

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC, IDEOLOGICAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS OF THE MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ATTENDING OKLAHOMA  
STATE UNIVERSITY DURING THE SPRING  
SEMESTER OF 1972

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This work was a descriptive study of the demographic, ideological, and environmental characteristics of mature female undergraduate students attending a midwestern state university in the spring semester of 1972. The subjects represented the geographical, social, and racial backgrounds of mature female undergraduate students enrolled at Oklahoma State University. Although the population studied may be similar to student populations at other state colleges and universities within this country, the researcher did not assume the findings of this study to be concurrent with similar student populations. However, further replication of this study could possibly lead to generalization, particularly in areas with a similar student constituency.

The study examined the demographic, ideological, and environmental factors which related to the mature female undergraduate student pursuing a baccalaureate degree or special study at a state university. The research further examined selected factors in relationship to mature women undergraduates. The grade point average, scholastic satisfaction, motivation, and usage of college facilities and

services by the mature female undergraduate were also investigated and reported.

### Significance of the Study

The present investigation gained its significance from the fact that the results could lead to more sensitivity to the individual needs of the mature female undergraduate who has returned to college and resumed her education after periods of interruption. Recent reports of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education; such as, A Chance to Learn; Less Time, More Options; and New Students and New Places; and the Report on Higher Education have advocated the necessity of further investigation of the mature undergraduate student.

The Carnegie Commission has stated in Less Time, More Options (1971) that older students have the potential of making positive contributions to the academic and campus community. The following paragraph conveys the Commission's attitude toward mature students in higher education.

Higher education is now prejudiced against older students. They should be welcome instead. Too often they are looked upon as inferior. Yet older students will help end the in loco parentis atmosphere of many campuses, add maturity to discussion, and make a more balanced community out of the college (p.19).

In A Chance to Learn (1970), the Commission advocated easier access and admission to college for older students as follows:

Many Americans who are beyond what has historically been considered "college age" did not



have an opportunity to attend college. Some of these people would still benefit from further education if it were available to them. (p.3).

New Students and New Places (1971) summarized the impact of increased adult enrollment in higher education on future enrollment trends.

There are indications that enrollment of adults in higher education has been increasing rapidly in recent years, but it is exceedingly difficult to arrive at accurate estimates on the basis of existing data. To the extent that adult enrollment merely rises in accordance with past trends, the future increase is reflected in our enrollment projections. To the extent that there is an increase in the tendency of young people of college age to stop out for a few years and return to higher education later, the resulting increased enrollment of adults would merely replace a reduction in enrollment of college-age youth (p.57).

Other factors involving the mature undergraduate student are intended to be discussed more fully in future reports of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.

The Report on Higher Education (1971) concurred with the Carnegie Commission recommendation of providing more options to students in order to diversify the pattern of college attendance. The Report on Higher Education explained its view in the following paragraph.

Some colleges are now moving in the direction of relaxing barriers to nonstandard admissions and transfers, providing opportunities for part-time students, and caring about individuals beyond "college age" who are seeking higher education, but these are gradual and marginal reforms. We believe that the time has come to halt the academic lockstep and reconstitute our colleges and universities as educational institutions for individuals of all ages (p.84).

The present study should add new data and new dimensions in expanding information about women students. Its subjects were the complete population of female undergraduate students who were 25 years of age or above and who were officially enrolled in an undergraduate or special program of study at a midwestern state university during the spring semester of 1972. The subjects provided a sizable sample of mature female undergraduate students who were diverse in sociological background.

The findings of this study should be of value to the following people:

1. To individuals desiring to motivate mature women to initiate or resume educational training at the higher education level.
2. To individuals interested in promoting an interest in mature women who are currently enrolled as undergraduates in the academic community.
3. To college and university administrators, faculty members, and student personnel workers who are interested in being informed about the characteristics of mature women undergraduate students.

#### Purpose of the Study

Although the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education and the Report on Higher Education have advocated the need for research about the adult student population, there have been few studies published in this area. Therefore, the present

study should add new data and new dimensions in expanding information about the adult student population, particularly the mature female undergraduate student. To describe the characteristics of mature female undergraduate students in terms of demographic, ideological, and environmental factors would greatly facilitate an understanding of this segment of the adult undergraduate population attending colleges and universities in the United States.

The present investigation has thus provided information about the mature female undergraduate student attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972. This information was obtained by a questionnaire form mailed to each subject.

### Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. It was assumed that the data is linear in nature thereby meeting the requirements for use of computations and analyses.
2. It was assumed that the population surveyed represented the entire mature female undergraduate population attending Oklahoma State University in the spring semester of 1972 as defined in the study.
3. It was assumed that the population surveyed was not necessarily similar to mature female undergraduate student populations existing at other colleges and universities within this country.

### Limitations

The scope of this study was limited in the following ways:

1. The subjects of the study were limited to the mature female undergraduate student population attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972. Only women subjects have been selected for research by the study because of current concern and interest in the changing role of women in American society.

2. The results of the study should be generalized only to those subjects included in this study. The investigation was a descriptive survey of the complete population of mature women undergraduate students at a midwestern state university.

3. The findings of the study were limited to the number of questionnaires returned by the subjects.

4. The validity of the responses on the questionnaire was dependent on the truthfulness of the respondents; whereas, the reliability of the measuring instrument was inherent in the quality of its construction.

### Statement of the Problem

The mature female population attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972 was studied in order to ascertain a descriptive analysis of their personal characteristics, motivations, and needs.

The study endeavored to ascertain the following information about each subject:

1. The demographic background of the mature female student:

- a. personal background
- b. family background
- c. marital status
- d. educational data
- e. employment data
- f. income

2. The ideological factors which motivated the mature female to return or initiate study for a college degree:

- a. impetus for obtaining a degree
- b. factors involved in selecting Oklahoma State University
- c. problems encountered while working toward the degree
- d. hindsight

3. Examination of the mature female undergraduate's utilization and value of the college environment:

- a. use of specific services and facilities on campus
- b. student-rating of academic experiences
- c. student-rating of intellectual growth
- d. probability of continuing education after obtaining a baccalaureate degree
- e. personal comments of subjects

### Definition of Terms

The following definitions were given to clarify terms used throughout the study.

Mature Female Undergraduate: any female student who was 25 years of age or above and who was officially enrolled in an undergraduate or special program of study at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater for the spring semester of 1972.

Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory: the questionnaire form constructed by the researcher to obtain specific demographic, ideological, and environmental information from each subject surveyed in the study. A sample of the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory (AWUI) was included in the appendix section of this paper.

Demographic Factors: all factors, such as the personal background, family background, marital status, education, employment, and income data, which constituted a personal history of each subject. The demographic factors were represented in parts A, B, C, D, E, and F of the questionnaire form.

Ideological Factors: fundamental motivational factors attributing to the continuation or initiation of work towards an undergraduate degree. This category included the reasons for attending Oklahoma State University, factors contributing to the completion of the degree, problems encountered while working towards the degree, and hindsight. Part G of the questionnaire surveyed these ideological factors.

Environmental Factors: the interaction of the student with selected services and facilities of the university. Factors in this category included the use of services and facilities, student-rating of academic experiences, student-rating of intellectual growth, the probability of continuing education beyond the baccalaureate degree, and personal comments of the subjects. Part H of the questionnaire contained these environmental factors.

### Questions

In addition to the preceding questionnaire, the following questions were asked:

1. What was the percentage of questionnaires returned by mature female undergraduate students during the spring semester of 1972?
2. What was the grade point average of mature female undergraduate students for the spring semester of 1972?
3. What was the enrollment distribution of mature female undergraduate students by class for the spring semester of 1972?
4. What was the average number of academic hours transferred by mature female undergraduate students to Oklahoma State University?
5. What was the average age of mature female undergraduate students attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972?

## Organization of the Study

The presentation of the study has been organized into the following chapters:

Chapter I contained the introduction to the problem, the significance of the study, the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem, definition of terms, questions, limitations, and assumptions.

Chapter II reviewed the research literature pertinent to this study.

Chapter III described the variables, subjects, treatments, instrumentation, and analysis of the data.

Chapter IV reported the findings and discussed the results of the study.

Chapter V summarized the major results of the study, conclusions, and implications for further research.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to review current research literature related to the mature female undergraduate student. As of the present time, there has been a limited number of studies in this area although the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education and the Report on Higher Education have advocated research of the mature student population. The following review was therefore restricted to a selected report of studies concerned with the mature female undergraduate student.

At Louisiana State University in New Orleans, Hiltunen (1965) studied the characteristics, motivations, and problems of freshmen students 23 years of age or older who enrolled for the first time in September, 1963. Some of these students were returning to complete an interrupted college education, whereas, others were experiencing college for the first time. A two part questionnaire was mailed to 113 students (58 males and 55 females) to obtain data regarding number and age of their children, spouse's education and occupation, transfer credit, hours enrolled, needs and problems. Results indicated that the average male student in this group was 26, had one child six years of age, was

working either full or part-time, was enrolled for 10.5 credit hours and had been out of school for nine years. The average female student was 32, had two children whose average age was nine years, was enrolled for nine credit hours, and had been out of school 13.6 years. The mean grade point average of the females was higher than that of the males. These adults reported that they did not participate in any organized campus activities although half expressed an interest in forming a group whose ages and interests would be similar to theirs. Forty-seven per cent of the males and 39 per cent of the females, as compared to 15.20 per cent of all freshmen, had contact with a counselor. Counselor contact was broadly defined as any formal contact with a counselor for such reasons as to obtain information, to change a class schedule, or to discuss personal problems. Women reported teaching as their most popular field of interest whereas men preferred engineering. Men expressed their goal of higher education for the purpose of job-upgrading, while women felt more of a need to learn for enlightenment, even when preparation for a career was part of their objective.

Hiltunen (1965) suggested that the results of his study indicated that student personnel workers should place increased emphasis on adult counseling programs and student activities to meet the needs of mature students. Such programs would improve and enrich the mature undergraduate students' academic and social experiences while attending college.

Ferguson (1966), who stated that his paper was in some respects similar to Hiltunen's study, surveyed 134 students (107 males and 27 females) who were 24 years of age or older in attendance at the University of Chicago in the spring semester of 1964. A comparison of enrollment by subjects to the distribution of the university population showed that enrollment of mature students in the College of Architecture and Art and in the College of Engineering was higher than in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The subjects were generally married and usually carried lighter academic loads than average undergraduates. The most frequent reason expressed by mature students for interrupting their education was given as financial, and the reason for return to college was most frequently related to job improvement. Significantly more mature undergraduates were in good academic standing at the end of the semester as compared to the total student body.

Student satisfaction between two different age groups at Iowa State University was measured with the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ) by Sturtz (1971). The subjects were 233 women enrolled in the colleges of Home Economics and Sciences and Humanities. Of these, 110 were women 24 years of age or above and 123 in the 18 to 21 age category. Findings indicated that adult women students were found to be generally more satisfied than younger women students as measured by the CSSQ. The difference in satisfaction between adult and younger students was suggested by

Sturtz to be dependent on different needs or expectations, which were being met less adequately for the younger than for the older student.

A comparison of the academic achievement of mature and average age undergraduate students was conducted by Halfter (1962). Subjects were obtained from two universities, De Paul University and Roosevelt University, which regularly admits older women to an undergraduate program of study. A total of 1,145 students, 76 older women and 552 younger women were enrolled at De Paul University, and 133 older women and 384 younger women at Roosevelt University. The older students in this investigation were women 40 years of age and above, and the younger students were women 18 to 25 years of age. The older students were found to have a better-than-young average academic performance. Further analysis of the data showed that the older students gave a better-than-young average performance in each field of study in both universities, with the exception of performance in natural sciences and mathematics at De Paul University.

Schofield and Caple (1971) used a factorial design to assess the self-concepts of mature and young women students. Forty-two undergraduate women over 30 years of age and 30 undergraduate women under 30 enrolled in the College of Education at the University of Missouri, during the winter semester, were the subjects for this study. Results indicated that there was as much variation within the groups of mature women and young women as between the two groups.

However, both groups rated their self-concept relative to the family as the most positive of all the external frames of reference. Schofield and Caple stated that the results of this research suggested that there was a connection between the type of home the women came from in terms of the occupation of their husband or father and the self-concept of the women. Furthermore, this relationship appeared to have had an effect both upon the students' goals for attending college and upon their self-concepts.

A questionnaire form and a personality inventory, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), was used by Doty (1966) to survey characteristics of mature women students and nonstudents. Forty mature undergraduate students enrolled at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois, and 40 mature women who had never been enrolled in a college degree program course after the age of 23 were the subjects for this research. Results indicated that the mature student was career oriented, participated in more activities outside of the home than the nonstudent, and stated marriage was their primary reason for previously leaving college. The nonstudent woman was domestically orientated, engaged in fewer activities outside their homes, and indicated personal preference for not attending or returning to college. Neither group of subjects revealed any maladjustment or deviancy on the personality test although mature students did obtain high masculinity scores than did nonstudents. Doty attributed these higher masculinity scores

of mature students as reflecting their interests in intellectual and social pursuits which had been defined by the test as traditional interests of men.

Lee (1961) surveyed 267 married undergraduate women students enrolled at Indiana State Teachers College during the spring semester of 1959. Questionnaires were filled out by the subjects and a 20 per cent stratified random sample were interviewed to obtain information about their time utilization and persistent problems related to their student role. Results indicated that there was no significant differences in academic achievement between full-time married undergraduates and unmarried women. Attitudes and opinions of married women and the attitudes of their family and friends favored these women attending college. Problems most often cited by these married women students was time pressures, household duties, scheduling of classes, and need for counseling services. Lee recommended that counseling facilities be expanded to accommodate the needs of college women with emphasis on long term as well as short term goals; flexible college programs be permitted to allow women to combine education and family responsibilities; child care facilities in keeping with current philosophies of child growth and development should be explored and expanded in the college community; housing be provided for married students; and that an increased acceptance of married women students by college and university faculty members be encouraged.

### Summary

The preceding section of this paper presented the reader with a review of the current literature pertaining to the mature female undergraduate student. The Hiltunen (1965) and the Ferguson (1966) studies described the mature undergraduate population attending their universities respectively. Sturtz (1971) surveyed the level of student satisfaction expressed by mature and average female students; whereas, Halfter (1962) compared the academic achievement of mature female students to the average undergraduate female attending De Paul and Roosevelt Universities. Schofield and Caple (1971) examined the self-concept of the mature and young women students. Doty (1966) compared the characteristics of mature women students and nonstudents, while Lee (1961) investigated the married undergraduate woman.

From the preceding review of the literature, the mature female undergraduate was seen as having characteristics which differentiates her from the average college undergraduate student. In order to obtain additional information and to contribute towards a better understanding of the mature student, the writer proposed to study the mature female undergraduate student population at a midwestern state university during the spring semester of 1972.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Variables

The variables of this study included the demographic, ideological, and environmental factors specified on the questionnaire form. The demographic variables pertained to the personal background, family background, education, employment, and income of the subject. The ideological variables included the motivational aspects of working towards a degree, reasons for attending college, problems encountered while working towards the degree, and hindsight. The environmental variables related to the use of services and facilities, student-rating of academic experiences, student-rating of intellectual growth, and continuation of education beyond the baccalaureate degree.

#### Subjects

Subjects for this study included female students who were 25 years of age or above, who could be contacted by mail, and who were officially enrolled in an undergraduate or special program of study at Oklahoma State University for the spring semester of 1972. This population was composed of 224 students. There was no attempt at randomization,



because the researcher was concerned with the entire population of mature female undergraduate students.

### Treatment

All subjects were mailed an introductory letter, questionnaire form, and return postage paid envelope. The introductory letter explained the purpose of the study and instructed the students on how to complete and return the questionnaire.

Remaining subjects who had not returned the questionnaire form received a follow-up letter reminding them of the importance of their participation in this study. A second copy of the questionnaire form accompanied this mailing with postage paid envelope for the convenience of a prompt response.

Final contact by the researcher was made by telephone to each non-responding participant of this study who had a listed telephone number. This telephone contact verified if the participant received the questionnaire and was willing or unwilling to return it. A numerical code was used on the returned envelope to allow for follow-up coverage of the non-responding population.

A sample of the initial and follow-up letters can be found in the appendix of this paper.

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire form entitled the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory (AWUI). The questionnaire was designed by the researcher to obtain selected demographic, idealogical, and environmental information about each subject. It was examined by ten faculty members, five women and five men, and was administered to selected female graduate students in order to obtain criticism and refinement of the format before it was mailed to the subjects. The length of the questionnaire consisted of three pages.

A sample of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix of this paper.

### Analysis

Responses stated on the questionnaire were coded and punched on IBM cards for use in computer tabulations. Averages were tabulated to provide a descriptive analysis of the data.

### Summary

Chapter III described the variables, subjects, treatment, instrumentation, and analysis used in the design and methodology of the study.

The subjects were 224 female undergraduate students who were 25 years of age or above. The subjects represented

the entire student population of mature undergraduates who could be contacted by mail and who were officially enrolled in the undergraduate or special program of study at Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this chapter was to report the results of the study. The findings will be presented in two sections. The first section will describe the subjects' responses to the demographic, ideological, and environmental factors reported on the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory. The second section will be concerned with the answers to the questions stated in the study.

#### Subjects' Responses Reported by the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory

##### Subjects' Responses Related to Demographic Factors

Personal background. Subjects responding to the mailed questionnaire reported information concerning their personal background in Section A, items one through five, on the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory. Such factors as birthplace, residency, mobility, and age were presented in Section A.

Of the 183 subjects responding to the questionnaire, 51.6% claimed Oklahoma state as their place of birth; whereas, 48.4% indicated birthplace outside the state of Oklahoma. A larger percentage of subjects (95.1%) reported

being residents of Oklahoma than subjects (4.1%) who reported themselves as non-residents. The average number of years subjects lived in Oklahoma was 19.6 years (Table I).

TABLE I  
PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

<u>Item</u>	<u>Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1. Birthplace	183	100.0%
Oklahoma born	94	51.6%
Non-Oklahoma born	89	48.4%
<u>Item</u>	<u>Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
2. Residency	183	100.0%
Resident	172	95.1%
Non-resident	11	4.9%
<u>Item</u>	<u>Respondents</u>	<u>Average</u>
3. Average number of years lived in Oklahoma state	183	19.6 yrs.

The mobility of the mature female undergraduate student was ascertained from the average number of times subjects changed their residence since adulthood between towns in Oklahoma and between towns outside Oklahoma. Subjects averaged 1.8 moves between towns in Oklahoma and 2.4 moves between towns outside Oklahoma. A total average of moves for all subjects indicated 4.2 moves (Table II).

The ages of the subjects were reported by age categories on the questionnaire. The age category of 25-29 years of age contained the highest single percentage figure of 45.4%.

TABLE II  
MOBILITY OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Mobility	Respondents	Average
Moves between towns in Oklahoma	183	1.8 moves
Moves between towns outside Oklahoma	183	2.4 moves
Total average moves of subjects	183	4.2 moves

The second highest percentage figure was recorded for the 30-34 years of age category at 19.1%, and the third highest percentage figure was the 35-39 years of age group at 18.6%. The 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, and 55-59 age categories contained 6.5%, 7.7%, 1.6%, and 1.1% of the respondents, respectively. The remaining age categories included on the questionnaire were not checked by the respondents (Table III).

TABLE III  
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Age Categories	Respondents	Percentage
25-29 years	83	45.4%
30-34 years	35	19.1%
35-39 years	34	18.6%
40-44 years	12	6.5%
45-49 years	14	7.7%
50-54 years	3	1.6%
55-59 years	2	1.1%
60-64 years	0	0
65-69 years	0	0
69+ years	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	183	100.0%

Family background. In Section B, items one through five, subjects reported demographic information about their family background. Such factors as the size of the family, birth order, educational background of the family, father's

occupation, and mother's occupation were included in Section B.

The average number of siblings reported by subjects in their family was 2.5 siblings. The average number of sisters was 1.3 with older sisters averaging .6 per subject and younger sisters .7 per subject. The average number of brothers was 1.2 with older brothers averaging .5 per subject and younger brothers .7 per subject (Table IV).

TABLE IV  
AVERAGE NUMBER OF SIBLINGS IN FAMILIES OF  
MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Siblings	Average
Average number of older sisters	.6 sisters
Average number of younger sisters	.7 sisters
Average number of sisters	1.3 sisters
Average number of older brothers	.5 brothers
Average number of younger brothers	.7 brothers
Average number of brothers	1.2 brothers
Average number of siblings	2.5 siblings

The average birth order for mature female undergraduate students indicated they were the 2.3 child born in their family. The frequency distribution of birth order for subjects appears in Table V.

The educational level of family members was reported for father, mother, older sister, older brother, younger



TABLE V  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF BIRTH ORDER OF MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Birth Order	Frequency Distribution
1st born child	77
2nd born child	61
3rd born child	24
4th born child	6
5th born child	4
6th born child	2
7th born child	1
8th born child	5
9th born child	0
10th born child	1
11th born child	0
12th born child	0
13th born child	0
14th born child	1
15th born child	0
16th born child	1

sister, and younger brother. The average number of years of schooling indicated that the male members of the family obtained more schooling than the female members. The father averaged 11.4 years of schooling while the mother averaged 10.7 years of schooling. The brothers of the subjects averaged 14.4 years of education with the younger and older brothers averaging 14.4 years respectively. The sisters of the subjects averaged 12.6 years of education with the older sisters averaging 11.8 years and the younger sisters 13.3 years of education (Table VI).

TABLE VI  
AVERAGE SCHOOLING YEARS RECEIVED BY FAMILY MEMBER  
OF MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Family Member	Average Years of Schooling
Father	11.4 years
Mother	10.7 years
Older sisters	11.8 years
Younger sisters	13.3 years
Older brothers	14.4 years
Younger brothers	14.4 years
Total sisters	12.6 years
Total brothers	14.4 years
Total siblings	13.5 years

The occupational classification of the subjects' parents was recorded in nine categories ranging from unskilled worker to professional requiring an advanced college degree. Over 50 per cent of the occupations held by the fathers were described as skilled worker or craftsman (24.6%) and small farm-ranch owner, manager, partner of a small business, lower level governmental official or military commissioned officer (26.2%). The mothers were predominantly classified as housewives (69.4%) with clerical and office work as the leading occupation (15.8%) outside the home. A listing of occupational classifications and employment percentages for fathers and mothers of subjects is found in Tables VII and VIII.

Marital status. Section C, items one through eight, included marital information about the mature female undergraduate student. Such factors as marital status, spouse's living status, divorce status, years married, spouse's enrollment status, spouse's educational level, spouse's occupational classification, and progeny were reported in Section C.

Ninety-two and four tenths per cent of the mature female undergraduate students reported they were married while 7.6% of the subjects indicated being unmarried. Of the married students, 99.4% reported their spouses were living and .6% reported their spouses were deceased. Responses to divorce status of subjects indicated that 14.9% had been divorced at least once while 85.1% reported they had not been divorced. The average number of years married was 10.9 years. The

TABLE VII  
OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF FATHERS OF  
MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Classifications	Respondents	Percentage
1. Unskilled worker, etc.	13	7.1%
2. Semiskilled worker, etc.	16	8.8%
3. Service worker	7	3.8%
4. Skilled worker	45	24.6%
5. Salesman, bookkeeper, etc.	17	9.3%
6. Small farm-ranch owner, manager, etc.	48	26.2%
7. Professional with degree	18	9.8%
8. Large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive, etc.	10	5.5%
9. Professional requiring advanced degree	9	4.9%
Total	183	100.0%

TABLE VIII  
OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF MOTHERS OF  
MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Classifications	Respondents	Percentage
1. Housewife	127	69.4%
2. Service worker	8	4.4%
3. Semiskilled worker, etc.	6	3.3%
4. Skilled worker	2	1.1%
5. Clerical-office worker	29	15.8%
6. Small farm-ranch owner, manager, etc.	3	1.6%
7. Professional with degree or equivalent	8	4.4%
8. Large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive, etc.	0	0
9. Professional requiring advanced degree	0	0
Total	183	100.0%

enrollment status of subjects' spouses showed 41.2% had spouses enrolled at Oklahoma State University, and 58.8% did not. Of the 41.2% who had husbands attending college, 74.6% of these men were full-time students and 25.4% were part-time students (Table IX).

TABLE IX  
MARITAL STATUS OF MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDENTS ATTENDING OKLAHOMA STATE  
UNIVERSITY, SPRING 1972

Item	Respondents	Percentage
1. Marital status	183	100.0%
Married	169	92.4%
Unmarried	14	7.6%
2. Spouse	161	100.0%
Living	160	99.4%
Deceased	1	.6%
3. Divorced	168	100.0%
Yes	24	14.9%
No	144	85.1%
4. Average number of years married	169	10.9 years
5. Enrollment status of spouse	153	100.0%
Student at OSU	63	41.2%
Non-student	90	58.8%
If spouse is student at OSU	63	100.0%
Full-time student	47	74.6%
Part-time student	16	25.4%

Subjects reported that 34.9% of the spouses attending college were enrolled in B. S. degree programs, 27.0% in M. S. degree programs, and 20.6% in Ph. D. degree programs. Of the remaining husbands attending college, 7.9% were enrolled in B. A. degree programs, 1.6% in M. A. degree programs, 1.6% in M. Ed. degree programs, 4.8% in Ed. D. degree programs, and 1.6% indicated other degree programs.

Distribution of spouses attending Oklahoma State University by college showed that 36.5% were in Graduate College, 17.5% in Arts and Sciences, 14.3% in Business, 14.3% in Engineering, 9.5% in Education, 6.3% in Agriculture, and 1.6% in Technical Institute. Table X presents the distribution of subjects' spouses enrolled at Oklahoma State University by colleges and degree programs.

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBANDS ATTENDING OKLAHOMA STATE  
UNIVERSITY BY COLLEGE AND DEGREE PROGRAM

Colleges	Percentage	Degree Programs	Percentage
Agriculture	6.3%	B. A.	7.9%
Arts and Sciences	17.5%	B. S.	34.9%
Business	14.3%	M. A.	1.6%
Education	9.5%	M. S.	27.0%
Engineering	14.3%	M. Ed.	1.6%
Home Economics	0	Ph. D.	20.6%
Technical Institute	1.6%	Ed. D.	4.8%
Graduate	<u>36.5%</u>	Others	<u>1.6%</u>
	100.0%		100.0%

The average educational level of the subjects' husbands was 16.3 years of schooling.

The occupational classification for spouses of mature female undergraduate students was reported in nine categories ranging from unskilled worker to professional requiring an advanced college degree. The same occupational scale was used to classify the occupations of subjects' fathers. The occupational classification for spouses indicated that 27.3% were reported as professional requiring an advanced college degree, 16.0% as professional requiring a bachelor's degree, and 21.3% as small farm-ranch owner, manager, partner of a small business, lower level governmental official, or military commissioned officer. The remaining spouses were listed as 8.0% skilled worker or craftsman; 5.3% as salesman, office worker; 5.3% as large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive; 4.0% as semiskilled laborer; 1.4% as service worker; and 1.4% as unskilled worker (Table XI).

Seventy-one percent of the subjects were parents. These parents averaged 2.4 children per family with an average age of 11.2 years per child. The average number of daughters was 1.1 with an average age of 11.1 years. The average number of sons was 1.3 with an average age of 11.9 years (Table XII).

Education data. Section D, items one through seven, requested information about the educational background of the mature female undergraduate student. Such factors as where subjects received their high school diploma, number of colleges attended prior to enrolling at Oklahoma State

TABLE XI  
OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' HUSBANDS

Classifications	Respondents	Percentage
1. Unskilled worker, etc.	2	1.4%
2. Semiskilled worker, etc.	6	4.0%
3. Service worker	2	1.4%
4. Skilled worker	12	8.0%
5. Salesman, bookkeeper, etc.	8	5.3%
6. Small farm-ranch owner, manager, etc.	32	21.3%
7. Professional with degree	39	26.0%
8. Large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive, etc.	8	5.3%
9. Professional requiring advanced degree	41	27.3%
	<u>150</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

TABLE XII  
AVERAGE NUMBER AND AGES OF CHILDREN OF MARRIED  
MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Children and Ages	Averages
Daughters	1.1 females
Average age	11.1 years
Sons	1.3 males
Average age	11.9 years
Total children	2.5 children
Total average age	11.5 years



University, degree program enrollment, college enrollment, student enrollment status, average semester hours carried, and relatives attending Oklahoma State University were stated in Section D.

Subjects reported that 59.2% had received their high school diploma in Oklahoma; whereas, 40.8% received their high school diploma outside the state of Oklahoma. A majority of 65.6% reported they had attended other colleges before enrolling at Oklahoma State University. However, 34.4% of the respondents stated Oklahoma State University was the first college they had attended. Of the 65.6% of students who indicated previous college experience, 43.1% reported prior college experience received within Oklahoma; whereas, 56.9% indicated obtaining prior college experience outside Oklahoma state. The majority of the subjects (96.2%) stated they were definitely working toward a degree, and 3.8% stated they were not. Of the undergraduate degree programs offered at Oklahoma State University, 62.9% were enrolled in a B. S. degree program, 28.9% in a B. A. degree program, and 8.2% indicated other types of degree programs.

The College of Education contained the highest enrollment percentage of students. There were 35.7% enrolled in the College of Education; 29.1% in the College of Arts and Sciences; 19.0% in the College of Home Economics; 12.7% in the College of Business; 2.9% in the College of Agriculture; and .6% in the College of Engineering.

The enrollment status of subjects showed that 60.1% were part-time students and 39.9% were full-time students. The average number of hours enrolled in for the spring semester was 9.9 semester hours. Some subjects indicated that they had family members attending Oklahoma State University at the same time they were going to school. Of these subjects, 43.2% reported some relative in college. A distribution of family relationship indicated that 63.3% were husbands, 11.4% were sons, 6.4% were daughters, and 18.9% were some relationship outside the central family unit (Table XIII).

Employment data. Section E, items one through four, was concerned with the past and present employment status of mature female undergraduates and their spouses' present employment. Also, the veteran status of the subjects was included in Section E.

There were 19.7% of the subjects who claimed full-time employment, 18.1% claimed part-time employment, and 62.2% reported they were not employed. Of the subjects reported employed, 53.6% were classified as office workers, 15.9% as semiskilled workers, 13.0% as skilled workers, 7.3% as professional requiring some education beyond high school, 4.4% as small farm-ranch owners or managers, 2.9% as service workers, and 2.9% as household workers (Table XIV).

The past employment status of subjects indicated 50.8% were employed full-time, 14.2% were employed part-time, and 35.0% were not employed. Of the subjects reporting employment before attending college, 65.7% were classified as

TABLE XIII  
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Item	Respondents	Percentage
1. High school diploma	183	100.0%
Within Oklahoma state	109	59.2%
Outside Oklahoma state	74	40.8%
2. OSU first college attended	183	100.0%
Yes	63	34.4%
No	120	65.6%
If No:	120	100.0%
Other colleges within Oklahoma	52	43.3%
Other colleges outside Oklahoma	68	56.7%
3. Working towards a degree	183	100.0%
Yes	176	96.2%
No	7	3.8%
4. Type of degree program	183	100.0%
B. A.	53	28.9%
B. S.	115	62.9%
Other	15	8.2%
5. College enrolled in	183	100.0%
Agriculture	5	2.9%
Arts and Sciences	53	29.1%
Business	24	12.7%
Education	65	35.7%
Engineering	1	.6%
Home Economics	35	19.0%
6. Full-time or part-time student	183	100.0%
Full-time student	73	39.9%
Part-time student	110	60.1%
Average semester hours enrolled	9.9 hours	
7. Family members attending OSU	183	100.0%
Yes	79	43.2%
No	104	56.8%
Relationship of family member at OSU	79	100.0%
Husband	50	63.3%
Son	9	11.4%
Daughter	5	6.4%
Other	15	18.9%

TABLE XIV  
PRESENT AND PAST EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND OCCUPATIONAL  
CLASSIFICATION OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

	Percentages	
	Present	Past
Employment Status:		
Full-time employment	19.7%	50.8%
Part-time employment	18.1%	14.2%
Not employed	62.2%	35.0%
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Occupational Classification:		
1. Household worker	2.9%	1.0%
2. Service worker	2.9%	5.0%
3. Semiskilled worker	15.9%	11.7%
4. Skilled worker	13.0%	7.5%
5. Clerical-office worker	53.6%	65.7%
6. Small farm-ranch owner, manager	4.4%	6.6%
7. Professional without degree	7.3%	2.5%
8. Large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive	0	0
9. Professional with advanced degree	0	0
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

office workers, 11.7% as semi-skilled workers, 7.5% as skilled workers, 6.6% as small farm-owner or managers; 5.0% as service workers; 2.5% as professional without a degree; and 1.0% as household workers (Table XIV).

Subjects reported that 75.0% of their spouses were employed full-time. There were 9.9% who were part-time workers, 1.3% who were retired, and 13.8% who were currently not employed (Table XV).

TABLE XV  
PRESENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF HUSBANDS OF  
MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Employment Status	Percentage
Full-time employment	75.0%
Part-time employment	9.9%
Retired	1.3%
Not employed	<u>13.8%</u>
Total	100.0%

There were 1.6% of the mature female undergraduate students who reported they were currently veterans. Of these, one individual served with the army and two other persons were enlisted in the navy. The remaining 98.4% of the women stated they were not veterans (Table XVI).

Income. Section F, items one through three, indicated the past and present income of the subjects, the spouses'

TABLE XVI  
VETERAN STATUS OF MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Veteran Status	Percentage
Is a veteran	1.6%
Is not a veteran	<u>98.4%</u>
Total	100.0%

present income, and methods selected to finance the subjects' education.

The classification of income for women showed that 17.5% earned below \$2,999; 15.3% earned \$3,000 to \$5,999; 7.1% earned \$6,000 to \$8,999; .5% earned \$9,000 to \$11,999; and .5% earned over \$12,000. There were 59.1% of the subjects who reported they were not presently employed (Table XVII).

TABLE XVII

PRESENT AND PAST INCOME DISTRIBUTION OF MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Salary Classification	Percentages	
	Present	Past
Over \$12,000	.5%	.6%
\$9,000 to \$11,999	.5%	1.7%
\$6,000 to \$8,999	7.1%	12.2%
\$3,000 to \$5,999	15.3%	31.5%
Below \$2,999	17.5%	18.7%
Not employed	<u>59.1%</u>	<u>35.3%</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%

The subjects' past income status showed 18.7% earned below \$2,999; 31.5% earned \$3,000 to \$5,999; 12.2% earned \$6,000 to \$8,999; 1.7% earned \$9,000 to \$11,999; and .6% earned over \$12,000. There were 35.3% of the subjects who were not employed (Table XVII).

A distribution for spouses' income showed 25.0% earned below \$5,000; 13.7% earned \$6,000 to \$8,999; 17.1% earned

\$9,000 to \$11,999; 14.6% earned \$12,000 to \$14,999; 14.6% earned \$15,000 to \$19,999; 6.5% earned \$20,000 to \$29,000; and 1.3% earned over \$50,000. There were 7.2% who indicated they were not employed during the spring semester (Table XVIII).

TABLE XVIII  
DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME FOR SPOUSES OF MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Salary Classification	Percentage
Over \$50,000	1.3%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	0
\$20,000 to \$29,999	6.5%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	14.6%
\$12,000 to \$14,999	14.6%
\$9,000 to \$11,999	17.1%
\$6,000 to \$8,999	13.7%
Below \$5,999	25.0%
Not employed	<u>7.2%</u>
Total	100.0%

The educational cost of obtaining a college degree was financed by 49.2% of the subjects through savings, 18.0% by loans, 4.9% by scholarship, 16.4% by full-time employment, 7.7% by part-time employment, and 3.8% in other ways (Table XIX).



TABLE XIX  
FINANCING OF EDUCATIONAL COSTS BY MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Types of Financing	Percentage
Savings	49.2%
Loans	18.0%
Scholarship	4.9%
Full-time employment	16.4%
Part-time employment	7.7%
Other ways	3.8%
Total	100.0%

Subjects' Responses Related  
to Ideological Factors

Motivation. Section G, items one through seven, was concerned with specific motivational factors involved in obtaining an undergraduate degree. Such factors as cause for initiating study, persons influencing a subject's decision to attend college, reasons for obtaining a degree, reasons for selecting Oklahoma State University, reasons for attending Oklahoma State University, reasons causing delay in obtaining a degree, and hindsight are presented in Section G.

Of the subjects working toward a degree, 55.7% indicated it was primarily their own idea, 1.6% stated it was someone else's idea, and 42.7% claimed it was both their and someone else's idea to obtain a college degree.

A rating of the extent to which other people influenced the subjects' decision to attend college showed that the spouse was attributed with presenting the strongest influence. The mother was the second most influential person, friends were rated as the third most influential, and the father was the fourth most influential person. The admission officer was rated as being the least beneficial person involved in a subject's decision to attend college (Table XX).

TABLE XX  
PERSONS INFLUENCING THE MATURE FEMALE UNDER-GRADUATE STUDENT TO ATTEND COLLEGE

Degree of influence	P e r c e n t a g e s				
	1 most	2	3	4 least	5
a. spouse	46.4	8.7	13.7	2.2	29.0
b. mother	14.8	15.8	14.8	14.2	40.4
c. father	9.9	13.1	13.7	8.7	54.6
d. friend	16.9	10.9	9.8	8.2	54.2
e. clergy	2.7	3.8	3.3	1.1	89.1
f. teacher	6.1	8.7	4.9	6.1	64.2
g. medical doctor	4.4	2.7	1.1	1.6	90.2
h. counselor	6.1	2.2	1.6	1.6	88.5
i. admission officer	2.7	1.6	.5	1.1	94.1
j. other	6.6	1.6	.5	0	91.3

Five reasons for obtaining a degree were chosen for subjects to rank from most important to least important. A majority of the subjects selected the following ranking order

of these reasons for obtaining a degree. The most important reason was to obtain personal satisfaction; secondly, to obtain a better job; thirdly, to increase their income; fourthly, to obtain recognition or leadership; and fifthly, to improve their social status (Table XXI).

TABLE XXI  
REASONS FOR OBTAINING A DEGREE RATED BY MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Reasons	Rating Scale in Percentages				
	1	2	3	4	5
a. better job	11.5	51.3	23.0	7.1	7.1
b. personal satisfaction	76.0	10.4	13.1	.5	0
c. social status	.5	6.8	12.3	42.1	38.3
d. increase income	12.0	23.5	47.0	9.3	8.2
e. recognition	1.1	11.5	9.3	45.3	32.8

Of the subjects responding to the questionnaire, 78.7%<sup>✓</sup> reported that Oklahoma State University was the institution of their choice; whereas, 21.3% stated it was not. Of the 21.3% who stated Oklahoma State University was not the institution of their choice, 64.1% said they came to attend Oklahoma State University because their husband came to Stillwater, and 35.9% reported the location of Oklahoma State University was the primary reason they selected to attend.

A ranking of the degree of importance of several factors which could have influenced subjects to select Oklahoma State University indicated that distance to and from campus was the

important factor for 57.4% of the subjects. The other factors of tuition cost, state college, prestige of Oklahoma State University, scholarship/work study, and others did not rate as high as the factor concerning location of the institution (Table XXII). ✓

TABLE XXII  
FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF OKLAHOMA  
STATE UNIVERSITY BY MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Degree of influence	P e r c e n t a g e s				
	1 most	2	3	4 least	5
a. distance	57.4	4.4	7.1	2.2	28.9
b. cost	16.4	17.4	15.3	6.1	44.8
c. state college	10.9	10.9	14.8	7.6	55.8
d. prestige of OSU	9.8	16.4	14.2	9.3	50.3
e. scholarship	5.5	2.7	6.1	6.6	79.1
f. other	7.1	0	0	0	92.9

Inquiry into whether the completion of the undergraduate degree had been delayed because of educational cost, child care facilities, class scheduling, location of college, and other reasons indicated the majority of the subjects did not feel these factors delayed the completion of their degree. However, 41.5% stated family responsibilities, 25.7% reported educational cost, 22.9% cited class scheduling, 10.9% indicated child care facilities, 4.4% showed location, and 7.1%

claimed other reasons had caused delay in the completion of their degree programs (Table XXIII).

TABLE XXIII  
REASONS FOR DELAY IN OBTAINING AN  
UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

Reasons for delay	Percentages	
	Yes	No
a. educational costs	25.7%	74.3%
b. child care facilities	10.9%	89.1%
c. family responsibilities	41.5%	58.5%
d. class scheduling	22.9%	77.1%
e. location of college	4.4%	95.6%
f. others	7.1%	92.9%

Hindsight in relation to when a person would start her degree showed that 58.4% would begin working towards a degree earlier in their lives, 36.1% stated they would select the same time in their lives, 4.9% agreed that they would begin later in their lives, and .6% decided not to begin working toward the degree (Table XXIV).

#### Subjects' Responses Related to Environmental Factors

Environment. Section H, items one through four, emphasized the interaction of the student with selected services and facilities of the university environment. These environmental factors included the facilities and services used by

TABLE XXIV  
HINDSIGHT IN SELECTION OF TIME TO START  
WORKING TOWARDS A DEGREE

Hindsight	Percentages
a. same time in life	36.1%
b. later in life	4.9%
c. earlier in life	58.4%
d. not at all	<u>.6%</u>
Total	100.0%

mature female undergraduate students, academic satisfaction, intellectual growth, and the pursuit of higher educational goals.

Subjects indicated the frequency in which they used the following facilities and services on campus in Table XXV.

TABLE XXV  
FREQUENCY OF USE OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES BY  
MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Degree of frequency	P e r c e n t a g e s				
	1 most	2	3	4 least	5
a. Student Union	29.4	18.1	27.9	13.7	10.9
b. HPER (gym)	7.1	3.3	13.1	13.7	62.8
c. Library	40.0	30.6	16.9	8.7	3.8
d. Campus organizations	1.6	.5	4.4	6.6	86.9
e. O'Collegian	28.4	26.7	21.3	12.7	10.9
f. Medical services	4.4	7.1	13.7	14.2	60.6
g. Parking	59.0	9.3	7.6	4.4	19.7
h. Financial aids	9.8	4.4	3.8	4.4	77.6
i. Placement	2.7	2.7	8.2	7.6	78.8
j. Counseling	3.8	4.4	6.6	9.8	75.4
k. Visiting lecturers	1.6	6.1	16.9	11.5	63.9
l. Performances	8.2	10.9	19.7	14.8	46.4
m. Motion pictures	1.1	4.9	11.5	12.0	70.5
n. Art exhibits	9.3	9.3	19.7	11.5	50.2
o. Athletic events	19.0	13.7	15.3	12.7	39.3
p. Housing	9.8	.5	.5	1.1	88.1
q. Residence halls	2.7	.5	1.6	1.1	94.1
r. Tutoring	1.1	1.1	1.6	.5	95.7
s. Test files	5.5	5.5	6.6	10.4	72.0

Parking services were ranked as the most frequently used service by the mature female undergraduate student; whereas, the library was the most frequently used physical structure on campus. The second most used service was the college newspaper, O'Collegian, and the Student Union ranked second in physical facilities used by the subjects. Other facilities and services were not strongly patronized by the mature female undergraduate student.

Academic experiences at Oklahoma State University were rated by the subjects. There were 57.3% who indicated strong satisfaction as compared to 7.7% who indicated some dissatisfaction with their academic experiences. Table XXVI summarizes the degree of satisfaction with academic experiences attained at Oklahoma State University by mature female undergraduate students.

TABLE XXVI

ACADEMIC SATISFACTION EXPERIENCED BY MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

	P e r c e n t a g e s				
	most			least	
	1	2	3	4	5
Degree of academic satisfaction reported by subjects	28.9	28.4	35.0	5.5	2.2

A rating of academic factors assumed to be related to intellectual growth showed class discussions, class lectures,



library, discussion with faculty members, and textbooks received higher ratings by subjects than did discussion with students, grades, examinations, and term papers (Table XXVII).

TABLE XXVII  
RATING OF ACADEMIC FACTORS BY MATURE  
FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Degree of importance	P e r c e n t a g e s				
	most 1	2	3	least 4	5
a. class lectures	35.5	30.6	20.2	5.5	8.2
b. class discussions	37.7	30.1	20.8	8.2	3.2
c. term papers	4.9	15.3	22.4	20.8	36.6
d. examinations	10.9	13.1	34.4	23.5	18.1
e. textbooks	24.0	27.9	26.2	16.4	5.5
f. grades	12.7	12.7	27.9	15.8	30.9
g. faculty discussions	27.4	26.2	16.4	13.1	16.9
h. student discussions	20.8	20.8	30.5	13.1	14.8
i. library	28.4	28.9	30.5	5.1	7.1

Subjects were asked to indicate if they planned to continue their education after graduation. There were 50.8% who answered "yes" and 49.2% who answered "no." Of the 50.8% respondents answering in the affirmative, 65.6% planned to continue their education toward a higher degree while 34.4% had planned to continue their education without obtaining a specific degree.

The questionnaire was concluded with a request for additional comments or information the subjects would like to

supply. There were 66.1% of the subjects who did not comment while 33.9% did state their opinions. Students who presented comments expressed a desire for an increase in child care facilities, a revised undergraduate curriculum program for adult students, an increase in career information services for adult women, and a brief orientation program for incoming adult students.

### Results Related to Questions

#### Results Related to Question I

The percentage of questionnaires returned by mature female undergraduate students during the spring semester of 1972 was 81.69%.

#### Results Related to Question II

The grade point average for mature female undergraduate students for the spring semester of 1972 was 3.283.

#### Results Related to Question III

The enrollment distribution of mature female undergraduate students by class for the spring semester of 1972 is presented in Table XXVIII.

There were 8.8% of the mature female undergraduate students enrolled in their freshman year, 12.9% enrolled in their sophomore year, 27.5% enrolled in their junior year, and 50.8% enrolled in their senior year of college.

TABLE XXVIII  
DISTRIBUTION OF MATURE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDENTS BY CLASS

Classification	Percentages
Freshman	8.8%
Sophomore	12.9%
Junior	27.5%
Senior	<u>50.8%</u>
Total	100.0%

#### Results Related to Question IV

The average number of academic hours transferred by mature female undergraduate students to Oklahoma State University was 25.29 hours.

#### Results Related to Question V

The average age of mature female undergraduate students attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972 was 32.7 years.

#### Summary

This chapter presented the results of the responses submitted by mature female undergraduate students returning the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory. The subjects' responses were related to specific demographic, ideological, and environmental factors stated on the questionnaire. Subjects returning the mailed questionnaire form reported information concerning their personal background, family background, marital status, education, employment, income, motivation, utilization of campus facilities and services, and satisfaction with academic experiences.

The five stated questions were answered. These answers related to the percentage of questionnaires returned by mature female undergraduate students, the grade point average of mature female undergraduate students, the enrollment distribution of mature female undergraduate students by class, the average number of academic hours transferred by mature

female undergraduate students, and the average age of mature female undergraduate students attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter was to summarize the major results of the study, to present conclusions, and to submit recommendations for future research and administrative and academic policies. This chapter is composed of three sections. First a general summary of the research will be presented. The second section will deal with the conclusions drawn from the study. The final section will discuss recommendations based on the study.

#### Summary

This study was designed to ascertain a descriptive analysis of the mature female undergraduate student attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972. A questionnaire was composed of specific demographic, ideological, and environmental factors related to the personal background, family background, marital status, education, employment, income, motivation, utilization of campus facilities and services, and satisfaction with academic experiences of the mature female undergraduate student at Oklahoma State University.

Five questions were asked in relation to the total mature female undergraduate student population attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972. These questions were concerned with the percentage of mature female undergraduate students who returned their questionnaire forms, the general grade point average of mature female undergraduate students, the enrollment distribution of mature female undergraduate students, the average number of academic hours transferred by mature female undergraduate students, and the average age of mature female undergraduate students attending Oklahoma State University during the spring semester of 1972.

The data utilized in the investigation was collected from 183 subjects who returned the Adult Woman's Undergraduate Inventory mailed to them.

### Conclusions

The results of the analysis of data in the present investigation warranted the following conclusions:

1. The majority of mature female undergraduate students were born in Oklahoma and were residents of Oklahoma state. They had received their high school diplomas in Oklahoma and resided in the state for an average 19.6 years.
2. These women were mobile. They had moved an average of 1.8 times between towns in Oklahoma and 2.4 times between towns outside of Oklahoma. The average mobility rate for the subjects was 4.2 moves.

3. The mature female undergraduate student was the 2.3 child born in her family. The educational level of the family showed parents completed grade school while children received some educational training beyond high school. Sisters of the subjects received an average of 12.6 years of schooling and brothers received an average of 14.4 years of schooling.

4. The fathers of these subjects were predominantly employed as skilled worker or small farm-ranch owner or manager while the mothers were reported as being housewives.

5. The majority of these women were married and had an average of 2.4 children. They had been married for an average of 10.9 years. Husbands were employed as professionals requiring an advanced degree, professionals requiring a bachelor's degree, or small-farm ranch owners or managers.

6. These women were part-time students enrolled for an average of 9.9 semester hours. They had previously attended other colleges or universities before enrolling at Oklahoma State University. They intended on completing their degree program and were financing their educational costs predominantly through savings and loans.

7. The majority of subjects indicated they were self-motivated in making their decision to attend college. However, they did feel their spouses were among the most influential people who supported their decision.



8. These subjects pursued a college degree predominantly because of personal satisfaction and to obtain a better job.

9. These subjects reported that Oklahoma State University was the institution of their choice with location being the dominant reason in their selection. They believed that completion of their degree was not being delayed; however, they did indicate a desire to have begun their college education during an earlier period of their lives.

10. Parking, the library, the Student Union, and the student newspaper were the most frequently used services and facilities of mature female undergraduate students. They felt lack of time limited their utilization of other services and facilities provided for students of the university.

11. They were satisfied with their academic experiences and rated class discussions, library, class lectures, discussions with faculty members, and textbooks as being the most stimulating factors involved in their intellectual growth.

12. The subjects were closely divided in their decision to continue their education beyond the baccalaureate degree. However, the majority of those who decided to continue their education indicated that they would pursue a higher degree.

13. The majority of subjects did not offer comments. Those who did comment indicated their concern about scheduling of classes, availability of child care facilities, career information for adult students, brief orientation programs for adult students, and revised undergraduate curriculum programs for mature female undergraduate students.

These ideas and suggestions were expressed in the following selected comments received from mature female undergraduate students:

Lack of participation on my part in school activities has a lot to do with lack of funds. Although the activities as such are not expensive, babysitters are!

The lack of use of the various facilities is mainly due to a considerable lack of time due to the fact that I am a mother of three children. If time and money permitted, I am sure I would use them more.

I feel that the course schedules could be made easier and more beneficial for those who return at my age with a great need to complete in a short time my hours for a degree. Some of the required courses are a loss as to knowledge and time. I have neither the time nor the desire to waste any more time in my life. I need to be able to make a living for my three children and myself and I need to do this as quickly as possible.

It would be helpful if counselors were given information pertinent to job situations for adult (older) women.

New students, especially transfer students, need to be contacted, even if by letter, about the services available to them. If there was any orientation for transfer students, I never knew about it!

14. The enrollment distribution of mature female undergraduate students by class indicated a predominant percentage of these students were juniors and seniors. The majority of mature female undergraduate students for the spring semester were enrolled as upper class students. In addition, a majority of the mature female undergraduate students that responded to the questionnaire indicated they had received previous college experience before attending Oklahoma State University.

## Recommendations

The present study has increased knowledge about specific demographic, ideological, and environmental factors pertaining to the mature female undergraduate student attending a midwestern state university during the spring semester of 1972. Additional research is recommended in order to allow for further generalization of these findings and to verify the results on populations other than the one used in the study.

The study indicated that mature female undergraduate students did not utilize many services or facilities of the university. Some mature female undergraduate students believed their lack of participation on campus was due to limited time available to them because of impending family responsibilities, particularly care of children. Several women indicated a desire to participate more fully in social and academic campus activities, but were unable because child care facilities were not readily available to them. It is recommended that further investigation be conducted to determine if child care facilities should be made available to adult students attending college in order that they may participate more fully in social and academic opportunities which are considered to be beneficial to their total growth and human development both as students and individuals.

The undergraduate curriculum was designed primarily for the average undergraduate student who is 17 to 21 years of age. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, the Report

on Higher Education, Hiltunen (1965), Ferguson (1966), Sturtz (1971), and Lee (1961) studies have indicated that interests and needs of adult students are not identical with the interests and needs of average undergraduate students. It is recommended that further research be conducted to determine if undergraduate curriculum programs should be revised to include a more flexible academic program for adult undergraduate students.

Interest in career information services and brief orientation programs for new and transferring adult students have been expressed by several mature female undergraduate students on their questionnaire forms. It is recommended that further investigation be conducted to determine the exact need and the feasibility of such services for adult students.

### Concluding Statement

The present investigation was designed to describe the mature female undergraduate student population attending a specific university during the spring semester of 1972 in relation to designated demographic, ideological, and environmental factors surveyed through a questionnaire form. In addition, five questions were presented concerning the general mature female undergraduate student population in regard to questionnaires returned, grade point average, class distribution, academic transfer hours, and age. The findings of the study presented a descriptive profile of the mature female undergraduate student.

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*Oklahoma State University*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074  
GUNDERSEN HALL  
(405) 372-6211, EXT. 6461

March 27, 1972

During the past few years, an increasing number of adult women have enrolled at Oklahoma State University in order to continue their education after periods of interruption or to undertake for the first time the goal of obtaining an undergraduate degree. Our records indicate that you are one of these individuals.

Our society at present is particularly interested in understanding the needs of women. Oklahoma State University has always been interested in every student, like yourself, who has chosen to attend our institution. In order to provide objective information and a better understanding of adult women undergraduates at Oklahoma State University, your participation in the following scientific investigation is requested.

The enclosed questionnaire will take less than 15 minutes to complete. Please take the time now to fill out and return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. Your response will be kept confidential. If you need any additional information or assistance, please feel free to contact Mrs. Burleigh at 372-4045.

Yours very truly,

Frank E. McFarland  
Professor of Education

Joan D. Burleigh  
Researcher

Enclosures

P. S. Your prompt response is urgently requested in order that the research findings may be analyzed and reported as soon as possible.





*Oklahoma State University*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074  
GUNDERSEN HALL  
(405) 372-6211, EXT. 6461

April 17, 1972

Recently you received a letter requesting your participation in a survey concerning adult undergraduate women attending Oklahoma State University. Thus far, 50% of all women contacted have returned their questionnaires.

As you may realize, your individual return is a very significant part of this investigation. If you have not returned your questionnaire, please do so today. It takes less than 15 minutes to complete.

An additional copy of the questionnaire has been enclosed for your convenience. Your response will remain confidential. If you need any additional information or assistance, please feel free to contact me at 372-4045.

Sincerely yours,

Joan D. Burleigh (Mrs.)  
Researcher

Enclosures

P.S. Dr. Frank McFarland and I would like to warmly thank you for your interest and participation in this study. If you have already submitted your return please disregard the above request.

## THE ADULT WOMAN'S UNDERGRADUATE INVENTORY

- DIRECTIONS: 1. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire.  
 2. Please circle, check, or fill in your responses.  
 3. Please answer all items.

## A. Personal Background

1. Birth place \_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State)  
 2. Are you a resident of Oklahoma Yes No.  
 3. Circle or fill in the number of years you have lived in Oklahoma  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 \_\_\_\_\_ years.  
 4. Circle or fill in the number of times you have changed residence  
 since adulthood  
 a. between towns in Oklahoma 1 2 3 4 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. between towns outside Oklahoma 1 2 3 4 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. Please check your age category  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 25-29 \_\_\_\_\_ 35-39 \_\_\_\_\_ 45-49 \_\_\_\_\_ 55-59 \_\_\_\_\_ 65-69  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 30-34 \_\_\_\_\_ 40-44 \_\_\_\_\_ 50-54 \_\_\_\_\_ 60-64 \_\_\_\_\_ Over 70

## B. Family Background

1. Circle or fill in the number of siblings in your family  
 a. number of older sisters 0 1 2 3 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. number of older brothers 0 1 2 3 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. number of younger sisters 0 1 2 3 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 d. number of younger brothers 0 1 2 3 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Circle or fill in your birth order in your family (Were you the  
 1st 2nd, 3rd, etc., child born to your parents):  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Circle the educational level of each member of your family:  
 Father:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Bachelor Master Doctorate  
 Mother:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Bachelor Master Doctorate  
 Older Sister(s):  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Bachelor Master Doctorate  
 Older Brother(s):  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Bachelor Master Doctorate  
 Younger Sister(s):  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Bachelor Master Doctorate  
 Younger Brother(s):  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Bachelor Master Doctorate  
 4. Which of the following categories comes closest to your father's  
 occupation? If your father is retired, deceased, or unemployed,  
 indicate his former or customary occupation. (Circle only one).  
 1. unskilled worker, laborer, farm worker  
 2. semiskilled worker (machine operator)  
 3. service worker (policeman, fireman, barber, etc.)  
 4. skilled worker or craftsman (carpenter, electrician,  
 plumber, etc.)  
 5. salesman, bookkeeper, secretary, office worker, etc.  
 6. small farm-ranch owner, manager, partner of a small busi-  
 ness; lower level governmental official, military commis-  
 sioned officer

7. professional requiring a bachelor's degree (engineer, school teacher, etc.)
8. large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive; large business or high-level government agency
9. professional requiring an advanced college degree (doctor, lawyer, professor)
5. Please describe in detail your mother's occupation \_\_\_\_\_

C. Marital Status

1. Have you ever been married \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No. If No, please go to Section D.
2. Is your spouse living \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No.
3. Have you ever been divorced \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No.
4. Circle or fill in the number of years of your most recent marriage  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	_____ years				
5. Is your spouse a student \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No. If No, go to item #6.  
 If Yes, is he \_\_\_full-time or \_\_\_part-time student. What degree program is he working on \_\_\_BA \_\_\_BS \_\_\_MA \_\_\_MS \_\_\_MED  
 \_\_\_PHD \_\_\_EDD \_\_\_other (\_\_\_\_\_)
 

In which college is he enrolled:

___ Agriculture	___ Education	___ Veterinary Medicine
___ Arts & Sciences	___ Engineering	___ Technical Institute
___ Business	___ Home Economics	___ Graduate
6. Circle your spouse's educational level  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Bachelor Master Doctorate														
7. Which of the following categories comes closest to your spouse's occupation? If your spouse is retired, deceased, or unemployed, indicate his former or customary occupation. (Circle only one).
  1. unskilled worker, laborer, farm worker
  2. semiskilled worker (machine operator)
  3. service worker (policeman, fireman, barber, etc.)
  4. skilled worker or craftsman (carpenter, electrician, plumber, etc.)
  5. salesman, bookkeeper, secretary, office worker, etc.
  6. small farm-ranch owner, manager, partner of a small business; lower level governmental official, military commissioned officer
  7. professional requiring a bachelor's degree (engineer, school teacher, etc.)
  8. large farm-ranch owner, high-level executive; large business or high-level government agency
  9. professional requiring an advanced college degree (doctor, lawyer, professor)
8. Number of children and ages:
 

Daughter(s)	1	2	3	4	_____
	Ages _____				
Son(s)	1	2	3	4	_____
	Ages _____				

## D. Educational Data

1. Where did you receive your high school diploma?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State)
2. Is OSU the first college you have attended ☐ Yes ☐ No. If  
 No, please list other colleges you have attended:  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you working on an undergraduate degree ☐ Yes ☐ No. If  
 No, please explain \_\_\_\_\_
4. What degree program are you working on ☐ BA ☐ BS ☐ Other
5. In which college are you enrolled:  
☐ Agriculture ☐ Education ☐ Veterinary Medicine  
☐ Arts & Sciences ☐ Engineering ☐ Technical Institute  
☐ Business ☐ Home Economics \_\_\_\_\_ (Other)
6. Are you a ☐ full-time or ☐ part-time student?  
 Number of hours enrolled ☐ hours.
7. Are any other members of your family attending OSU ☐ Yes ☐ No.  
 If Yes, please indicate family relationship \_\_\_\_\_

## E. Employment Data

1. Indicate your present employment status:  
☐ full-time ☐ retired  
☐ part-time (☐%) ☐ not employed  
 If employed, describe your occupation \_\_\_\_\_
2. Indicate your past employment status before attending college:  
☐ full-time ☐ retired  
☐ part-time (☐%) ☐ not employed  
 If employed, describe your past occupation \_\_\_\_\_
3. Indicate your spouse's present employment status:  
☐ full-time ☐ retired  
☐ part-time (☐%) ☐ not employed
4. Are you a veteran ☐ Yes ☐ No. If No, go to Section F. If  
 Yes, specify former rank and branch of service: \_\_\_\_\_

## F. Income

1. Your present income: Your past income before attending college:  

<input type="checkbox"/> over \$12,000	<input type="checkbox"/> over \$12,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$9,000-11,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$9,000-11,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$6,000-8,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$6,000-8,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$3,000-5,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$3,000-5,999
<input type="checkbox"/> below \$2,999	<input type="checkbox"/> below \$2,999
<input type="checkbox"/> not employed	<input type="checkbox"/> not employed
2. Spouse's present income:  

<input type="checkbox"/> over \$50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000-49,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000-29,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000-19,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$12,000-14,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 9,000-11,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 6,000- 8,999
<input type="checkbox"/> below \$5,999
<input type="checkbox"/> not employed

3. How are you financing your college education:
- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> savings     | <input type="checkbox"/> full-time employment         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> loan        | <input type="checkbox"/> part-time employment         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> scholarship | <input type="checkbox"/> other (please explain) _____ |

G. Motivation

1. Whose idea was it for you to obtain a degree
- ☐ your own idea
- ☐ someone else's idea
- ☐ both your own and someone else's idea
- ☐ other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
2. To what extent did the following people influence your decision to attend college. Circle the degree of influence.
- |                   |             |   |   |   |   |   |                          |
|-------------------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| spouse            | <u>most</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <u>least influential</u> |
| mother            |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| father            |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| friend            |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| clergy            |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| teacher           |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| medical doctor    |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| counselor         |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| admission officer |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
| others _____      |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                          |
3. Rank the following reasons for obtaining a degree (1=most important; 2=very important; 3=important; 4=moderately important; 5=least important)
- ☐ for obtaining a better job
- ☐ for personal satisfaction
- ☐ for improving social status
- ☐ for increasing income
- ☐ for obtaining recognition or leadership
4. Was OSU the institution of your choice ☐ Yes ☐ No. If No, please explain how you came to attend OSU \_\_\_\_\_
5. How important were the following factors in selecting OSU. Circle the degree of importance.
- |                         |             |   |   |   |   |   |                        |
|-------------------------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| distance to/from campus | <u>most</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <u>least important</u> |
| cost of tuition         |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                        |
| state college           |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                        |
| prestige of institution |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                        |
| scholarship/work-study  |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                        |
| others _____            |             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                        |
6. Is the completion of your degree being delayed in any way because of the following:
- Yes    No
- ☐ ☐ educational cost
- ☐ ☐ child care facilities
- ☐ ☐ family responsibilities
- ☐ ☐ class scheduling
- ☐ ☐ location of college
- ☐ ☐ other reason(s) \_\_\_\_\_

7. If you could decide again, would you decide to start your degree  
 \_\_\_ at the same time in your life  
 \_\_\_ later in your life  
 \_\_\_ earlier in your life  
 \_\_\_ not at all

H. Environmental Factors

1. How frequently do you use the following facilities and services at OSU. Circle the degree of frequency.

	<u>most</u>	1	2	3	4	5	<u>least frequently</u>
Student Union							
HPER Building (Gym)							
Library							
Campus organizations							
O'Collegian Newspaper							

Medical services							
Parking facilities							
Financial aids							
Placement services							
Counseling services							

Visiting lecturers							
Live performances							
Motion pictures							
Art exhibits							
Athletic events							

Married student housing							
Residence halls							
Tutoring services							
Test files							

2. How would you rate your academic experiences at OSU, thus far:

	<u>most</u>	1	2	3	4	5	<u>least satisfying</u>
--	-------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------------

3. How would you rate the following factors as contributing to your intellectual growth. Circle the degree of importance.

	<u>most</u>	1	2	3	4	5	<u>least important</u>
Class lectures							
Class discussions							
Term papers							
Examinations							
Textbooks							
Grades							
Discussions with faculty							
Discussions with students							
Library							

4. After graduation do you plan to continue your education?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No. If Yes, please explain your intentions \_\_\_\_\_

Please write any additional comments or information you may like to add to this questionnaire in the following space: \_\_\_\_\_

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2

VITA

Joan Delhom Burleigh

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC, IDEOLOGICAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS OF THE MATURE FEMALE  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ATTENDING OKLAHOMA STATE  
UNIVERSITY DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER OF 1972

Major Field: Student Personnel and Guidance

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in New Orleans, Louisiana,  
November 14, 1944, the daughter of John William  
and Pauline Bohne Delhom.

Education: Attended public schools in New Orleans,  
Louisiana. Graduated from John McDonogh Senior  
High School in 1962. Received a Bachelor of Arts  
degree from Louisiana State University in New  
Orleans in 1966; received a Master of Education  
degree from Louisiana State University in New  
Orleans in 1970; completed requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Education at Oklahoma State  
University in May, 1973.

Professional Experience: Regular business teacher at  
L. E. Rabouin Vocational High School, 1966-1968,  
and Marion Abramson Senior High School, 1968-1969,  
for Orleans Parish School Board in New Orleans,  
Louisiana; graduate assistant, fall of 1972, in the  
Department of Education at Oklahoma State Univer-  
sity, Stillwater, Oklahoma.