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Factors Contributing To Self-Esteem Structure In Males And Females

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FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SELF-ESTEEM
STRUCTURE IN MALES AND FEMALES

Presented to
the Graduate Faculty of the
University of the Pacific

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

by
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March, 1987

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ABSTRACT
FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SELF-ESTEEM
STRUCTURE IN MALES AND FEMALES

Jerry S. Harris

University of the Pacific, 1987

The focus of this study was to test certain gender-related hypotheses regarding the relationships among personality traits as identified on the Personality Research Form (PRF) and self-esteem as measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS).

The subjects who voluntarily participated in this research were 92 male and 96 female college students. The subjects were students in an Introductory Psychology course at a local community college and state university. A packet containing a short biographical questionnaire, the TSCS, the PRF, and an introductory letter was administered to and completed by each subject. A statistical analysis of the data was accomplished with the use of the following treatments: a series of one-way analyses of variance, the Z test for independent correlation coefficients, and a two-way analysis of variance. In addition a multiple regression analysis was performed as a supplementary analysis.

The following results were obtained: (a) self-esteem scores for men and women were not shown to differ; (b) college women had significantly higher mean scores than college men on the PRF subscales of Harmavoidance, Nurturance and Sentience; (c) PRF subscales of Desirability and Succorance were significant predictors of the total TSCS score for men; (d) PRF subscales of Desirability, Order, Abasement and Dominance were significant predictors of the total TSCS score for women; (e) college women scoring below the 16th percentile in self-esteem scored significantly lower on the PRF subscale of Dominance than college men in the same self-esteem group; (f) age and marital status did affect self-esteem scores significantly for both men and women.

Some tentative conclusions may be drawn from this study. While college women scored significantly higher on the personality traits of harmavoidance, nurturance and sentience, it was not established that these or any of the traits measured by the PRF correlated differently with the TSCS self-esteem score the men and women. In fact, the study suggests that while there were some differences in moderate predictors of the self-esteem score from the multiple regression, there are no statistically significant differences between genders with regard to personality traits as measured by the PRF and self-esteem as measured by the TSCS.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The question of differences between men and women has long been of interest in educational and psychological research. However, a critical look at past research would indicate that much of what was identified as sex or gender differences was often incidental to the main purpose of the investigation. In fact, it has been observed that not until recent years has gender become an important independent variable in psychological research (Sonderegger, 1984).

Over the last few decades, differences between genders have been more intensely explored. In the early 70's, Maccoby and Jacklin published a summary volume, The Psychology of Sex Differences (1974). Areas that were discussed and studied included sociability, motivation, learning styles, activity level, and the personality traits of anxiety, dominance, and aggressiveness. A more recent compilation, Psychology and Gender (Sonderegger, 1984), also explored many of the above mentioned areas of possible differences between men and women.

Bem (1984) identified an important source of gender differentiation, namely, how people feel and think about themselves. Other authors have also posited that an individual's level of self-regard affects many areas of his

or her behavior and performance (Bandura, 1977; Coopersmith, 1967; Fromm, 1947). Additional authors have addressed the issue of possible distinct levels of self-evaluation between men and women, as well as different sources or bases for their self-evaluation (Bardwick, 1977; Carlson, 1971; Gilligan, 1982).

Terminology

The concept of how people feel about themselves has had various labels. Such constructs as "self-concept," "self-esteem" and "self-efficacy" are all interrelated and are defined in terms of how persons think or feel about themselves. Many authors use these constructs interchangeably (e.g. Carlson, 1965; Orlofsky & Stake, 1981; Thomas, 1983). Indeed, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS), a measurement instrument, uses the term self-concept in the title while defining its total score as "reflecting the overall level of self-esteem" of the respondent (Fitts, 1965). Other authors have chosen such terms as "self-regard" (Wylie, 1979) to refer to the collective concepts regarding one's feelings of self-worth. Definitions such as those noted in Chapter 2 denote self-concept as a "view of" and self-esteem as a "judgment of" one's self. However, as Wylie (1979) noted, "the terms are so intertwined and overlapping in the literature that the constructs must be discussed as a group" (p. 40). The present researcher has chosen to use the term

self-esteem consistently as reflecting a person's overall judgment of himself or herself (Briggs, 1975). This term is seen as reflecting the focus of the present study and the emphasis of most of the reviewed research.

An additional pair of constructs that need to be clarified at this point are "gender" and "sex." As noted in Chapter 2 sex is more of a biological term referring to the basic categories of humans--male or female--whereas gender is a more psychological term that refers to the sum total of thoughts, feelings and behavior that make a person masculine or feminine (Eysenck, 1982). While such authors as Gilligan (1982) and Chodorow (1978) have used the two terms interchangeably, other authors such as Unger (1979) have argued that gender is a less vague and a more preferred term in most research discussions. The "coming of age" of the term gender is perhaps illustrated in the titles of the Maccoby & Sonderregger books mentioned earlier. The first published in 1974 is titled The Psychology of Sex Differences; the second was published in 1984 and is titled Psychology and Gender. In view of this trend in usage and in consideration of the present researcher's focus on the psychological aspects between men and women, the term gender will be most generally used. The term sex will be used when referring to strictly biological distinctions between men and women.

Research

Research in the area of gender differences in self-esteem, as mentioned earlier, has been very tangential until recently. Nevertheless, there have been some important trends in identifying gender differences in self-esteem. Some research, for example, has produced positive correlation between measures of masculinity and high self-esteem scores (e.g. Whitley, 1983). Other research points toward some different bases for self-esteem between men and women (e.g. Carlson, 1971; Gilligan, 1982). Illustrative of the latter findings is the study of Bedian and Touliatos (1978) who found that a major source of self-esteem for women was affiliative relationships whereas this was not true for men. Such research tends to generate additional questions. Do men and women differ on some specific personality traits? Do these differences affect how they feel about themselves? Do men and women have the same "kind" of self-esteem?

McClelland (1975) has suggested some additional concerns in this area of research. He has observed that research data have often been drawn predominantly or exclusively from studies of men; consequently psychologists have generally regarded male behavior as the norm and female behavior as some type of deviation. Thus the bias

of instruments constructed from male-oriented theories and populations is certainly plausible. With such bias in past research acknowledged, another look at gender differences in self-esteem seems appropriate.

Statement of the Problem

Although research has shown significant positive correlations between self-esteem and other variables, few studies have attempted to identify the components or personality traits correlated with self-esteem. Still fewer have used well-validated instruments in personality and self-esteem measurement (Wylie, 1979). In the present researcher's review of research articles relating to self-esteem, only four used a well-researched instrument with published norms and psychometric properties. Furthermore, available research seemed to be focused on correlating measures of masculinity and femininity with self-esteem rather than identifying the specific personality traits that may relate to male and female self-esteem.

Thus, the focus of this study was to test certain gender-related hypotheses regarding the relationships among personality traits as identified on the Personality Research Form (PRF) and self-esteem as measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS).

Significance of the Study

There is adequate research to suggest that male and female values (Gilligan, 1982) and perceptions (Taylor & Fiske, 1982; Wallston & O'Leary, 1981) differ. Observational data also suggest that society in general responds to men and women differently (e.g. greater availability of athletic training for men than women, veteran points for men on Civil Service exams, and maternal leave for women). Gender differences have also been evidenced by the predilection of both male and female perceivers to differentially attribute traits, behavioral characteristics and motivations for identical performance as a function of the sex of the performer (Wallston & O'Leary, 1981). Assuming that such differences in values and perceptions do exist, it seems tenable that men and women may feel differently about themselves and that different personality traits may be developed that would affect self-esteem levels.

It is hoped that the findings related to the hypotheses in this study would be an important step in identifying significant differences between genders in the area of personality and self-esteem. As differences are established, then possible implications need to be evaluated and explored. If the level of self-esteem is determined to be different between genders, then it seems reasonable to make efforts at changing parental practices, instructional policies, and

societal influences to insure that self-esteem can be well developed in persons of both genders. With different components or personality traits of self-esteem identified, awareness of these differences could be heightened.

Follow-up questions may be asked such as: Are these traits desirable? Can they be changed? Should they be modified? How are they presently maintained? What values are associated with these components? Other possible changes might include differing approaches in a counseling or educational setting to enhance self-esteem for men and women.

The aim of such possible implications would be to ameliorate gender differences in self-esteem that debilitate an individual in his or her psychological and sociological progress. Thus this research could be a small step in that direction.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to measure the levels of self-esteem in a sample of men and women and analyze the differing correlations between the genders on selected personality traits and self-esteem. The questions the research was designed to answer were:

1. Does the mean TSCS total self-esteem score of college men differ from that of college women?
2. Do college men and women have different means on the TSCS subtests of Physical Self, Moral-Ethical Self, Family Self, Social Self, Self-Criticism, Identity,

Self-Satisfaction, and Behavior?

3. Are there differences between college men and women with regard to their mean scores on the PRF personality traits of Abasement, Achievement, Affiliation, Aggression, Autonomy, Change, Cognitive Structure, Defence, Dominance, Endurance, Exhibition, Harmavoidance, Impulsivity, Nurturance, Order, Play, Sentience, Social Recognition, Succorance, Understanding, Desirability and Infrequency?

4. Are there different correlations between the self-esteem score on the TSCS and the PRF subtest traits of Abasement, Achievement, Affiliation, Aggression, Autonomy, Change, Cognitive Structure, Deference, Dominance, Endurance, Exhibition, Harmavoidance, Impulsivity, Nurturance, Order, Play, Sentience, Social Recognition, Succorance, Understanding, Desirability, and Infrequency for college women than for college men?

5. Among college students, does gender interact with age or marital status with respect to total mean self-esteem scores?

Assumptions

There are some major assumptions upon which this study is based. One such assumption is that the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale does indeed measure a person's concept of himself or herself. Another related assumption is that

the Personality Research Form does measure the personality traits ascribed to it. It is further assumed that both of these instruments are equally valid for men and women. Both test authors indicate there are no significant differences in men and women's scores and do not use separate profile sheets for men and women (Fitts, 1965 & Jackson, 1967). These assumptions are based on validity studies completed with these instruments, the results of which are reported in Chapter 3.

Limitations

This study was conducted with a sample from a community college and a state university in Sacramento, California. The degree of its representativeness with regard to many potentially relevant variables is not known. Generalization of the findings would thus be limited to state and community college populations similar in composition.

The measures used in this study are self-report instruments. Although the most valid and reliable measures available were selected, how well they measure their respective constructs is limited to their measured validity and reliability.

Definition of Terms

Self-concept. "A person's view of himself; the fullest description of himself of which a person is capable

at any given time" (English & English, 1958, p. 113). See discussion under self-esteem.

Self-esteem. "A person's overall judgment of himself or herself--how much he or she likes his or her particular person" (Briggs, 1975, p. 32). Terms such as self-concept and self-efficacy are related to self-esteem and all have to do with judgments that a person makes about himself or herself. The term self-esteem will be used consistently throughout this study, except where an alternative term is used in a quotation.

Gender. "Masculinity or femininity: it is a psychological term that describes thoughts, feelings and behaviors. It is the sum of an individual's feelings about his or her sexual status" (Eysenck, 1982, p. 63). Although related to the term "sex," the term "gender" seems freer from secondary or connotative meanings and thus is a preferred term. It will be used consistently throughout this study.

Sex. "Either of the two divisions or categories of organisms, male or female, that are based on the distinction of producing respectively, egg cells or sperm cells. A sexually motivated phenomena or behavior (i.e., sexual intercourse)" (Eysenck, 1982, p. 187).

Rationale

In consideration of the purpose of this study, a sample of college students from local graduate and undergraduate institutions was obtained. Since a majority of the comparable studies used college students as subjects, a like sample should enable comparisons in results to be more accurate, although there are limitations to such a sample in terms of generalizability to the general population. One hundred male and 100 female college students constituted the sample. The instruments chosen for measurement of the personality traits and self-esteem were the Personality Research Form (PRF) and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS), respectively. These instruments were considered valid and reliable by selected reviewers (Buros, 1972), and both had normative data on populations similar to the sample chosen for this study. Statistical analyses to determine the relationships among gender, self-esteem and personality traits were performed by this researcher at the Computer Center of the University of the Pacific.

Summary

The relationship between gender and various aspects of behavior and personality is of increasing interest in today's world. Significant publications (Gilligan, 1982; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Sonderegger, 1984) have addressed such relationships and their possible implications. One

variable of interest is that of self-esteem. The questions of how self-esteem may differ between the genders, what personality variables may contribute to possible differences, and what the answers to these questions may mean is the subject of this study.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

While much has been written regarding self-esteem as is illustrated in Wylie's (1979) landmark volume, there is considerable disagreement concerning its nature and role in personality psychology. The following review will examine the literature regarding gender, self-esteem and personality traits under the following headings: (a) Self-Esteem in Psychological Theory, (b) Theoretical Bases for Gender Differences in Self-Esteem, (c) Research on Gender Differences in Self-Esteem, (d) Instrumentation and (e) Conclusion.

Self-Esteem in Psychological Theory

Early in the development of the field of psychology in the United States, William James (1890) evidenced an interest in self-esteem. His writings depicted the importance that judgments about one's self played in determining behavior and attitude. While writing during the same period, Cooley (1902) defined the self as everything that an individual designates as his or her own and to which the individual refers with the personal pronouns "I," "me," and "myself." He proposed the term or concept of "the looking glass self." Thus, Cooley emphasized the

importance of how individuals react to "others" in their lives. That is, individuals tend to view themselves through the eyes of others.

Mead's point of view develops that of Cooley's. Mead (1934) believed that self-esteem could only be developed in the context of a social group. His term "generalized other" emphasized the importance of the self existing only in relationship to other selves. Thus he hypothesized that each individual has many selves; persons have different roles or views of themselves corresponding to the different social groups with which they relate.

Sullivan (1953) examined the concept of "significant other." According to Sullivan, such persons exert particular influence on the development of self-concept. Thus the child--and later the adult--develops the images of "good-me" and "bad-me." Just as the bad-me is organized around feelings of disapproval from significant others, the good-me is organized around feelings of approval and acceptance from the significant others. Thus, as a person internalizes positive feelings toward the self, the sense of self-esteem will be enhanced.

Drawing from the concepts expressed by Lucky (1960), Snyggs and Combs (1949), Sullivan (1953) and others, Rogers (1961) has become perhaps the leading exponent of self-theory in recent years. Rogers defined self as

"an organized, fluid, but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationships of the 'I' and the 'me' together with values attached to these concepts" (p. 498). He stated clearly that the self includes only those perceptions and values that are conscious or can easily become so. Thus self-esteem in Roger's system would be a positive regard for those characteristics and relationships of the "I" and "me" in the person's conceptual pattern.

The highlighted phenomenologists have generated a large body of research surrounding the constructs of self-esteem. Increasingly, cognitive psychologists have given centrality to the concepts of self-esteem and self-concept also. Kelly (1955), Hilgard (1949), Epstein (1973) and others have given emphasis in theory and research to the nature and effects of self-esteem. Bandura's (1977) landmark article on self-efficacy is yet another indicator of the centrality of this concept of self-esteem from a social learning viewpoint.

The above review has been conducted in order to establish that self-esteem is a psychological construct that has assumed a prominent position in the construction of the major non-behavioral theoretical frameworks. The construct of self-esteem has generated a significant amount of research attention either as a dependent or

independent variable. Given this, what basis exists that warrants an investigation of gender differences in the construct of self-esteem?

Theoretical Bases for Gender Differences in Self-Esteem

In any discussion of the differentiation of genders, biological aspects cannot be ignored. The influence of biology on gender differences may be as strong as Freud (1927) intimates or as slight as is perceived by such authors as Adler (1946) and Bardwick (1971). As with the trait of intelligence, one could find articulate arguments discussing the relative weights of the influence of biological or social/psychological factors on an individual's self-esteem. Certainly most theorists would agree that it is the interaction of biology with culture--not biology or culture alone--that determines how similar or different men and women are. While none of the authors in the following review discusses the nature or nurture questions directly, the relative weights of each may be inferred from their theoretical positions. Therefore, both nature and nurture factors should be kept in mind as the following literature is reviewed.

Freud (1927) was probably the first to articulate the basis for gender differences in feelings about the self.

He hypothesized that girls, upon realizing their lack of a penis, "develop, like a scar, a sense of inferiority" (p. 138). Horney (1967) further developed this line of reasoning. She argued that as the female grows, she evaluates herself in light of male pretensions and values. Horney thought, like Freud, that women devalued themselves because of their lack of a penis.

Adler (1973) was another theorist who focused on the cultural forces in determining feelings of self-esteem. He described the roles which foster the belief in the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. Following from this belief is the corollary that "good" is "masculine," and "bad" is "feminine." Adler, too, expected males to have higher self-esteem, in general, than women.

Fromm (1947) examined the respective roles of men and women in sexual intercourse as an integral part in the formation of male and female personality. Fromm (1947) theorized that men, to guard against their fear of sexual failure, strive for power and prestige. Women on the other hand, to guard against frustration and dependency, strive to attract and prove themselves desirable. Fromm believed that while these different paths are rooted in the sex act, they are supported primarily by social roles.

Thompson's (1950) writings further highlighted the influence of social and cultural factors in the development of the self-concept. She advanced the idea that

women and men in western culture have a derogatory attitude toward female sexuality. This devaluation is based on three factors: (a) the belief that the female sexual drive is not important, (b) a depreciation of female sex organs, and (c) the association of female genitals with uncleanness. With these obstacles, then, women were believed to face a difficult route to formulating a healthy self-esteem. As Thompson stated, "the acceptance of one's body and all its functions is a basic need in the establishment of self-respect and self-esteem" (p. 353). Since men do not labor under such burdens, the implication is that they would have more positive feelings of self-esteem.

Breaking from predominantly male-oriented theories was Bardwick (1971). She stressed that the discrepancy between the ideal self and the real self is the critical factor in determining self-esteem. Such a perspective led her to the following conclusion:

I think that if a woman has a feminine and normal core identity, failure in the feminine roles will preclude feelings of self-esteem. Normally, women will not participate in roles which threaten their affiliative needs, because these needs are critical in their basic concept of themselves (p. 158).

To complement Bardwick's (1971) position are the concepts offered by Carlson (1971). She described two important dimensions of the self-concept. One is a social/personal orientation, and the other is self-esteem.

The social/personal orientation is the degree to which a person values interpersonal experiences and social relationships as opposed to a more personal-self orientation. The second dimension, self-esteem, is defined as the degree of correspondence between an individual's self-concept and his or her ideal self. Although Carlson saw different components for male and female self-esteem, she expected the levels of self-esteem to be equivalent across gender.

Drawing from the writings of Bardwick, Miller, Carlson, and others is the more recent position offered by Gilligan (1982) in her book, In a Different Voice. She called for "a new psychology of women" (p. 102) that recognizes the different antecedents for self-development. She further theorized that "women not only define themselves in a context of human relationships, but judge themselves [evaluate their self-esteem] in terms of their ability to care" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 68). Gilligan believed that men have devalued women in their theories of psychological development. She concurred with Miller (1976) who emphasized,

. . . that women stay with, build on, and develop in a context of attachment and affiliation with others--eventually, for many women, the threat of disruption of an affiliation is perceived not just as a loss of a relationship, but as something closer to a loss of self (p. 83).

Various psychological theories have been examined with regard to the self-esteem construct and the possible differences between men and women in self-esteem development and composition. As noted above, the earlier, better known theories have been accepted to such an extent through the years that differences between genders on such issues as self-esteem were not even explored in any direct sense until the last decade. It is the later female-authored theoretical positions that have begun to cast doubt on the earlier well-entrenched theories which stressed a male-superior position.

In discussing moral reasoning Gilligan (1982) critiques the use of male standards (or norms) as the bases for evaluating the moral reasoning of women. Bardwick (1971) and Carlson (1971) also articulated the self-esteem issue with regard to differences between men and women. They each outlined different components of self-esteem for men and women. Thus Bardwick and Carlson would depict men and women as drawing from different sources for construction of their self-esteem--women from relationship factors and men from personal factors.

These recent female authors posit a difference between genders in the factors affecting the maintenance of self-esteem. It is with this position in mind that a review of related research will be conducted in the following section.

Research on Gender Differences
in Self-Esteem

A survey of the research that has attempted to identify differential factors affecting male and female self-esteem does not lead to any solid conclusions. Wylie (1979) believed that there are several reasons for the inconclusiveness in the search for gender differences in self-esteem. Among these reasons are: (a) the use of idiosyncratic instruments with poor validity and reliability data, (b) few replications of the better designed experiments, and (c) failure to control for gender-related factors. In light of these concerns, the available literature will be examined to determine what has and what has not been explored in terms of gender differences in self-esteem.

One factor in the focus of some research has been the correlation between masculinity and self-esteem. Kagan (1976) designed a study to focus on possible correlates of self-esteem with high achieving males and females. One hypothesis that was accepted at the .05 level was that the self-esteem of males was higher than that of females. The instrument used to measure self-esteem was the Inventory of Adjustment and Values. A second hypothesis was also supported to the effect that dyadic relationships were more highly correlated with self-esteem for female

than male students. In other words, a positive heterosexual relationship seemed to be a significant correlate to female self-esteem scores; however, this was not true for males.

In a similar study, Anill and Cunningham (1979) tested 237 university students with sex-role and self-esteem instruments. The conclusion of the study was that "masculinity showed significant positive correlations with self-esteem in both sexes, whereas the correlations with femininity were generally nil or slightly negative" (p. 783). Similarly, Flaherty and Dusek (1980) had 357 college students take the Bem Sex Role Inventory and a semantic differential self-concept scale. Using analyses of variance and multiple regression, the scores from the two instruments were analyzed. The findings were that self-esteem for males was highly correlated with measures of masculinity, whereas self-esteem for females was significantly related to measures of both masculinity and femininity. There was no significant difference on the mean self-esteem scores for men and women.

Other researchers have attempted to identify different sources of self-esteem for men and women. An early study by Carlson (1971) showed significant differences between men and women on social-personal orientation and self-esteem. Using themes from expository writing, Carlson

found that men were more self-oriented and women were significantly more social or other oriented in evaluating sources of their self-esteem. Feldman (1980) studied 86 women between 30 and 55 years in age, and identified external social factors as the main contributor to high self-esteem scores for women. In contrast, Orlofsky and Stake (1981) found no significant difference between genders on sources of self-esteem when they investigated 176 male and female college students. The instruments used were the Personal Attributes Questionnaire and the Performance Self-Esteem Scales, both with non-reported psychometric properties.

Berger (1968) made some similar conclusions in his study. In an effort "to explore the factorial nature of the self-esteem construct" (p. 442), 272 undergraduates were given self-esteem items from an idiosyncratic instrument on which no reliability or validity data were reported. Five factors were chosen that explained 51.8% of the total variability. In Berger's discussion of the results he noted that:

. . . [the] sex differences obtained indicate that females' self-evaluation stems from different sources than males' self-evaluation. The results suggest that females tend to derive their self-evaluation, or some part of it, from social certainty, while males tend to rely on other sources. When dealing with self-esteem, it appears that sex differences cannot be ignored (p. 445).

More recently, Bedian and Touliatos (1978), using a modified Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and an adjective checklist, tested 85 high-achieving women. They concluded that success in affiliative relationships is a major source of esteem in women even though they may have achievement strivings.

Gender role stereotypes also seem to play an important part in self-esteem scores. For instance, Rosenkrantz and Vogel (1968) investigated the value of sex-role stereotypes for 74 male and 80 female college students. The students responded on a questionnaire consisting of 122 bipolar items. He concluded that: (a) sex-role stereotypes were very strong, (b) masculine traits hold higher social desirability than feminine traits, and (c) women hold more negative values of their self-worth than men do of themselves. The Rosenkrantz and Vogel (1968) and Berger (1968) studies indicate a strong relationship between male-linked traits and high self-esteem regardless of the gender identity.

Although there were exceptions, Wylie (1979) concluded from her investigation of some 47 studies that the predominance of findings were null--thus lending little evidence to the possibility of a significant gender and self-esteem correlation. What does seem to have fairly consistent positive findings is the high correlation

between measures of masculinity and self-esteem. What the research suggests then is that those individuals, whether male or female, who evaluate themselves as having what society describes as masculine traits, feel more positive about themselves.

To recapitulate, research findings fall into three general categories. The first is that a strong relationship between gender and self-esteem is yet to be established; however, none of the research indicates a positive correlation between measures of feminine characteristics and self-esteem--all were either positive correlations with measures of masculine characteristics or null findings. The second generalization is that women tend to place a higher value on affiliation needs than men with regard to their self-concept. Finally, there are consistent findings that the higher a person of either gender scores on traits which society describes as masculine, the higher his or her self-esteem tends to be.

One possible explanation for the majority of null findings relates to the instrumentation and scoring. The practice in almost all studies is to sum across subtests in order to generate a total self-esteem score; thus any given global score may result from any number of combinations. For example, men and women may obtain equivalent scores by scoring strongly in different sets of items.

Thus two total scores may be similar, but each may reflect a different profile on the subtests.

It may, of course, be possible that the recurrent failure to find significant gender differences indicates a genuine similar level of self-esteem in both genders. Wylie (1979) offered that "despite their subordination, women may draw upon various resources that enable them to develop positive self-concepts. Despite their position of relative privilege, men may encounter various obstacles to such development" (p. 272). Although this would be inconsistent with several of the theories that predict lower self-regard in women than men, it is not inconsistent with the more recent research which has been discussed.

Instrumentation

The methods by which researchers have measured self-esteem have been almost as diverse as the results of the research. A review of the use of instruments in the measurement of self-esteem is reported.

Wylie's (1979) summary of 47 studies using what she described as "well-known instruments of over-all self-regard" (p. 271) included the use of 10 different instruments. These tests ranged from children to adults in applicability. The instruments differed in theoretical bases and ranged in format from adjective check lists (e.g. Interpersonal Check List) to self-report inventories

(e.g. Tennessee Self-Concept Scale). In light of these differences it is not difficult for one to see the challenge in interpreting results from the various instruments used in self-esteem research. To further obscure the picture, there were some 43 other studies which Wylie examined that used idiosyncratic instruments. She stated,

The problems of evaluation and interpretation are compounded by the practice of using in a single study an instrument about which little is known--concerning psychometric properties. Of the 43 studies which I have examined, most were so deficient methodologically or lacking in information that I merely list them at the end of the section (p. 273).

The present researcher, in reviewing studies regarding self-esteem from 1968 through 1985, found a similar picture. Of the 14 studies identified during this time period, only four used a well-known instrument with reported psychometric properties. The other 10 studies used idiosyncratic instruments with incomplete or unreported measurement data.

Summary

As the available research data have been examined regarding gender and self-esteem, several factors seem to be significant. First of all, there are obvious trends, as noted previously, in much of the research. Second, there has been little replication of the methodologically solid studies. Next, the instruments used in the research have been so varied in type and quality as to make

comparable interpretation difficult and tenuous. Finally, there has been little attempt to identify the separate antecedents or components of self-esteem to determine if there are significant correlations between gender, self-esteem, and specific personality components.

This review of literature has provided a theoretical basis for investigation and a research background upon which one may formulate further research. A basis has been established for formulating hypotheses for further study of gender differences in the levels of and antecedents of self-esteem.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The works of such authors as Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), Bem (1984), and Gilligan (1982), suggest that the study of gender differences has recently been a popular issue which has led to the identification of possible areas of difference and of the factors influencing the differentiation between genders. The possible differences between men and women in their levels of self-esteem has been a tangential issue in several studies (e.g. Berger, 1968; Whitley, 1983), whereas the possible personality factors affecting the self-esteem of both genders has received little attention.

The purpose of this study was to test certain gender-related hypotheses regarding the relationships among personality traits as identified on the PRF and self-esteem as measured by the TSCS.

Population and Sample

The population to which the findings of this study are generalizable is college undergraduate men and women.

The sample from this population was selected from students attending a community and a state college in the

Sacramento, California area. The American River College (ARC) was selected because it is the largest community college in the area and draws its student population from a wide geographical and economic area. A community college was selected because it has a large number of older and part-time students which would tend to broaden the generalizability of the sample. The California State University at Sacramento (CSUS) was also selected to increase the representativeness of the sample. CSUS has a large number of minority groups and draws students from several states and foreign countries. Thus these institutions should provide the best probability of drawing a sample that is as representative as possible of the stated population.

The subjects of this study were all enrolled in an "Introduction to Psychology" class at the respective institutions. Both male and female students were equally free to volunteer for participation in the study following a brief explanation of the tests by the cooperating professors.

Measurement Instruments

The instruments chosen to measure the variables in this study were the Personality Research Form and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. Both tests were selected after consideration of their validity and reliability properties. The selection of valid and reliable

instruments was especially important since much of the past relevant research had made use of instruments with questionable or unknown psychometric properties.

The Personality Research Form (PRF)

This form was developed by Jackson (1967) to measure the normally functioning personality. The personality traits on the PRF were originally defined by Murray (1938) and his colleagues at the Harvard Psychological Clinic, and these definitions have been somewhat modified by Jackson in his construction of the PRF. The test has a self-report, true-false format and takes about 20 minutes to complete. The norms for the PRF are based on samples of over 1,000 male and over 1,000 female college students. No statistics concerning differences in male and female scores are reported, nor are separate profiles used for male and female subjects.

The reliability scores of the PRF range from .72 to .92 when split-half reliability was used and from .69 to .90 for test-retest reliability (Jackson, 1967). The instrument has built-in scales for social desirability responses and validity coefficients of .52 with peer ratings (Jackson, 1967). One reviewer called the PRF "among the most methodologically sophisticated personality inventories available" (Buros, 1972, p. 782). Crites (1969) also offered a positive critique of the PRF.

One of the special features of the PRF scales is that they are explicitly bipolar so that high or low scores on a given dimension indicate its presence or absence. An adjectival description of the 22 scales is provided in Table 1 (see page 33).

The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS)

This test was developed by William H. Fitts (1965), and consists of 100 self-descriptive statements on which subjects rate themselves on a five-part Likert scale. The mean time for the administration of the TSCS is about 13 minutes. The TSCS is one of only a few objective instruments found that was specifically developed to measure aspects of the adult self-esteem.

Norms for the TSCS were developed from a broad sample of 626 subjects. The author (Fitts, 1965) states that "the effects of such demographic variables as sex, age, race, education and intelligence on the scores of this scale are not significant" (p. 13). Reported test-retest reliability ranged between .70 and .92. Convergent validity scores were also reported in the .70's (Fitts, 1965).

A description of the nine scales of the TSCS is provided in Table 2 (see page 35). The most important single score on the TSCS is the total "P" or total self-esteem score. It is this score that was used in most of the

Table 1

Adjectival Descriptions of PRF Personality Variables*

Variable	Description of High Scorer
Abasement	self-blaming, resigned, yielding, humble
Achievement	aspiring, self-improving, driving, striving, competitive
Affiliation	amicable, sociable, genial, hospitable
Aggression	argumentative, hostile, hot tempered, blunt
Autonomy	self-reliant, individualistic, uncompliant
Change	flexible, unpredictable, innovative, fickle
Cognitive Structure	precise, designing, literal, needs structure
Defendence	justifying, self-condoning, guarded, touchy
Dominance	governing, forceful, assertive, directing
Endurance	persistent, persevering, energetic, durable, determined
Exhibition	expressive, demonstrative, dramatic, showy
Harmavoidance	fearful, apprehensive, pain-avoidant, avoids risks
Impulsivity	hasty, reckless, uninhibited, irrepressible
Nurturance	protective, maternal, ministering, helpful
Order	neat, systematic, consistent, methodical
Play	jovial, fun loving, frivolous, carefree
Sentience	aesthetic, earthy, sensuous, noticing

(table continues)

Variable	Description of High Scorer
Social Recognition	approval seeking, socially proper, obliging
Succorance	dependent, seeks support, needs protection, craves affection
Understanding	reflective, investigative, rational, astute
Infrequency	responds in an implausible or careless manner
Desirability	in responding to personality statements, tends to present a favorable picture of oneself

*The above descriptions are taken from Jackson's PRF Manual (1967).

Table 2

Description of the TSCS Total Score and Subscales*

Score Item	Description
Total P Score	This is the most important single score on the Counseling Form. It reflects the overall level of self-esteem. Persons with <u>high</u> scores tend to like themselves, feel that they are persons of value and worth, have confidence in themselves, and act accordingly. People with <u>low</u> scores are doubtful about their own worth; see themselves as undesirable; often feel anxious, depressed, and unhappy; and have little faith or confidence in themselves.
Row 1 P Score-- Identity	These are the "what I am" items. Here the individual is describing his basic identity--what he is as he sees himself.
Row 2 P Score-- Self-Satisfaction	This score comes from those items where the individual describes how he feels about the self he perceives. In general, this score reflects the level of self-satisfaction or self-acceptance. An individual may have very high scores on Row 1 and Row 3 yet still score low on Row 2 because of very high standards and expectations for himself. Or vice versa, he may have a low opinion of himself as indicated by the Row 1 and Row 3 scores yet still have a high Self-Satisfaction Score on Row 2. The sub-scores are therefore best interpreted in comparison with each other and with the Total P Score.
Row 3 P Score-- Behavior	This score comes from those items that say "this is what I do, or this is the way I act." Thus, this score measures the individual's perception of his own behavior or the way he functions.

(table continues)

Score Item	Description
Column A--Physical Self	Here the individual is presenting his view of his body, his state of health, his physical appearance, skills, and sexuality.
Column B--Moral/Ethical Self	This score describes the self from a moral/ethical frame of reference--moral worth, relationship to God, feelings of being a "good" or "bad" person, and satisfaction with one's religion or lack of it.
Column C--Personal Self	This score reflects the individual's sense of personal worth, his feeling of adequacy as a person and his evaluation of this personality apart from his body or his relationships to others.
Column D--Family Self	This score reflects one's feelings of adequacy, worth, and value as a family member. It refers to the individual's perception of self in reference to his closest and most immediate circle of associates.
Column E--Social Self	This is another "self as perceived in relation to others" category but pertains to "others" in a more general way. It reflects the person's sense of adequacy and worth in his social interaction with other people in general.

* Fitts (1965, pp. 2-3).

statistical analyses. This total score is defined by Fitts (1965, p. 8) as "reflecting the overall level of self-esteem."

Biographical Questionnaire

A short six question self-report questionnaire was completed by each subject. The questions were directed at gathering data on age, college class, grade-point-average (GPA), marital status and ethnicity. A sample questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

Procedures and Activities

Permission from administrators of the participating institutions was received following the submission of an abstract of the proposed research. These administrators also assisted in the identification of possible professors to be involved in the study.

The cooperating professors at each institution were given an orientation regarding the general purpose of the research and procedures for the administration of the specific tests. A packet containing the TSCS and PRF test booklets and answer forms, in addition to the questionnaire and introduction letter (see Appendix B), was given for each student who volunteered to participate. The tests were administered by the professors. Male and female subjects were equally encouraged to volunteer for participation. Anonymity on all instruments was assured.

Although over 100 subjects of each gender returned the test packets, due to mutilation and incompleteness only 92 male and 96 female packets were useable. The tests were all hand-scored and then test scores and questionnaire data were entered into a data file for analysis at the Computer Center of the University of the Pacific. All data were double entered and verified for accuracy. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program was utilized for all statistical analyses.

Hypotheses

The data from this study were analyzed with respect to the hypotheses of the study. The level of significance for the hypotheses testing was set at the .01 level. In consideration of the sample size and the number and type of statistical tests the .01 level was considered most appropriate for accepting hypotheses. The specific hypotheses stated in the null form are as follows:

1. There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean total TSCS self-esteem scores.
2. There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean scores of the TSCS subscale traits of:
 - 2.1 Physical Self
 - 2.2 Moral-Ethical Self
 - 2.3 Family Self
 - 2.4 Social Self
 - 2.5 Self-Criticism
 - 2.6 Identity
 - 2.7 Self-Satisfaction
 - 2.8 Behavior

3. There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean scores of the PRF subscales of:

3.1 Abasement	3.12 Harmavoidance
3.2 Achievement	3.13 Impulsivity
3.3 Affiliation	3.14 Nurturance
3.4 Aggression	3.15 Order
3.5 Autonomy	3.16 Play
3.6 Change	3.17 Sentience
3.7 Cognitive Structure	3.18 Social Recognition
3.8 Defenceence	3.19 Succorance
3.9 Dominance	3.20 Understanding
3.10 Endurance	3.21 Desirability
3.11 Exhibition	3.22 Infrequency

4. Correlations do not differ for college men and women between the TSCS total self-esteem score and the PRF subscales of:

4.1 Abasement	4.12 Harmavoidance
4.2 Achievement	4.13 Impulsivity
4.3 Affiliation	4.14 Nurturance
4.4 Aggression	4.15 Order
4.5 Autonomy	4.16 Play
4.6 Change	4.17 Sentience
4.7 Cognitive Structure	4.18 Social Recognition
4.8 Defenceence	4.19 Succorance
4.9 Dominance	4.20 Understanding
4.10 Endurance	4.21 Desirability
4.11 Exhibition	4.22 Infrequency

5. Gender does not interact with age or marital status with respect to the mean TSCS total self-esteem scores.

Statistical Treatment

The data from this investigation were analyzed utilizing the statistical tests described below at the computer facilities of the University of the Pacific. All statistical analyses were implementations of the SPSS program.

The following statistical treatments were employed to test the various hypotheses:

1. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were tested by using a series of one-way ANOVA's with gender as the independent variable.

2. Hypothesis 4, pertaining to the relationship between the TSCS self-esteem score and PRF subscale scores for males and females, was tested by using the z test for independent correlation coefficients.

3. Hypothesis 5 was tested using two-way analyses of variance with gender as one factor and age categories and marital status used as second factors. Self-esteem was used as the dependent variable.

4. A supplementary analysis of the data was performed to provide additional information about the relationship among the variables. A multiple regression analysis was performed using the PRF subscales to predict self-esteem

scores for males and females separately. This analysis ascertained whether the set of significant PRF predictors of self-esteem for men differed from that of women, and if the relative weights are comparable.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the procedures used in gathering the data for this study. A population was selected, followed by the identification of the appropriate sample. Measurement instruments were discussed with emphasis on validity and reliability information. Following the explanation of steps taken in the collection of the data, the specific hypotheses for this study were stated. Finally, the specific statistical tests used in the analysis of the data were delineated.

Chapter 4

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to test certain gender-related hypotheses regarding the relationships among personality traits as identified on the PRF and self-esteem as measured by the TSCS. This chapter contains the results of the statistical analysis of the data from the study. These results were used to retain or reject the statistical hypotheses which were stated in Chapter 3.

The results were analyzed at the computer facilities of the University of the Pacific. The analysis of variance, z-test for independent correlations and regression analysis test were used to evaluate the hypotheses set forth in Chapter 3. These analyses utilized the SPSS programs available through the Burroughs B6700 computer facilities at University of the Pacific. All hypotheses were evaluated at the .01 level of significance.

In addition to the results for the specific hypotheses, descriptive data were gathered from the questionnaire. As is indicated in Table 3 (see page 43) gender was fairly evenly distributed, and the majority of the sample was Anglo, single, between 18 and 21 years of age, and either a freshman or sophomore in college. Thus, there are some limitations to the generalizability of the study. The

Table 3

Sample Description According to Demographic Variables

Category	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>N</u>	Percent
Gender:				
Male			92	48.9
Female			96	51.1
Age:				
18 - 21	51	59	110	58.5
22 - 26	26	16	42	22.3
27 - 35	11	12	23	12.2
36 - over	4	9	13	6.9
Marital Status:				
Single	72	69	141	75.0
Married	17	21	38	20.2
Widowed & Divorced	3	4	7	3.7
College Class:				
Freshman	26	38	64	34.0
Sophomore	39	32	71	37.8
Junior	18	20	38	20.2
Senior	9	6	15	8.0
Ethnic:				
Hispanic	5	8	13	6.9
Anglo	68	62	130	69.1
Black	7	5	12	6.4
Asian	2	4	6	3.2
Other	10	16	27	14.3

representation of minority groups, for example, was not adequate to allow generalizations to a particular group. Representation in such categories as widowed and divorced were also not sufficient for meaningful statistical analysis.

With the use of the PRF and TSCS tests a comparison was appropriate between the means of the sample group and the means of the normative group for each test. An inspection of the sample means and the normative means for each test indicates that the sample mean did not differ appreciatively from the normative means on either test (see Appendices C and D).

Results Pertaining to Hypothesis 1

There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean total TSCS self-esteem scores.

This hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with total self-esteem scores on the TSCS as the dependent variable and gender as the independent variable.

As indicated in Table 4 (see page 45), there is no significant difference between the mean self-esteem scores of college men and women on the total scores of the TSCS. The null hypothesis as stated above was retained. These data give no indication that college men and women differ with regard to mean total self-esteem scores.

Table 4

Analysis of Variance of the TSCS Scales by Gender

TSCS Scales	Group Means		df	F - Ratio	p
	Male	Female			
Identity	124.66	126.02	184	.64	.42
Acceptance of Self	117.83	108.17	184	1.144	.28
Behavior	111.77	111.54	184	.011	.91
Physical Self	69.10	67.89	184	.96	.32
Moral-Ethical Self	70.45	71.37	184	.47	.49
Personal Self	67.35	66.59	184	.38	.53
Family Self	69.58	70.13	184	.17	.67
Social Self	68.40	69.42	184	.74	.39
Total Self	343.52	345.68		.132	.71

Notes: $.95F_{1,184} = 3.89$, $.99F_{1,184} = 6.76$, $.999F_{1,184} = 11.2$

Results Pertaining to Hypothesis 2

There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean scores of the TSCS subscale traits of:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2.1 Physical Self | 2.5 Self-Criticism |
| 2.2 Moral-Ethical Self | 2.6 Identity |
| 2.3 Family Self | 2.7 Self-Satisfaction |
| 2.4 Social Self | 2.8 Behavior |

This hypothesis was tested by using successive one-way ANOVA'S, with gender as the independent variable and each TSCS subscale as the dependent variable.

The results of this statistical analysis are shown in Table 4. There was no significant difference between the mean subtest scores from the TSCS for college men and women. The null hypothesis was retained.

Results Pertaining to Hypothesis 3

There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean scores of the PRF subscales of:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 3.1 Abasement | 3.10 Endurance |
| 3.2 Achievement | 3.11 Exhibition |
| 3.3 Affiliation | 3.12 Harmavoidance |
| 3.4 Aggression | 3.13 Impulsivity |
| 3.5 Autonomy | 3.14 Nurturance |
| 3.6 Change | 3.15 Order |
| 3.7 Cognitive Structure | 3.16 Play |
| 3.8 Defenceence | 3.17 Sentience |
| 3.9 Dominance | 3.18 Social Recognition |

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 3.19 Succorance | 3.21 Desirability |
| 3.20 Understanding | 3.22 Infrequency |

This hypothesis was tested by using a series of one-way ANOVA's with gender as the independent variable and scores on the PRF subscales as dependent variables.

As indicated in Table 5 (see page 48), there were significant differences between genders on means of 3 PRF subscales. Mean scores for women on the PRF subscales of Harmavoidance, Nurturance and Sentience were significantly higher than the means of these subscales for men. Conversely, male mean scores were not significantly higher than female mean scores on any of the subscales.

The mean scores for the remaining 19 subscales did not differ significantly. Thus the null form of hypotheses 3.12, 3.14 and 3.17 were rejected at the .01 level of significance. The remaining hypotheses were retained.

Results Pertaining to Hypothesis 4

Correlations do not differ for college men and women between the TSCS total self-esteem score and the PRF subscales of:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 4.1 Abasement | 4.7 Cognitive Structure |
| 4.2 Achievement | 4.8 Defenceence |
| 4.3 Affiliation | 4.9 Dominance |
| 4.4 Aggression | 4.10 Endurance |
| 4.5 Autonomy | 4.11 Exhibition |
| 4.6 Change | 4.12 Harmavoidance |

Table 5

Analysis of Variance of the Personality Research Form by Gender

PRF Scales	Subtest Means		df	F	p
	Male	Female			
Abasement	7.10	7.04	186	.007	.933
Achievement	10.23	9.85	186	.795	.373
Affiliation	9.19	10.46	186	4.27	.040
Aggression	8.00	8.50	186	.249	.618
Autonomy	7.80	7.31	186	.356	.551
Change	9.21	9.69	186	.919	.339
Cognitive Structure	9.32	9.29	186	.006	.938
Defendence	6.16	7.01	186	2.006	.158
Dominance	10.71	9.30	186	3.89	.045
Endurance	10.00	8.97	186	4.69	.031
Exhibition	7.90	8.12	186	.145	.703
Harmavoidance	6.48	10.09	186	18.43	.000*
Impulsivity	6.66	7.44	186	1.83	.171
Nurturance	9.69	11.54	186	13.73	.000*
Order	7.33	8.70	186	4.72	.031
Play	9.41	9.40	186	.00	.988
Sentience	8.96	10.87	186	24.54	.000*
Social Recognition	8.39	9.15	186	1.48	.224
Succorance	7.01	8.98	186	5.51	.019

(table continues)

PRF Scales	Subtest Means		df	F	p
	Male	Female			
Understanding	7.98	8.83	186	1.60	.207
Infrequency	.68	.47	186	.96	.326
Desirability	11.22	11.43	186	.20	.647

Note: $.95F_{1,184} = 3.90$, $.99F_{1,180} = 6.79$,
 $.999F_{1,180} = 11.3$.

*Significant at the .01 level of significance.

- | | | | |
|------|-------------|------|--------------------|
| 4.13 | Impulsivity | 4.18 | Social Recognition |
| 4.14 | Nurturance | 4.19 | Succorance |
| 4.15 | Order | 4.20 | Understanding |
| 4.16 | Play | 4.21 | Infrequency |
| 4.17 | Sentience | 4.22 | Desirability |

This hypothesis was tested by using the z test for independent correlations.

As indicated in Table 6 (see page 50), there was no significant difference between men and women in the correlation of the total TSCS score with the PRF subscales.

Hypotheses 4.1 through 4.22 are retained at the .01 level of significance as the data give no indication that significant differences do exist between men and women for these correlations.

Table 6

Correlation between Total TSCS Score and PRF Subscales
Classified by Gender

PRF Scale	Males (N=92)		Females (N=96)		z-Ratio
	<u>r</u>	<u>Z₁</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>Z₂</u>	
Abasement	.057	.057	-.032	.032	.168
Achievement	.204	.207	.297	.307	.627
Affiliation	.025	.025	.267	.274	1.63
Aggression	-.328	.341	-.004	.004	2.18
Autonomy	-.046	.046	.029	.029	.114
Change	.131	.132	.114	.114	.114
Cognitive Structure	.006	.006	.235	.239	1.54
Defendence	-.301	.311	-.030	.030	1.83
Dominance	-.099	.099	.351	.366	1.70
Endurance	.225	.229	.400	.424	1.18
Exhibition	.003	.003	.253	.258	1.69
Harmavoidance	.056	.056	.187	.189	.883
Impulsivity	-.192	.194	-.205	.208	.088
Nurturance	-.037	.037	.090	.090	.357
Order	.171	.172	.461	.498	2.02
Play	.021	.021	.080	.080	.397
Sentience	.138	.139	.176	.178	.256
Social Recognition	-.008	.008	.085	.085	.519

(table continues)

PRF Scale	Males		Females		<u>z</u> Value
	<u>r</u>	<u>Z</u> ₁	<u>r</u>	<u>Z</u> ₂	
Succorance	-.143	.144	.082	.082	.411
Understanding	.099	.099	.144	.145	.303
Infrequency	.020	.020	.035	.035	.101
Desirability	.598	.688	.511	.564	.586

$$1. .975 z = 2.95$$

$$2. \sigma_{z_1 - z_2} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}} = .1483$$

Results Pertaining to Hypothesis 5

Gender does not interact with age or marital status with respect to the mean TSCS total self-esteem scores.

This hypothesis was tested by using two-factor ANOVA's to examine the data for possible gender interaction. As evidenced in Tables 7 and 8 (see pages 52 and 53) there was no gender interaction with either age or marital status. (Thus Hypothesis 5 was retained.) However, as noted in the above mentioned tables, the mean TSCS self-esteem scores differed significantly by age and marital status for both genders. The older the subject the more likely he or she would score higher on the self-esteem test. Married subjects also tended to score higher on the self-esteem test.

Table 7

Summary Table for the Two-Way Analysis of Variance of the Total TSCS Scores with Age and Gender as Factors

Source of Variation	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Sex	2.0	1	2.0	.001	.972
Age	24,290.4	3	8,096.8	5.101	.002*
Sex X Age	873.6	3	291.2	.183	.908
Explained	25,384.4	7	3,626.3	2.285	.030
Residual	285,723.5	180	1,587.4		
Total	311,107.9	187			

Age Level	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>
18-21	110	340.27
22-26	42	337.21
27-35	23	360.00
36-over	13	378.23

*Significant at the .01 level of significance.

Table 8

Summary Table for the Two-Way Analysis of Variance of the Total TSCS Scores with Marital Status and Gender as Factors

Source of Variation	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Sex	32.2	1	32.27	.019	.89
Marital Status	11,234.7	1	11,234.7	6.693	.01*
Sex X Marital Status	142.1	1	142.1	.085	.771
Explained	11,501.7	3	3,833.9	2.284	.081
Residual	293,751.7	175	1,678.6		
Total	305,253.4	178			

Marital Status	<u>N</u>	Mean
Single	141	340.28
Married	38	359.74

*Significant at the .01 level of significance.

Results Pertaining to Supplemental Analysis

A regression analysis was performed using the PRF subscales to predict total self-esteem scores for men and women separately. This analysis indicated that there was a different set of predictors for men and for women.

Table 9 (see page 55) depicts the significant predictors of the total TSCS score for men as the PRF scales of Desirability and Succorance. These two scales accounted for 30% of the variance in the TSCS total score. It should be noted that Succorance predicted in a negative direction for men; thus as men scored lower on Succorance they tend to score higher on the self-esteem test.

Table 10 (see page 56) shows the results of the regression analysis for women. Four significant predictors emerged: Desirability, Order, Abasement and Dominance. Together they accounted for 41% of the variance in the total TSCS score. It should be noted that for women, Abasement was a negative predictor and thus the lower women scored on this PRF scale, the higher (more positive) they tended to score on the TSCS total self-esteem score.

In order to further understand the relationship between PRF subscale scores and the TSCS total score, a two-factor ANOVA test was conducted. Two self-esteem levels were defined by categorizing those scoring higher than one standard deviation above the mean and those scoring lower

Table 9

Regression Analysis with Total TSCS Score as Criterion and PRF Scales as Predictors --
Males

	Predictor Variables	Constant	Regressive Coefficient	Multiple <u>R</u>	Multiple <u>R</u> ²
Step 1	PRF 22 (Desirability)	.255.31	7.85	.53	.28
Step 2	PRF 19 (Succorance)	.268.14	-2.42	.57	.32

Table 10

Regression Analysis with Total TSCS Score as Criterion and PRF Scales as Predictors--
Females

	Predictor Variables	Constant	Regressive Coefficient	Multiple <u>R</u>	Multiple <u>R</u> ²
Step 1	PRF 22 (Desirability)	283.16	5.46	.47	.22
Step 2	PRF 15 (Order)	266.44	3.05	.58	.33
Step 3	PRF 1 (Abasement)	262.10	-1.51	.61	.38
Step 4	PRF 9 (Dominance)	264.04	2.28	.66	.44

than one standard deviation below the mean. These categories were created for both men and women. Table 11 describes the data from this analysis. The total TSCS score was a factor with gender, and PRF scale scores as the dependent variables.

Table 11

Distribution of the PRF Subscale of Dominance Scores By Self-Esteem Groups and Gender

Group	Women		Men		Total
	<u>N</u>	Mean	<u>N</u>	Mean	<u>N</u>
Low Self-Esteem Group	10	5	11	11	21
High Self-Esteem Group	9	10	12	11	21
Totals	19		23		42

Table 12 (see page 58) summarizes the results of the two-way ANOVA's for those dependent variables that reached a .01 level of significance. The following variables were significant for the two levels of self-esteem: Achievement, Affiliation, Endurance, Order, Sentience, and Desirability. Whereas for the low self-esteem group, the variables of Aggression, Defenceence, and Impulsivity were significant. Thus there seems to be certain personality traits that are associated with both college men and women whether classified as high or low in self-esteem levels.

Table 12

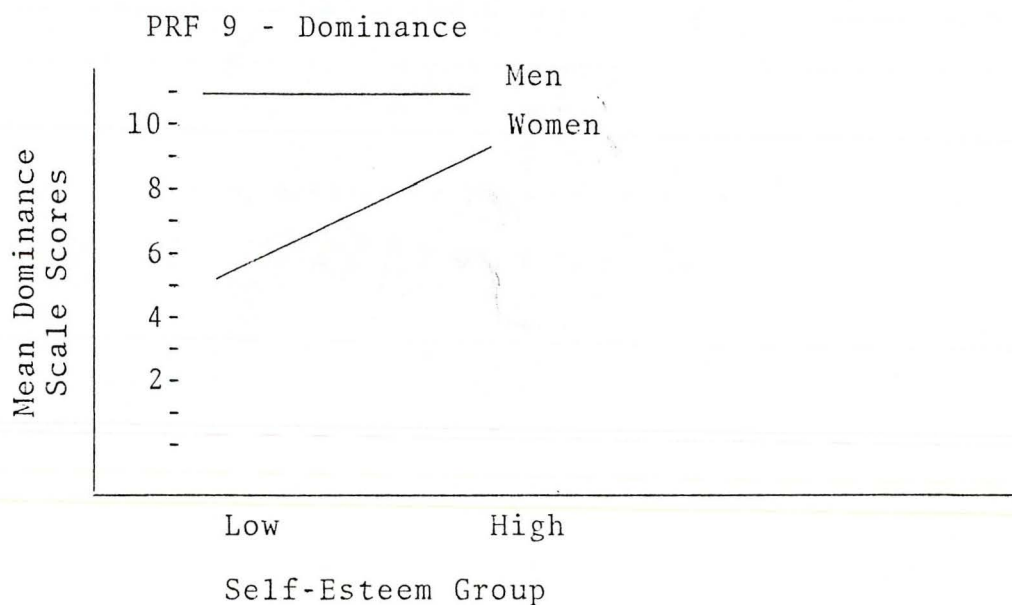
Summary Table of Two-Way Analysis of Variance of PRF Scales
with Gender and Self-Esteem Level as Factors

Dependent Variable	F	p	Nature of Findings
Achievement SE Level	7.355	<.01	Hi > Lo
Affiliation SE Level	8.738	.005	Hi > Lo
Aggression SE Level	16.72	<.001	Hi < Lo
Gender	7.33	<.01	M > F
Defendance SE Level	8.57	.006	Hi < Lo
Dominance SE Level	5.52	.024	Hi > Lo
Gender	8.92	.005	M > F
Gender X SE Level	7.65	.009	See Fig. 1
Endurance SE Level	15.75	<.001	Hi > Lo
Impulsivity SE Level	14.673	<.001	Hi < Lo
Order SE Level	24.36	<.001	Hi > Lo
Gender X SE Level	4.85	.034	N.S.
Sentience SE Level	13.32	<.001	Hi > Lo
Desirability SE Level	62.17	<.001	Hi > Lo

Figure 1 indicates the gender interaction for low and high self-esteem groups on the PRF scale of Dominance. On this scale, women in the low self-esteem group scored significantly lower than men in the low self-esteem group. This difference was not seen in men and women in the high self-esteem group.

Figure 1

Interaction between the PRF Scale of Dominance and Self-Esteem Group by Gender



Summary

In summary, the data from this sample of 188 (92 male and 96 female) undergraduate college students indicated:

1. The mean total self-esteem score from the TSCS was not significantly different for college men and women.

2. College women had significantly higher mean scores than college men on the PRF subscales of Sentience, Nurturance and Harmavoidance.

3. The PRF scales of Desirability and Succorance were significant predictors of the total TSCS score for men. These two scores accounted for 32% of the variance in the total TSCS score for men.

4. The PRF subscales of Desirability, Order, Abasement and Dominance were significant predictors of total TSCS score for women. These four scales accounted for 44% of the variance in the total TSCS score for women.

5. College women in the low self-esteem group scored significantly lower than college men in the low self-esteem group on the PRF subtest of Dominance. There were no significant differences on the PRF subscales between men and women in the high self-esteem group.

6. Age and marital status correlated significantly with self-esteem for both men and women. Subjects of both genders reported higher means on the TSCS self-esteem score when over age 27 and married.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Researchers have attempted to identify various differences between genders. In the area of personality research, this has led to an exploration of various character traits and the possible different distribution of these traits between men and women. The purpose of this study was to test certain gender related hypotheses regarding the relationships among personality traits as identified on the Personality Research Form (PRF) and self-esteem as measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS).

In an effort to isolate the hypothesized differences, 188 students (92 male and 96 female) were administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) and the Personality Research Form (PRF). The results were tabulated and subjected to statistical analysis (the .01 level of significance was used) specific for each hypothesis. The results of the analysis were presented in Chapter 4.

The basic finding of the study is that there is no evidence that men and women differ with regard to their total self-esteem level. There are, however, some slight differences with regard to personality traits which predict the self-esteem scores.

The remainder of Chapter 5 is organized into three sections: (a) Summary and Discussion of Findings, (b) Conclusions of the Study, and (c) Recommendations for Application and Future Research.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis 1

There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean total TSCS self-esteem scores.

This hypothesis was retained as there was no significant difference between the total self-esteem scores of men and women at the .01 level of significance. Within the limitations of this study, it can be concluded that persons of both genders are equally capable of developing positive self-esteem. As mentioned earlier in the review of literature, most personality theorists would place women at a distinct disadvantage in the development of a positive self-esteem. However, it would seem from this study that college women achieve a similar level of self-esteem when measured by the TSCS as do college men. Further research may help discover some explanations for the discrepancy between theory and this research finding. This issue will be explored later in this chapter.

Hypothesis 2

There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean scores of the TSCS subscale traits of:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2.1 Physical Self | 2.5 Self-Criticism |
| 2.2 Moral-Ethical Self | 2.6 Identity |
| 2.3 Family Self | 2.7 Self-Satisfaction |
| 2.4 Social Self | 2.8 Behavior |

The findings for Hypothesis 2 were nonsignificant and indicate that within the subscales that constitute the total self-esteem score on the TSCS, there are no reliable differences detected between genders at the .01 level of significance. Researchers such as Feldman (1981) and Bedian and Touliatos (1978) have drawn the conclusion that women derive their basis for self-esteem from a different source than men and that affiliative relationships are a major source of female self-esteem. Consistent with such findings one might expect the subscales of Family Self and Social Self to have a higher correlation with the total self-esteem score for women than for men. However, this study indicates that, at least by the measures within the TSCS, men and women in this sample do not differ significantly in these areas contributing to their total self-esteem score.

Hypothesis 3

There is no difference between college men and women with respect to mean scores on the PRF subscales of:

3.1	Abasement	3.12	Harmavoidance
3.2	Achievement	3.13	Impulsivity
3.3	Affiliation	3.14	Nurturance
3.4	Aggression	3.15	Order
3.5	Autonomy	3.16	Play
3.6	Change	3.17	Sentience
3.7	Cognitive Structure	3.18	Social Recognition
3.8	Defendence	3.19	Succorance
3.9	Dominance	3.20	Understanding
3.10	Endurance	3.21	Infrequency
3.11	Exhibition	3.22	Desirability

A series of one-way ANOVA's allowed for the comparison of the identified means to one another. The findings depict some significant differences between men and women on their PRF subscale scores. The results, as indicated in Chapter 4, show that women scored significantly higher on the measured personality traits of Sentience, Nurturance and Harmavoidance. Men did not score higher as a group on any of the subscales. Gilligan (1982) and Bardwick (1971) reported research which support the present findings. Past studies of sex differences have not focused on personality trait differences. For example, two notable volumes on the subject (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974 and Sonderegger, 1984) failed to note any studies dealing with differences in personality traits. Thus, this finding may be significant in identifying such differences in college men and women.

Hypothesis 4

Correlations do not differ for college men and women between the TSCS total self-esteem score and the PRF subscales of:

4.1	Abasement	4.12	Harmavoidance
4.2	Achievement	4.13	Impulsivity
4.3	Affiliation	4.14	Nurturance
4.4	Aggression	4.15	Order
4.5	Autonomy	4.16	Play
4.6	Change	4.17	Sentience
4.7	Cognitive Structure	4.18	Social Recognition
4.8	Defendence	4.19	Succorance
4.9	Dominance	4.20	Understanding
4.10	Endurance	4.21	Infrequency
4.11	Exhibition	4.22	Desirability

It was found that there was no significant difference between men and women in this sample in regard to the correlation of the 22 PRF subscales and the total score of the TSCS.

Previous researchers such as Rosenkrantz (1968) and Orlofsky and Stake (1981) found a strong positive relationship between "masculine traits" such as aggression and self-esteem. However, this study does not support such a conclusion. An explanation of the discrepancy between the present study and other research which found a positive

correlation between such traits as aggressiveness and self-esteem may relate to the differences in measurement instruments. The present study sought to use the most reliable and valid instruments available, whereas past researchers such as Orlofsky and Stake (1981) used instruments with no reported psychometric properties. Obviously, comparisons in such cases are inconclusive at best.

Hypothesis 5

Gender does not interact with age or marital status with respect to the mean TSCS total self-esteem scores.

As was depicted in the previous chapter, the findings for this hypothesis were null at the .01 level of significance. However, an observation was that, in general, older subjects have a significantly higher level of self-esteem. This was true for both genders and may reflect a maturational aspect of self-esteem. Specifically, the subjects in age groups from 18 through 26 had lower self-esteem scores than those subjects 27 years of age and older. Similarly, married subjects of both genders had a slightly higher mean self-esteem score than single subjects. While this study did not focus on the variables of age or marital status, this finding indicates the significant relationship these two variables may have on self-esteem for college men and women.

Supplemental Analysis

As was earlier indicated, a regression analysis was performed to achieve a clearer picture of the possible interaction between men and women's scores on personality traits and their scores on a self-esteem measure. Two traits seem to have significant influence on the self-esteem scores of men. The first trait was that of Desirability. High scorers on the trait of Desirability are described as presenting a favorable picture of self, and as always describing their self in positive terms. This predictor indicates that men with higher self-esteem tend to describe themselves in a socially desirable manner. In fact, the PRF authors (Jackson, 1967) indicate that high desirability scores may depict "high self-regard" (p. 26).

The second trait that contributed slightly to the prediction formula for men was Succorance. However, this predictor was in the negative direction and thus indicates that men who score lower on succorance, score higher on the self-esteem test,

The findings for women with respect to the regression analysis were somewhat different. Four scales from the PRF contributed significantly as predictors of the criterion self-esteem. The first and primary predictor was Desirability, as was the case noted above among the predictors of self-esteem for males. The assumption for the

significant predictor of self-esteem scores for college women is the same as that expressed above for college men; namely that women who have positive feelings of self-esteem tend to describe themselves in a socially desirable or positive manner. The second trait to contribute significantly was that of Order. Those scoring high on Order are described as; "concerned with keeping things organized and neat; disliking clutter; liking structure and order" (Jackson, 1967, p. 5). The third characteristic slightly enhancing the predictions of self-esteem was that of Abasement. However, this predictor was in the negative direction and indicates that women who score lower on the abasement scale tend to score higher on the self-esteem test.

The fourth trait that slightly contributed to the prediction of self-esteem in women was that of Dominance. Those scoring high on this trait tend to control their environment, direct others, express opinions forcefully, and assume leadership responsibility. Thus the best four predictors of a woman's self-esteem score from the PRF are Desirability, Order, Abasement (negative) and Dominance. A woman who likes structure, is orderly and neat, not self-effacing, and who assumes leadership, expresses herself openly and takes control of situations would tend to score higher on the self-esteem measure. Previous research has

not indicated specific personality traits which contribute to female self-esteem scores.

A further analysis of the data was conducted with the use of a two-factor ANOVA. The results indicate that for women who scored more than one standard-deviation above the mean on the TSCS total self-esteem score, the critical trait was Dominance. In other words, this trait seems to depict a significant difference between women scoring in the bottom 16% of the sample and those women scoring in the top 16% of the sample on the TSCS self-esteem score. There were no such findings for the data from the male sample.

It is of interest in what manner the findings of this study are related to the studies cited in the literature review. The lack of statistical difference between men and women on the total self-concept measure is of relevance. Despite theoretical speculation about differing levels of self-esteem in men and women, this finding of no significance difference would substantiate the theoretical positions of such authors as Carlson (1971) and Bardwick (1971). These authors offer the position that while men and women draw their source of self-esteem from different areas, the resulting level of self-esteem is generally equivalent. The analysis in the present study of the sub-scales contributing to the total self-esteem score on the TSCS showed no significant difference between men and women. The related

analysis of significant personality factors that contribute to the prediction of self-esteem scores did indicate some differences between men and women.

Conclusions of the Study

The following conclusions have been drawn from the results of the present research. It should be kept in mind that the population to which the conclusions are directed is state and community college students of like age and background of the sample. Further it should be noted that the conclusions are based on the results from two personality measurement instruments, namely the PRF and TSCS.

1. The self-esteem scores for men and women were not shown to differ.

2. The measured personality trait of aggression has a slight negative correlation with the self-esteem level of men.

3. The presence of the measured personality trait of order is positively correlated with the total self-esteem level of women.

4. For those women who score above the 84th percentile as compared to women scoring below the 16th percentile in self-esteem, the personality trait of dominance, seems to be a significant factor. Whereas for men, there was no significant difference in the personality traits of high and low scorers on the self-esteem measure.

5. For men the measured personality trait of succorance in correlation with desirability was a significant negative predictor of self-esteem.

6. Age and marital status correlated with self-esteem scores significantly for both men and women. That is for both men and women being over age 27 and being married had a reported higher mean to self-esteem scores.

Implications

Several implications are suggested from the findings of the present research. Dramatic differences between genders on personality traits and self-esteem were not found. This research would suggest that whatever differences men and women may experience growing up, they both develop similar levels of self-esteem by the time they reach adulthood.

There is some evidence, however, that there are different influences on the level of self-esteem achieved by men and women. For example, the presence of the personality trait of dominance may have an influence on women achieving or maintaining a high level of self-esteem. In fact, a possible profile predicting a woman with good self-esteem would include that of dominance along with a lack of abasement, a desire for order and a tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner.

The implications for men are less descriptive. However, a predictive profile of self-esteem in men would also include a tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner and a lack of succorance or seeking sympathy.

The implications from these research findings are certainly not causal or diagnostic; however, they do suggest some possible differences in the factors which influence the development of or maintenance of self-esteem in men and women. Perhaps with further consideration and exploration of these suggested differences awareness will be increased, biases will be lessened and motivation for appropriate change will be provided.

Recommendations for Application and Future Research

Population Comparisons

The present study indicates that significant findings may result from additional research examining the difference in self-esteem of men and women at various age levels. The relationship of marital status and self-esteem could also be further explored. If the same instruments and research design were used, greater generalization of the results could be accomplished. Of significant interest also would be cross-cultural studies among selected ethnic or racial populations.

Theory Development

While similar scores on a self-esteem measure indicates that college men and women may have similar levels of self-esteem, this study suggests that there may be differing components or predictors to their self-esteem. Gilligan (1982) suggests that men and women take differing paths in development of adult moral reasoning and self-evaluation. Further research on the developmental aspects of self-esteem may help to define more fully the possible different paths of self-esteem development.

Counseling Applications for Women

The present study indicates that the measured personality traits of Desirability, Order, Abasement (a negative predictor) and Dominance to be significant predictors of self-esteem scores for women. It would seem to follow that the enhancement of the traits of order and dominance and the reduction of the trait of abasement would affect levels of self-esteem in women. In a counseling setting where low self-esteem is a major symptom an approach which focused on the above traits might effect the desired change in self-esteem. Such techniques as goal-setting and problem-solving may enhance the trait of order, while such techniques as assertiveness training and affirmations may affect the traits of desirability, abasement and dominance in the

desired direction. Although there is some face validity to the recommendations made, further research is needed to test the recommendations mentioned above.

Counseling Applications for Men

Significant predictors of self-esteem for men was the personality scale of Desirability and Succorance on the PRF. An additional finding of significance for men was the negative correlation between male self-esteem scores and the scale of Aggression on the PRF. Thus it would seem appropriate in a counseling setting to focus on therapeutic techniques that would decrease succorant and aggressive behavior and attitudes. Such techniques as reality therapy, affirmations, anger control and reframing might effect these traits in the desired direction. Techniques such as affirmations and positive imagery may have a positive effect on the trait of desirability. The counseling methods mentioned have some face validity; however, further research is needed to test the effects of such methods on self-esteem.

Instructional Policies

A possible implication from the present study is that men and women are similar in self-esteem levels. If such is true, a less stereotyped view of students which allows a broad range of acceptable behavior and feelings in both

men and women, would probably enhance self-esteem development in both genders. Thus greater opportunity for leadership roles for women, textbook content depicting decision-making skills for women and less aggressive roles for men would perhaps provide for a more free and stronger development of self-esteem. There is evidence (e.g. Buxton, 1973; Gagot, 1975) that teachers reinforce both boys' and girls' feminine behavior more often. Therefore, a less stereotyped view of "good" behavior may allow for a more positive self-esteem development in both genders.

Parental Practices

Probably the most significant help this research could be to parents is to heighten awareness of the possible gender similarities in self-esteem development. With an increased awareness parents may ask themselves: Am I harder on my daughter for exhibiting anger than my son? Do I expect my daughter to be more neat and orderly than my son? Do I model leadership, assertiveness skills for my daughter as well as my son? Reflective answers to such questions may provide motivation for appropriate change.

A further consideration is the modification of commercialized parenting classes to allow for a broader range of acceptable behavior and feelings in both genders. For example, the Systematic Training for Effective

Parenting (STEP) and Parent Effectiveness Training (PET), two popular parenting courses, could incorporate a greater awareness of developmental similarities by asking such questions as those posed above.

Measurement Instruments

An apparent weakness indicated in the review of literature for self-esteem studies is the diversity of measurement instruments used and the lack of psychometric strength a majority of the instruments had. In light of this perceived weakness a strong recommendation for further research is the use of a self-esteem instrument with strong reliability and validity properties. Many of the past studies have used self-made instruments which had little depth in psychometric research. Thus the replication of the present study using the TSCS and the PRF is recommended.

Appendix A
BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix A

BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS HONESTLY AND COMPLETELY AS YOU CAN. CHECK (X) THE MOST CORRECT ANSWER FOR YOU.

1. Gender: Male___ Female___
2. Age: 18-21___ 22-26___ 27-35___ 36 and over___
3. Marital Status: Single___ Married___ Divorced___ Widowed___
4. Academics: Your GPA for the last semester was: under 2.0___
2.0-2.5___ 2.6-3.0___ 3.1-3.5___ 3.6-4.0___
5. Student Status: Freshman___ Sophomore___ Junior___ Senior___
6. Ethnic Background: Spanish/Mexican___ Anglo___ Black___
Asian___ Other___

Appendix B
INTRODUCTION LETTER

Appendix B
Introduction Letter

Dear Student:

Thank you for volunteering to help with this important research study. I want to assure you that complete confidentiality will be preserved. No names will be used in the research study--only group statistics. Your participation in this study is not associated with your course grade in any way and is strictly voluntary. There will be no interpretative results of the testing available to you.

Please fill out the questionnaire and follow the directions for each of the tests as accurately as possible. Please return the test packet to your instructor as soon as possible.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jerry S. Harris, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate
University of the Pacific

Appendix C
NORM AND SAMPLE MEANS OF THE PRF SUBSCALES
FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Appendix C

Norm and Sample Means of the PRF Subscales for Men and Women

PRF Subscales	Men		Women	
	Subscale Norm Group (N=1350)	Means Sample Group (N=92)	Subscale Norm Group (N=1415)	Means Sample Group (N=96)
Abasement	7.78	7.10	7.66	7.04
Achievement	10.98	10.23	10.00	9.85
Affiliation	8.33	9.19	8.93	10.46
Aggression	7.35	8.00	6.91	8.50
Autonomy	9.54	7.80	7.11	7.31
Change	9.49	9.21	9.87	9.69
Cognitive Structure	8.64	9.32	8.71	9.29
Defendence	5.75	6.16	6.04	7.01
Dominance	10.19	10.71	7.60	9.30
Endurance	10.92	10.00	10.91	8.97
Exhibition	7.52	7.90	7.24	8.12
Harmavoidance	7.41	6.48	9.49	10.09
Impulsivity	5.46	6.66	6.53	7.44
Nurturance	8.90	9.69	10.90	11.45
Order	7.82	7.33	8.15	8.70
Play	8.18	9.41	8.95	9.40
Sentience	9.27	8.96	10.76	10.87
Social Recognition	7.52	8.39	8.22	9.15

(table continues)

PRF Subscales	Men		Women	
	Subscale Norm Group (N=1350)	Means Sample Group (N=92)	Subscale Norm Group (N=1415)	Means Sample Group (N=96)
Succorance	5.64	7.01	8.70	8.98
Understanding	10.25	7.98	9.70	8.83
Infrequency	.48	.68	.37	.47
Desirability	10.78	11.22	10.97	11.43

Appendix D
NORM AND SAMPLE MEANS OF THE TSCS
TOTAL SCORE

Appendix D

Norm and Sample Means of the TSCS Total Score

<u>Norm Group</u>	<u>Sample Group</u>
345.57	344.65

Note. Separate means from the Norm Group for men and women were not available.

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