was a significant negative relationship ( $r = -.331$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the moratorium identity status and self-esteem.
10. There was a significant positive relationship ( $r = .308$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the achievement identity status and self-esteem.
11. There was a significant positive relationship ( $r = .196$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the foreclosure identity status and cohesion.

12. There was a significant positive relationship ( $r = .176$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the achievement identity status and cohesion.
13. There were no significant relationships between the diffusion and moratorium identity statuses and cohesion.
14. There were no significant relationships between the four identity statuses and adaptability.

Predictive Relationships. Multiple regression analysis was employed to test the following hypotheses:

1. A relationship exists between ego identity status and age, sex, and high school curriculum.
2. A relationship exists between ego identity status and self-esteem after controlling for age, sex, and high school curriculum.
3. A relationship exists between ego identity status and cohesion and adaptability after controlling for age, sex, high school curriculum, and self-esteem.

The hypothesized relationship between ego identity status and age, sex, and high school curriculum (first hypothesis) was supported for the diffusion identity status only, with the demographic variables (age, sex, and high school curriculum) explaining 5.4% ( $R^2 = .054$ ;  $p < .05$ ) of the variance in the diffusion score. The first hypothesis was not supported for the foreclosure, moratorium, and

achievement identity statuses. Of the demographic variables, sex was the only variable that significantly contributed to the prediction of the diffusion identity status. There was a significant negative relationship ( $\beta = -.150$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the diffusion identity status and sex.

The hypothesized relationship between ego identity status and self-esteem (second hypothesis) was supported for each of the four identity statuses. Self-esteem explained from 3.3% to 9% of the variance in the four identity status scores. The significant relationships between the four identity statuses and self-esteem were as follows:

1. There was a significant negative relationship ( $\beta = -.280$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the diffusion identity status and self-esteem.
2. There was a significant negative relationship ( $\beta = -.232$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the foreclosure identity status and self-esteem.
3. There was a significant negative relationship ( $\beta = -.283$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the moratorium identity status and self-esteem.
4. There was a significant positive relationship ( $\beta = .284$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the achievement identity status and self-esteem.

The hypothesized relationship between ego identity status and cohesion and adaptability (third hypothesis) was

supported for the foreclosure identity status only. Cohesion and adaptability explained 2.8% of the variance in the foreclosure score. The third hypothesis was not supported for the diffusion, moratorium, and achievement identity statuses. For the third hypothesis, cohesion was the only family structure variable that significantly contributed to the prediction of ego identity status. The significant relationships between ego identity status and cohesion were as follows:

1. There was a significant positive relationship ( $\beta = .249$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between the foreclosure identity status and cohesion.
2. There was a significant positive relationship ( $\beta = .153$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the achievement identity status and cohesion.

Self-esteem was the most stable of the significant predictor variables as it was a significant predictor of ego identity status across the four identity statuses. A comparison of the regression coefficients for sex, self-esteem, and cohesion indicated that self-esteem was the most important predictor of the diffusion, moratorium, and achievement identity statuses, whereas cohesion was the most important predictor of the foreclosure identity status.

Age was previously cited as a significant predictor of identity status but was not found to be a significant

predictor of ego identity status in the present research. The present study also failed to find a significant relationship between ego identity status and high school curriculum.

Based on literature and research in the field of family theory, it was hypothesized that a significant relationship would exist between ego identity status and family adaptability. To the contrary, no significant relationship was found between ego identity status and family adaptability.

In summary, ego identity status was found to be significantly correlated with age, sex, self-esteem, and cohesion. Although these correlations were statistically significant, they were weak correlations at best. The significant correlation between ego identity status and age failed to have predictive value. On the other hand, the significant correlations between ego identity status and sex, self-esteem, and cohesion proved to have predictive value.

The hypothesized relationship between ego identity status and the demographic variables of age, sex, and high school curriculum was supported for the diffusion identity status. The demographic variables explained 5.4% of the variance in the diffusion score which is meaningful from a statistical perspective, but less meaningful from a practical perspective. Similarly, the hypothesized relationship

between ego identity status and self-esteem was supported for each of the four identity statuses, with self-esteem explaining from 3.3% to 9% of the variance in the ego identity status scores. Because self-esteem explains only a small percentage of the variance in the four ego identity status scores, caution should be used in arriving at conclusions about the relative importance of self-esteem on ego identity. The hypothesized relationship between ego identity status and cohesion and adaptability was supported for the foreclosure identity status, with cohesion and adaptability explaining 2.8% of the variance in the foreclosure score. Thus, the relationship between the foreclosure identity status and cohesion and adaptability has statistical meaningfulness but not much substantive meaningfulness.

#### Implications and Recommendations

The present research reveals that less than 15% of the variance in ego identity status can be attributed to age, sex, high school curriculum, self-esteem, cohesion, and adaptability, with sex, self-esteem, and cohesion as the significant contributors. Thus, more than 85% of the variance in ego identity status is unexplained. Consequently, the present study underscores the importance of the need for future research in the area of black adolescent

identity development. Future research should be designed to generate factors that influence ego identity at both the individual and family levels. Moreover, measures of ego identity should be developed and normed for use with black adolescents. Researchers should be sensitive to the various socioeconomic statuses among black families and not approach research from the perspective of a universal black family.

Since previous research that found age to be a significant predictor of ego identity sampled both middle and late adolescents, future research is indicated with middle and late black adolescents to determine the effect of age. In order to assess the effect of age in relation to social experience, future research should perhaps focus on "latch key" children and children from single parent families.

Since Erikson (1968) stressed the importance of the cultural component of ego identity, a cross-cultural study of adolescent identity development may help to identify significant factors related to ego identity that are either race, socioeconomic, or culture specific. Erikson also proposed that ego identity is an integration of social experience and intrapsychic development. Thus, it may be important to approach black adolescent identity development from an ecosystemic perspective, given the social, economic, and political realities for many blacks.

The predominance of adolescents in the transitional group highlights the importance of Erikson's (1968) postulation that ego identity is never final or static but is constantly altered according to the perception of the self as part of social reality. Thus, research should not focus on ego identity as a developmental end-point. Rather, research should focus on the developmental processes that contribute to the acquisition of a personal identity (Bourne, 1978b).

While cohesion was found to be a significant predictor of ego identity status, adaptability was not. As cohesion and adaptability were hypothesized to be the two central properties of family structure in family theory, research on black families is indicated with an emphasis on family structures that influence adjustment and maladjustment. An instrument should be designed and normed on black families that will serve as a more accurate measure of functional and dysfunctional black families, especially since FACES III did not successfully delineate between high and low identity adolescents. Furthermore, high family cohesion (enmeshment) was a predictor of both high and low identity. The finding that enmeshment was a predictor of high identity was contrary to the theoretical and clinical literature in family therapy. However, it implies the need for family theorists, educators, and therapists to be aware of the cultural impact on black family structures and

functions as well as the possible strengths inherent in these structures (Hines & Boyd-Franklin, 1982).

### Limitations

One limitation of this research is that the sample was drawn from only one predominantly low-income black high school. Another limitation is that the instrument (Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status) used to obtain a measure of ego identity was normed on a college sample and may have biased the results of the present study. Internal consistency, using Cronbach Alphas, for the Revised Version of the EOM-EIS was moderate at best for this study: .55 diffusion, .59 foreclosure, .66 moratorium, and .67 achievement. Furthermore, differentiations between the diffusion and moratorium scores should be made tentatively since items for both tended to load in the same direction (Grotevant & Adams, 1984). Note that the diffusion identity status is regarded as low identity while the moratorium identity status is regarded as high identity. Still another limitation may be due to exclusive reliance on self-report measures as some participants may have responded in a socially desirable fashion.

## REFERENCES

- Ackerman, N.J. (1980). The family with adolescents. In E.A. Carter & M. McGoldrick (Eds.), The family life cycle: A framework for family therapy (pp. 147-169). New York: Gardner Press.
- Adams, G.R. & Jones, R.M. (1983). Female adolescents' identity development: Age comparisons and perceived child-rearing experience. Developmental Psychology, 19, 249-256.
- Adams, G.R., Ryan, J.H., Hoffman, J.J., Dobson, W.R., & Nielsen, E.C. (1985). Ego identity status, conformity behavior, and personality in late adolescence. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 47, 1091-1104.
- Aponte, H.J., & VanDeusen, J.M. (1981). Structural family therapy. In A.S. Gurman & D.P. Kniskern (Eds.), Handbook of Family Therapy (pp. 310-360). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Bell, A.P. (1969). Role modeling of fathers in adolescence and adulthood. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 16, 30-35.
- Bell, L.G. & Bell, D.C. (1982). Family climate and the role of the female adolescent: Determinants of adolescent functioning. Family Relations, 31, 519-527.
- Bernard, H.S. (1981). Identity formation during late adolescence: A review of some empirical findings. Adolescence, 16, 349-358.
- Berzonsky, M.D. (1985). Diffusion within Marcia's identity-status paradigm: Does it foreshadow academic problems? Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14, 527-538.
- Billingsley, A. (1968). Black families in white America. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Blos, P. (1979). The adolescent passage. New York: International University Press.
- Bosma, H.A. & Gerrits, R.S. (1985). Family functioning and identity status in adolescence. Journal of Early Adolescence, 5, 69-80.

- Bourne, E. (1978a). The state of research on ego identity: A review and appraisal. Part I. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 7, 223-251.
- Bourne, E. (1978b). The state of research on ego identity: A review and appraisal. Part II. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 7, 371-392.
- Bunt, M. (1968). Ego identity: Its relationship to the discrepancy between how an adolescent views himself and how he perceives that others view him. Psychology, 5, 14-25.
- Cabin, S. (1966). Ego identity status: A laboratory study of the effects of stress and levels of reinforcement upon self and peer evaluations. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University.
- Campbell, E., Adams, G.R., & Dobson, W.R. (1984). Familial correlates of identity formation in late adolescence: A study of the predictive utility of connectedness and individuality in family relations. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 13, 509-525.
- Carter, E.A. & McGoldrick, M. (1980). The family life cycle and family therapy: An overview. In E.A. Carter & M. McGoldrick (Eds.), The family life cycle: A framework for family therapy (pp. 3-20). New York: Gardner Press.
- Clasen, D.R. & Brown, B.B. (1985). The multidimensionality of peer pressure in adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14, 451-468.
- Cooper, C.R., Grotevant, H.D., & Condon, S.M. (1983). Individuality and connectedness in the family as a context for adolescent identity formation and role taking skill. In H.D. Grotevant & C.R. Cooper (Eds.), Adolescent development in the family: New directions for child development (pp. 43-60). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cross, J.H. & Allen, J.G. (1970). Ego identity status, adjustment, and academic achievement. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 34, 288.
- Cushing, D.C. (1971). Identity status: A developmental model as related to parental behaviors. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo.

- Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. (1966). The adolescent experience. New York: Wiley.
- Enright, R.D., Lapsley, D.K., Drivas, A.E., & Fehr, L.A. (1980). Parental influences on the development of adolescent autonomy and identity. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 9, 529-545.
- Epstein, N., Bishop, D., & Levin, S. (1978). The McMaster model of family functioning. Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling, 4, 19-31.
- ✓ Erikson, E.H. (1950). Childhood and society. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E.H. (1956). Ego identity and the psychosocial moratorium. In New perspectives for research on juvenile delinquency. Washington, D.C.: Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.
- ✓ Erikson, E.H. (1959). Identity and the life cycle. Psychological Issues, 1, 1-171.
- ✓ Erikson, E.H. (1968). Identity: Youth and crisis. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E.H. (1980). Identity and the life cycle. New York: Norton.
- Fitch, S.A. & Adams, G.R. (1983). Ego identity and intimacy status: Replication and extension. Developmental Psychology, 19, 839-845.
- Fleming, W. M. & Anderson, S.A. (1986). Individuation from the family of origin and personal adjustment in late adolescence. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 12, 311-315.
- Freilino, M.K. & Hummel, R. (1985). Achievement and identity in college-age vs. adult women students. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14, 1-10.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). In a different voice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Green, L.B. & Hubbard, M.A. (1982). The minority psychology of adolescence: A concept for adult equanimity and rationality. Adolescence, 17, 585-603.

- Grotevant, H.D. (1983). The contribution of the family to the facilitation of identity formation in early adolescence. Journal of Early Adolescence, 3, 225-237.
- Gruen, W. (1960). Rejection of false information about oneself as an indication of ego identity. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 24, 231-233.
- Hauser, S.T. (1972). Black and white identity development: Aspects and perspectives. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 1, 113-130.
- Hauser, S.T. (1976). "Self-image complexity and identity formation in adolescence: Longitudinal studies." Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 5, 161-177.
- Hill, R.B. (1972). The strengths of black families. New York: Emerson Hall Publishers.
- Hines, P.M., & Boyd-Franklin, N. (1982). Black families. In M. McGoldrick et al. (Eds.), Ethnicity and family therapy (pp. 84-107). New York: Guilford Press.
- Hines-Chapman, B.S. & Hansen, J.C. (1983). Family environments and self-concepts of delinquent and mentally ill adolescents. Family Therapy, 10, 289-298.
- Hinkle, D.E. & Oliver, J.D. (1986). Regression analysis with dummy variables: Use and interpretation. Journal of Vocational Education Research, 11, 17-32.
- Hurtig, A.H., Petersen, A.C., Richards, M.H., & Gitelson, I.B. (1985). Cognitive mediators of ego functioning in adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14, 435-450.
- Josselson, R., Greenberger, E., & McConochie, D. (1977). Phenomenological aspects of psychosocial maturity in adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 6, 145-167.
- Juhasz, A. (1982). Youth, identity, and values. Erikson's historical perspective. Adolescence, 17, 443-450.
- Kantor, D. & Lehr, W. (1975). Inside the family. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Kleiman, J.I. (1981). Optimal and normal family functioning. American Journal of Family Therapy, 9, 37-44.
- Kroger, J. (1985). Separation-individuation and ego identity status in New Zealand university students. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14, 133-147.
- LaVoie, J.C. (1976). Ego identity formation in middle adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 5, 371-385.
- Litovsky, V.G. & Dusek, J.B. (1985). Perceptions of child rearing and self-concept development during the early adolescent years. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14, 373-388.
- Long, B.H. (1986). Parental discord vs. family structure: Effects of divorce on the self-esteem of daughters. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 15, 19-27.
- Madanes, C., Dukes, J., & Harbin, H. (1980). Family ties of heroin addicts. Archives of General Psychiatry, 37, 889-894.
- Madden, D.J. & Harbin, H.T. (1983). Family structures of assaultive adolescents. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 9, 311-316.
- Mahler, C. (1969). The assessment and the evaluation of the coping styles of two ego identity groups, moratorium and foreclosure, to identity conflict arousing stimuli. Unpublished master's thesis, State University of New York at Buffalo.
- Marcia, J.E. (1966). Development and validation of ego identity status. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 3, 551-558.
- Marcia, J.E. (1967). Ego identity status: Relationship to change in self-esteem, "general maladjustment" and authoritarianism. Journal of Personality, 35, 119-133.
- Marcia, J.E. (1976). Identity six years after: A follow-up study. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 5, 145-160.
- Marcia, J.E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), Handbook of adolescent psychology (pp. 159-187). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

- Marcia, J.E. & Friedman, M.L. (1970). Ego identity status in college women. Journal of Personality, 38, 249-263.
- McAdoo, H.P. (1981). Patterns of upward mobility in black families. In H.P. McAdoo (Ed.), Black families (pp. 155-170). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Matteson, D.R. (1972). Exploraton and commitment: Sex differences and methodological problems in the use of identity status categories. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 6, 353-374.
- Matteson, D.R. (1974). Alienation vs. exploration and commitment: Personality and family correlaries of adolescent identity statuses. Report from the Project for Youth Research. Copenhagen: Royal Danish School of Educational Studies.
- Matteson, D.R. (1975). Adolescence today: Sex roles and the search for identity. Homewood, IL: Dorsey.
- McCarthy, J.D. & Hoge, D.R. (1982). Analysis of age effects in longitudinal studies of adolescent self-esteem. Developmental Psychology, 18, 372-379.
- McClain, E.W. (1975). An Eriksonian cross-cultural study of adolescent development. Adolescence, 10, 527-541.
- Meilman, P.W. (1979). Cross sectional age changes in ego identity status during adolescence. Developmental Psychology, 15, 230-231.
- Minuchin, S. (1974). Families and family therapy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Minuchin, S. & Fishman, H.C. (1981). Family therapy techniques. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Neuber, K.A. & Genthner, R.W. (1977). The relationship between ego identity, personal responsibility and facilitative communication. Journal of Psychology, 95, 45-49.
- Newman, P.R. (1976). Social settings and their significance for adolescent development. Adolescence, 11, 405-418.
- Newman, B.M. & Murray, C.I. (1983). Identity and family relations in early adolescence. Journal of Early Adolescence, 3, 293-303.

- Newman, B.M. & Newman, P.R. (1978). The concept of identity: Research and theory. Adolescence, 13, 157-166.
- Olson, D.H., McCubbin, H.I., Barnes, H.L., Larsen, A.S., Muxen, M.J., & Wilson, M.A. (1983). Families: What makes them work. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Olson, D.H., Portner, J., & Bell, R. (1982). FACES II: Family adaptability and cohesion evaluation scales. St. Paul: Family Social Science, University of Minnesota.
- Olson, D.H., Portner, J., & Lavee, Y. (1985). FACES III: Family adaptability and cohesion evaluation scales. St. Paul: Family Social Science, University of Minnesota.
- Olson, D.H., Sprenkle, D. & Russell, C. (1979). Circumplex model of marital and family systems I: Cohesion and adaptability dimensions, family types and clinical application. Family Process, 18, 3-28.
- Onyehalu, A.S. (1981). Identity crisis in adolescence. Adolescence, 16, 629-632.
- Orlofsky, J.L. (1977). Sex-role orientation, identity formation, and self-esteem in college men and women. Sex Roles, 3, 561-575.
- Orlofsky, J.L. (1978). Identity formation, achievement, and fear of success in college men and women. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 7, 49-62.
- Orlofsky, J.L., Marcia, J.E., & Lesser, I.M. (1973). Ego identity status and the intimacy vs. isolation crisis of young adulthood. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 27, 211-219.
- Oshman, H. & Manosevitz, M. (1974). The impact of the identity crisis on the adjustment of late adolescent males. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 3, 207-216.
- Podd, M.H., Marcia, J.H., & Rubin, B.M. (1970). The effects of ego identity and partner perception on a, prisoner's dilemma game. Journal of Social Psychology, 82, 117-126.
- Protinsky, H.O. (1975). Eriksonian ego identity in adolescents. Adolescence, 10, 428-432.

- Protinsky, H.O. & Wilkerson, J. (1986). Ego identity, egocentrism, and formal operations. Adolescence, 21, 461-466.
- Reiss, D. & Oliveri, M.E. (1980). Family paradigm and family coping: A proposal for linking the family's intrinsic adaptive capacities to its responses to stress. Family Relations, 29, 431-444.
- Richardson, R.A., Galambos, N.L., Shulenberg, J.E., & Petersen, A.C. (1984). Young adolescents' perception of the family environment. Journal of Early Adolescence, 4, 131-153.
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Rosenfeld, R.U. (1972). The relationship of ego identity to similarity among self, ideal self, and probable occupational-role concept among college males. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland.
- Russell, C. (1979). Circumplex model of marital and family systems III: Empirical evaluation of families. Family Process, 18, 29-45.
- Schenkel, S. (1975). Relationship among ego identity status, field-independence, and traditional femininity. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 4, 73-82.
- Schenkel, S. & Marcia, J.E. (1972). Attitudes toward premarital intercourse in determining ego identity status in college women. Journal of Personality, 3, 472-482.
- Schiedel, D.G. & Marcia, J.E. (1985). Ego identity, intimacy, sex role orientation, and gender. Developmental Psychology, 21, 149-160.
- Selva, P.C. & Dusek, J.B. (1984). Sex role orientation and resolution of Eriksonian crises during the late adolescent years. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 47, 204-212.
- Smollar, J. & Youniss, J. (1985). Parent-adolescent relations in adolescents whose parents are divorced. Journal of Early Adolescence, 5, 129-144.

- Snyder, J., Dishion, T.J., & Patterson, G.R. (1986). Determinants and consequences of associating with deviant peers during preadolescence and adolescence. Journal of Early Adolescence, 6, 29-43.
- Stark, P.A. & Traxler, A.J. (1974). Empirical validation of Erikson's theory of identity crises in late adolescence. Journal of Psychology, 86, 25-33.
- Steinberg, L.D. (1981). Transformation in family relations at puberty. Developmental Psychology, 17, 833-840.
- Teyber, E. (1981). Structural family relations: A review. Family Therapy, 8, 39-48.
- Teyber, E. (1983). Effects of the parental coalition on adolescent emancipation from the family. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 9, 305-310.
- Thompson, E.H. & Gongla, P.A. (1983). Single-parent families in the mainstream of American Society. In E.D. Macklin & R.H. Rubin (Eds.), Contemporary families and alternative life styles, (pp. 97-124). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Waterman, C.K., Beubel, M., & Waterman, A.S. (1970). The relationship between resolution of the identity crisis and outcomes of previous psychosocial crises. Proceedings of the 78th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, 5, 467-468.
- Weiss, R. (1979). Going it alone: The family life and social situation of the single parent. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Whitbourne, S.K. & Tesch, S.A. (1985). A comparison of identity and intimacy statuses in college students and alumni. Developmental Psychology, 21, 1039-1044.
- Youniss, J. (1980). Parents and peers in social development. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

APPENDIX A

Please describe your family as your family acts now when responding to the following statements. Circle the number from 1 to 5 which indicates your personal view of each statement.

Example:

- | ALMOST<br>NEVER<br>1 | ONCE IN<br>IN A WHILE<br>2 | SOMETIMES<br>3 | FREQUENTLY<br>4 | ALMOST<br>ALWAYS<br>5 |
|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
- 
- |  | ALMOST<br>NEVER |   |   |   | ALMOST<br>ALWAYS |
|--|-----------------|---|---|---|------------------|
| 1. Family members ask each other for help.   | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 2. In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed. . . . .                         | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 3. We approve of each other's friends. . .   | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 4. Children have a say in their discipline.  | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 5. We like to do things with just our immediate family. . . . .                                  | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 6. Different persons act as leaders in our family. . . . .                                       | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 7. Family members feel closer to other family members than to people outside the family. . . . . | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 8. Our family changes its way of handling tasks. . . . .   | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 9. Family members like to spend free time with each other. . . . .                               | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 10. Parent(s) and children discuss punishment together. . . . .                                  | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 11. Family members feel very close to each other. . . . .  | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 12. The children make the decisions in our family. . . . .                                       | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 13. When our family gets together for activities, every body is present. . .                     | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |
| 14. Rules change in our family. . . . .  | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                |

15. We can easily think of things to do  
together as a family. . . . . 1 2 3 4 5
16. We shift household responsibilities  
from person to person. . . . . 1 2 3 4 5
17. Family members consult other family  
members on their decisions. . . . . 1 2 3 4 5
18. It is hard to identify the leader(s)  
in our family. . . . . 1 2 3 4 5
19. Family togetherness is very important. . 1 2 3 4 5
20. It is hard to tell who does which  
household chores. . . . . 1 2 3 4 5

### Self-Esteem Scale

Please read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings. Indicate your answer by choosing one of the following responses.

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE   | 4 = AGREE            |
| 2 = MODERATELY DISAGREE | 5 = MODERATELY AGREE |
| 3 = DISAGREE            | 6 = STRONGLY AGREE   |

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. 1 \_\_\_\_\_
2. At times I think I am no good at all. 2 \_\_\_\_\_
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. 3 \_\_\_\_\_
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. 4 \_\_\_\_\_
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. 5 \_\_\_\_\_
6. I certainly feel useless at times. 6 \_\_\_\_\_
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others. 7 \_\_\_\_\_
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. 8 \_\_\_\_\_
9. All in all, I feel that I am a failure. 9 \_\_\_\_\_
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself. 10 \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

The Revised Version of the Extended Objective  
Measure of Ego Identity Status

Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings. If a statement has more than one part, please indicate your reaction to the statement as a whole. Indicate your answer by choosing one of the following responses.

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE   | 4 = AGREE            |
| 2 = MODERATELY DISAGREE | 5 = MODERATELY AGREE |
| 3 = DISAGREE            | 6 = STRONGLY AGREE   |

1. I haven't decided on the job I really want. I'm going to take whatever job is available until something better comes along. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I haven't found a religion that I like and I don't really feel the need to look. \_\_\_\_\_
3. There is no single way to live my life which I like more than another. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I can never be too sure about politics because things change so fast. But I do think it's important to know where I stand politically and what I believe in. \_\_\_\_\_
5. I'm still trying to decide what I'm good at doing and what jobs will be right for me. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I don't think about religion much. It doesn't bother me one way or the other. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I'm looking for a way to live my life that feels good to me, but I haven't found it yet. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I haven't really thought about politics. I'm not excited about politics. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I might have thought about the different jobs I could have when I graduate but my parent(s) have already decided what I should do. \_\_\_\_\_
10. A person's religious faith is special to him or her. I have thought about it over and over again and know what I believe in. \_\_\_\_\_
11. After much thought I've developed my own beliefs about the best way for me to live my life and don't believe anyone will be likely to change my mind. \_\_\_\_\_

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE  
 2 = MODERATELY DISAGREE  
 3 = DISAGREE

4 = AGREE  
 5 = MODERATELY AGREE  
 6 = STRONGLY AGREE

12. I'm pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I feel the same as they do in terms of voting and such. \_\_\_\_\_
13. I really don't have to find the right job. I'll take any job that is available. \_\_\_\_\_
14. I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'm still trying to make up my mind. \_\_\_\_\_
15. My views on a good way to live my life were taught to me by my parent(s) and I don't see any need to question what they taught me. \_\_\_\_\_
16. There are so many political parties that I can't figure out what political party I should belong to. \_\_\_\_\_
17. It took me a while to decide but now I know what kind of job I want for a career. \_\_\_\_\_
18. I am confused about religion. I keep changing my mind about what is right and wrong for me. \_\_\_\_\_
19. In deciding how I want to live my life, I find that I ask myself and others a lot of questions. \_\_\_\_\_
20. I've thought about my political beliefs. I can agree with some of my parent's political beliefs and not others. \_\_\_\_\_
21. I am going to get the kind of job my parent(s) decided I should have. \_\_\_\_\_
22. I've thought a lot about religious faith and now know what I believe in. \_\_\_\_\_
23. My parent's views on life are good enough for me. I don't need anything else. \_\_\_\_\_
24. I'm not sure about my political beliefs but I'm trying to figure them out. \_\_\_\_\_
25. It took me a long time to decide but now I'm sure about the kind of job I want. \_\_\_\_\_
26. I go to the same church my family has always gone to. I've never really questioned why. \_\_\_\_\_

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE  
2 = MODERATELY DISAGREE  
3 = DISAGREE

4 = AGREE  
5 = MODERATELY AGREE  
6 = STRONGLY AGREE

27. I just kind of enjoy living. I don't want any one particular way to live my life. \_\_\_\_\_
28. I haven't been involved in politics enough to know what I believe. \_\_\_\_\_
29. I just can't decide what to do for a job. There are so many job possibilities. \_\_\_\_\_
30. I've never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parent(s) it must be right for me. \_\_\_\_\_
31. After a lot of thinking I'm sure I know what way I will live my life. \_\_\_\_\_
32. My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about things like abortion and mercy killing and I've always gone along believing what they believe. \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D

## Demographic Questionnaire

The questions below are to help us obtain general information about you for the purpose of adequately interpreting the results of this project. Please answer them as carefully and as accurately as you can.

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_  
years
2. What is your sex? (Circle number of your answer)
  - 1 MALE
  - 2 FEMALE
3. What is your race? (Circle number)
  - 1 BLACK
  - 2 WHITE
  - 3 HISPANIC
  - 4 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_  
specify
4. What grade are you in? (Circle number)
  - 1 9TH
  - 2 10TH
  - 3 11TH
  - 4 12TH
5. What high school curriculum are you in? (Circle number)
  - 1 COLLEGE PREP
  - 2 BUSINESS EDUCATION
  - 3 VOCATIONAL
6. Who are you living with? (Circle number)
  - 1 MOTHER ONLY
  - 2 FATHER ONLY
  - 3 MOTHER AND FATHER
  - 4 GRANDMOTHER
  - 5 GRANDFATHER
  - 6 STEPFATHER AND MOTHER
  - 7 STEPMOTHER AND FATHER
  - 8 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_  
specify

7. What is your parent's marital status? (Circle number for both mother and father)

MOTHER

- 1 MARRIED
- 2 SEPARATED
- 3 DIVORCED
- 4 SINGLE
- 5 OTHER

\_\_\_\_\_ specify

FATHER

- 1 MARRIED
- 2 SEPARATED
- 3 DIVORCED
- 4 SINGLE
- 5 OTHER

\_\_\_\_\_ specify

8. Is your mother employed? (Circle number of your answer)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

\_\_\_\_\_ specify job

9. Is your father employed? (Circle number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

\_\_\_\_\_ specify job

10. What is the highest level of education completed by your parents? (Circle number for both mother and father)

MOTHER

- 1 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 2 MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 3 HIGH SCHOOL
- 4 TECHNICAL/VOCA-TIONAL TRAINING
- 5 SOME COLLEGE
- 6 COMPLETED COLLEGE
- 7 GRADUATE SCHOOL

FATHER

- 1 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 2 MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 3 HIGH SCHOOL
- 4 TECHNICAL/VOCA-TIONAL TRAINING
- 5 SOME COLLEGE
- 6 COMPLETED COLLEGE
- 7 GRADUATE SCHOOL

11. Do you have brother(s) and/or sister(s)? (Circle number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

12. What are the ages of your brother(s) and/or sister(s)? (Please write in ages for both brothers and sisters)

BROTHER(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
SISTER(S) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

*Blacksburg, Virginia 24061 - 3099*

CENTER FOR FAMILY SERVICES (703) 961-7201

CONSENT FORM

I voluntarily give permission for my child to participate in a research project exploring adolescent ego identity achievement and family interaction. The project is supported by the Center for Family Services and the Department of Family and Child Development at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Your child's participation will contribute significantly to an increased understanding of adolescent development and will therefore enable educators and counselors to provide effective services to adolescents. I understand that the information provided by my child is completely confidential and that my child may withdraw from participation at any time. I also understand that I have the right to request the results of this research.

---

Parent/Guardian

---

Adolescent

**The vita has been removed from  
the scanned document**