

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND THE CONSTRUCT  
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, LOCUS OF CONTROL,  
AND JOB SATISFACTION IN EARLY  
AND MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study will examine the relationship between gender and three variables--psychological well-being, locus of control and job satisfaction--within two age groups: early adulthood (22 through 31 years old) and middle adulthood (42 through 51 years old). These age groups were chosen because they are represented in the literature as being early and middle adulthood, respectively. The period between the two levels, 32 to 41 years old, is a transition stage from early to middle adulthood in most developmental models (Levinson, 1978; Gould, 1978; Sheehy, 1976). The need to examine such gender differences during adulthood arises from the fact that most current models of adult development are based primarily on male samples, and life cycle theorists have implicitly adopted the male pattern as the developmental norm (Notman, 1980). Recently, research has recognized that women may follow a different developmental pattern than that of men (Baruch et al., 1983; Notman, 1980). For example, women's development is often centered around the family life cycle, whereas men's development often centers around a career (McIlroy, 1984). Women's development, when different from men's, has often been conceptualized as deviant from the primary (male) normative pattern (Barnett & Baruch, 1978; Notman, 1980; Gilligan & Notman, 1978). Insofar as developmental models are based primarily on observations of male development, it may be inappropriate to use a single adult developmental model for both men and women. Often the processes or stages of change in male



models of development are not relevant to women. Current research has begun to discriminate between male and female adult development to some extent, but a full developmental psychology of women does not yet exist (Barnett et al., 1978). Cytrynbaum, Blum, Patrick, Stein, Wadner, and Wilk (1980) suggest the need to extend the existing work with predominantly middle- and upper-class males to female and blue-collar samples.

### Theories of Adult Development

Although most developmental theories focus on childhood and adolescence, some assert that significant development continues to occur throughout adulthood (Brim & Kagan, 1980; Gould, 1978), and support seems to be growing for these theories. Psychologists (Erikson, 1963; Levinson, 1978; Gould, 1978; Cytrynbaum, Lee & Wadner, 1982) studying adult development have generally suggested that adulthood is best thought of as a series of stages, most commonly, early adulthood, middle adulthood, late adulthood, and old age. This study will be limited to the stages of early and middle adulthood.

Early adulthood is the subject of Erikson's (1959) sixth stage, "intimacy versus isolation" in his theory of the "eight stages of man." Erikson (1959) says:

Young adults emerge from the search for identity, and are eager and willing to fuse their identities with that of others. The young adults are ready for intimacy, that is, the capacity to commit themselves to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises (p. 263).

Levinson (1978) (based on observation of male subjects only) describes early adulthood as a novice phase: a time when the individual finds his place in adult society and commits himself to a more stable life. The primary task for

the individual in the novice phase is to make a place for oneself in the adult world and suitable for the self (Levinson, 1978). A man often assumes he is doing this in the early twenties when he forms an initial adult structure, but inevitably, there are flaws and limitations. The late thirties mark the culmination of early adulthood and in the early forties, a man makes some judgment regarding his relative success or failure in meeting the goals he set himself. The forties mark the beginning of middle adulthood, according to Levinson (1978).

According to Gould (1978), early adulthood is a period when the demands and limitations of each job or new careers, including, for some, starting a marriage or family, becomes the borders of a new life. Out of a vast, impersonal world, the young adult creates a manageable personal space in which to become important. The young adult defines a space he can devote his energies to so that he can prove himself an adult, beyond his parents' long reach. In many ways, Gould believes life becomes simpler. Young adults have more reason for self-confidence. They are expected to solve only a finite number of problems within a limited range of possible solutions. Tasks can actually be accomplished by interaction, work, and perseverance; processes are shared and knowable. It is a "mental vacation" compared with the search for one's identity in adolescence. Those who accept the challenge of the early adult years will put their energy into worthwhile and necessary tasks and daily successes will accumulate and provide a solid base of confidence built on real competence (Gould, 1978).

Middle adulthood will be compared with early adulthood in this research to determine if there is a difference between the age groups when measuring certain variables. If, in fact, most adults experience a midlife transition, change should be evident between early adulthood and middle adulthood.

Until quite recently, investigation of middle adulthood development has stressed the significance of loss and decline, and has regarded middle adulthood as a relatively static period between the growth of adolescence and the decline of old age (Notman, 1980). Within the past decade, however, the emphasis has changed toward a perception of middle adulthood as being a time of development and growth rather than one of stasis (Notman, 1980; Barnett & Baruch, 1978; Neugarten, 1975).

In the past, the study of middle adulthood as a developmental stage was largely ignored. Jung was one of the earliest theorists to espouse a midlife theory (Staude, 1981). Jung (1961) claims he went through a painful dissolution of his old life structure and experienced feelings of guilt, loss, loneliness, isolation, and failure. He had to face the fact of his own aging process and the inevitability of death. Out of his midlife crisis, Jung discovered the Self as a new integrating center of the mature adult personality beyond the ego.

Erikson's (1963) theory of the "eight stages of man" is probably the best known of those developmental theories which discuss middle adulthood as a distinct stage. Erikson considers his seventh stage, "generativity versus stagnation" to focus on middle adulthood. During this stage, individuals are often concerned with others both within and outside of their immediate families and must give of themselves to the world in a creative, caretaking, participatory way. Those who fail to establish a sense of generativity fall into stagnation, which is a state of self-absorption in which their personal needs and comforts are of predominant concern (Erikson, 1963).

Levinson (1978) (based on observation of male subjects only) emphasizes the experience of disparity between what individuals may have gained from living within particular life structures and what they now want for themselves. Furthermore, the transition from early to middle adulthood can

lead to a creative era, an experience of life renewal, if an individual comes to terms with the gaps, contradictions, and illusions that are in his early adulthood life structure. Levinson (1978) defines the concept of a life structure as the underlying pattern or design of a person's life at a given time. A man's life could have many components: his occupation, his love relationships, his marriage and family, his relation to himself, his use of solitude, his roles in various social contexts--all the relationships with individuals, groups, and institutions that have significance for him. His personality influences and is influenced by his involvement in each of them. Over the years, the life structure evolves through a standard sequence of periods which include middle adulthood (Levinson, 1978).

Gould (1978) believes that middle adulthood brings an awareness of finality in life and the pressure of time: "Whatever we must do must be done now" (p. 101). Time is the ultimate limitation of life and removes any remaining illusion of safety. Any illusions of immortality disappear and those in middle adulthood become vulnerable. To achieve an adult sense of freedom, one must let go of the childish desire for absolute safety and accept vulnerability. Gould concludes that those in middle adulthood must work to form a new, deeper understanding of the meaning of life uncontaminated by the need for magical solutions or protective devices. Once the fundamental task of deep self-renewal is accomplished, adults in midlife finally know and can accept themselves.

The exact time period of middle adulthood is difficult to pinpoint. Even researchers do not agree on a single age. To date, researchers have not found a universal, specific event such as a bodily change, a social or a psychological event to mark the passage into middle adulthood (Chiriboga, 1981; Levinson, 1978). Research has shown, however, that most adults experience a midlife

transition in which they face developmental issues (Chiriboga, 1981; Brim & Kagan, 1980; Levinson, 1978; McIlroy, 1984). For this study, middle adulthood will be defined as the period from 42 to 51 years of age. This age range is within that period considered to be middle adulthood by most researchers (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978; Melamed, 1983; Tamir, 1980).

Although empirical studies of middle adulthood are still relatively few, a common theme has emerged from them. Most adults experience a midlife transition in which they face developmental issues which can involve one or more of the following: (1) questioning of identity (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978); (2) concern over mortality (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978); (3) discontent with marital relationship (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978); (4) concern over children leaving home (Lowenthal, 1975); (5) dissatisfaction with career accomplishments (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978; McIlroy, 1984); (6) physical changes (McIlroy, 1984; Melamed, 1983); and (7) a shift in time perspective--from a sense of timelessness in early adulthood to an awareness of the pressure of time in middle adulthood (Gould, 1978; McIlroy, 1984).

#### Dependent Variables

Three variables--psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction--were chosen as a basis for the comparison of males and females during early and middle adulthood. The three variables were chosen because, although research exists using the male as the norm, no comparison studies on these variables have been found using males and females across different adult age levels. A detailed description of the work that has been done with the three variables in adulthood is provided in the review of the literature.

Psychological well-being is a construct that has been used when studying development across the life span and particularly in old age. However, little

research exists comparing gender and age differences in adulthood. Furthermore, because the majority of middle adulthood studies have emphasized men, little research has examined women's psychological well-being, particularly at different periods in the life cycle. Bradburn (1969) defines psychological well-being as the assessment of the degree to which an individual has positive and negative affect: "An individual will be high in psychological well-being in the degree to which he has an excess of positive over negative affect and will be low in well-being in the degree to which negative affect predominates over positive" (p. 9). Throughout this study, psychological well-being will be operationally defined as the overall affective balance score (ABS) obtained from Affective Balance Score (Bradburn, 1969).

Research has found locus of control or mastery to have a significant relationship with psychological well-being in middle adulthood (Baruch et al., 1983; Gould, 1978; Bell, 1983/1984). Locus of control has been defined by Levenson (1974) as the mastery people feel over their own personal life (internal control) or the extent to which people believe their destinies are controlled by chance or powerful others and political institutions (external control). In this study, locus of control will be measured by the Internal-External Locus of Control Scales (Internals and Powerful Others) (Levenson, 1974).

Those individuals who are internally controlled feel they have control over their lives and score high on psychological well-being tests, while those who are externally controlled and view events as beyond their own personal control manifest lower psychological well-being (Baruch et al., 1983; Gould, 1978; Bell, 1983/1984). A curvilinear developmental trend toward internal locus of control and higher levels of psychological well-being has been found across the life span (Bradley & Webb, 1976; Bourque & Back, 1977). This trend is evidence that as individuals age they tend to be more internally controlled and

more satisfied with their lives until old age. Studies (Phares, 1976) have shown that old aged adults in nursing homes are more externally controlled and less satisfied with their lives.

While autonomy and independence are critical to men's identity, women's identity may be more dependent on their relationship with and the opinion of others. The legacy of feminine development is that women have been defined in terms of their relationships to others--parents, husband, and children (Melamed, 1983; Baruch et al., 1983; Notman, 1980). If it is the case that women's identity largely depends on relationships with others, then it is evident that women would be more likely to be externally controlled (Notman, 1980; Baruch et al., 1983; Friedan, 1963). Further research is needed to examine the relationship of locus of control to gender and age on early and middle adult males and females, and to determine if, in fact, men are more internally controlled and women are more externally controlled (Baruch et al., 1983).

Another construct commonly used in studies of adulthood, and one potentially useful for examining the relevance of gender to development during adulthood, is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been defined by Locke (1976) as "a positive or pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience" (p. 310). The Job Satisfaction Index (Brayfield, Wells & Strate, 1957) was selected to assess employee's attitude toward work in this study. Doering, Rhodes and Schuster (1983) report that job satisfaction for male employees increases with age; however, results are less consistent for females. Kelleher (1973) reports that middle-aged workers often have a feeling of dissatisfaction.

One of the key components of identity for men in midlife is their occupational status; working often contributes to feelings of self-esteem and psychological well-being (Tamir, 1982). The middle-aged man is usually at the

peak of his working career; however, once he realizes this is the peak, he may panic (Tamir, 1982). By middle age, the man is at a plateau; further advancement is unlikely. At best, the middle-aged man may make a lateral shift, or he may proceed on a downward curve. Studies of adulthood uniformly document this ambiguous position of the middle-aged man, whether he comes from a high- or low-status job (Tamir, 1982).

Often this situation stimulates the man to examine the extent to which he is responsible for his own success or lack of it (Lowenthal, 1975). At midlife, there is a major review of one's life and career status (Levinson, 1978). This is when the man takes stock, when he compares reality with the dream. If he has not achieved what he had dreamed, there is little chance now to realize the dream; but if he has reached the heights of success, he may regret the sacrifices he made along the way and find the rewards of his current success to be less than he had anticipated (Tamir, 1982).

While career is noted as an important variable for men in defining middle adulthood, women, until recently, defined themselves more in terms of events in the family cycle. The launching of children from the family usually coincides with middle-age and can precipitate a crisis, especially for the woman who has devoted most of her time to the family (Kimmel, 1974).

Recent research shows that women who work outside the home have in middle adulthood a higher level of psychological well-being than women who do not work outside the home (Coleman et al., 1983). In middle adulthood, women employed outside the home also scored higher on mastery than did women at home. Because mastery can be an indicator of psychological well-being, the data seem to show that employment might, for women, be a buffer against midlife psychological anxiety (Baruch, 1983; DuBois, 1981; Coleman et al., 1983).



## Statement of the Problem

Because past developmental studies of adulthood have used the male pattern of development as the norm, there is a need for additional research on gender differences in adulthood (Baruch et al., 1983; Coleman et al., 1983; Notman, 1980). The need to further research psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction has been well established (Coleman et al., 1983; Baruch et al., 1983; Notman, 1980; Cytrynbaum et al., 1980). This study will focus on gender and age differences during adulthood with regard to these variables.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between gender and three variables--psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction--within two age groups, early and middle adulthood in a population of public school teachers. Teachers were chosen for the population because of the accessibility and the probability of finding male and female, early and middle adults. This study was chosen because the research is not conclusive regarding the aforementioned variables in early and middle adulthood. For this study, early adulthood will be considered from ages 22 through 31 because this is the time frame considered by most researchers to be early adulthood (Levinson, 1978; Sheehy, 1976). Middle adulthood will be considered from ages 42 through 51 because this time frame is included in most researchers' definition of middle-age (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978; Tamir, 1980).

## Research Questions

1. Is there a significant interaction between gender and age on the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction in early and middle adulthood?

2. Is there a significant difference between gender on the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction?

3. Is there a significant difference between age groups on the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction?

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This study will be concerned with gender and age differences in adulthood. The variables to be examined in relationship to gender and age are psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction. This chapter will begin by reviewing the relevant literature on middle and early adult development with relationship to gender. Next, individuals will be reviewed who do not apply this drive to their own offspring; however, this does not mean they have not obtained generativity (Hall, 1983). Generativity goes beyond procreativity and can be sublimated into creativity or productivity. The mere fact of having or even wanting children does not achieve generativity. In fact, some parents fail to develop this stage for whatever reasons (Erikson, 1963). This self-absorption or stagnation, as it is called, becomes the opposing trend in middle adulthood.

The early forties provide a bridge from early to middle adulthood, according to Levinson (1978), and bring a new set of developmental tasks. The life structure again comes into question. It becomes important for the man to ask: "What have I done with my life? What do I really get from and give to my wife, children, friends, work, community--and self? What is it I truly want for myself and others?" A man yearns for a life in which his actual desires, values, talents, and aspirations can be expressed.

Some men do very little questioning or searching during middle adulthood. They are apparently untroubled by difficult questions regarding the meaning, value, and direction of their lives. Other men realize that the character of their lives is changing, but the process is not a painful one. They are in a manageable transition, one without crisis. But for the great majority of men this is a period of great struggle within the self and with the external world. Middle adulthood is a time of moderate or severe crisis. They question nearly every aspect of their lives and feel they cannot go on as before. They will need several years to form a new path or modify the old one (Levinson, 1978).

After a man has reappraised and explored choices for a new life in middle adulthood, he must make his choices and begin forming a new life structure. This is sometimes marked by a series of changes rather than one dramatic event and may be evident only as a man looks back a few years later. In other men's lives, however, Levinson says (1978) the shift is signaled by a crucial marker event--a drastic change in job or occupation, a divorce or love affair, a serious illness, the death of a loved one, or a move to a new locale.

Other men's lives show no conspicuous change: life at 45 seems to be just as it was at 39. Closer inspection, however, reveals seemingly minor changes that make a considerable difference (Levinson, 1978). A man may still be married to the same woman, but the character of his relationships has changed for better or worse. Or the nature of his work life has altered: he is quietly marking time until retirement; his work has become oppressive and humiliating; or seemingly small changes in his work have made his work life more satisfying and creative. A man's life structure necessarily changes in certain respects during middle adulthood (Levinson, 1978).

The changed life structure that emerges in middle adulthood greatly varies in its satisfactoriness. Some men lack the inner and outer resources for creating a minimally adequate structure. They face a middle adulthood of restriction and decline. Other men form a life structure that is reasonably viable in the world but poorly connected to the self. Although they do their bit for themselves and others, their lives are lacking in inner excitement and meaning.

Still other men have started a middle adulthood that will have its own special satisfactions and fulfillments. For these men, middle adulthood is often the most creative and fullest season in the life cycle. They are less tyrannized by the ambitions, passions, and illusions of youth. They can be more deeply attached to others and yet more separate, more centered in the self. For them, development in middle adulthood is the most satisfying of all the life stages (Levinson, 1978).

Gould (1978) emphasizes the awareness of mortality as the developmental task in middle adulthood. In their forties, middle-aged adults realize their immortality and the fact that they must act now to accomplish their goals. The sense of timelessness in the early thirties gives way to an awareness of the pressure of time in the forties. To the middle-aged adult of 40, the illusion of immortality is fading and a sense of vulnerability sets in.

To achieve an adult sense of freedom, Gould (1978) believes (1978) one must pass through periods of passivity, rage, depression, and despair as one experiences the repugnance of death, the hoax of life, and the evil within and around us. To enjoy full access to one's innermost self, one can no longer deny the "ugly, demonic" side of life, which the immature mind tried to protect one against by enslaving itself to false illusions that absolute safety from mortality was possible.

The confrontation of the last remnants of the illusion of absolute safety is a key developmental task of middle adulthood. When one faces this illusion, one makes the final passage of "I own myself" (Gould, 1978). With that momentous awareness, one is finally able to step out of the familiar world of struggle for status into a life of inner-directedness. When this occurs, usually toward the end of middle adulthood, one lives with a sense of having completed something, a sense that "we are whoever we are going to be." The middle-aged adult accepts this, not with resignation to the negative feeling that he or she could have been more and have failed, but with a more positive acceptance: "This is me!" This "me" becomes the individual's core, around which that individual centers the rest of his or her life. One must go through this experience before one emerges as a wise, more philosophical being, according to Gould (1978).

The literature shows that the onset of middle age is commonly a time of stocktaking set off by the recognition that one's life is reaching its climax. Middle adults usually try to assess how their lives, both internally and externally, are going to turn out. For some, middle adulthood brings angry bewilderment because neglect of meaningful relationships in the striving for success makes life seem empty. When, as sometimes happens, all goes relatively well in work and family life, middle adulthood is a time of fruition, when the strivings and efforts of earlier years are producing tangible rewards. Most people are now at the height of their potential; they know their areas of competence and feel in control of them. Truly successful people have not simply acquired mastery, power, knowledge, and skills, but also wisdom in making decisions, approaching tasks, and in working with others (Notman, 1980). The literature indicates that coming to terms with one's accomplishments and future potential is the underlying developmental task of middle

adulthood. Not everyone gains satisfaction from accomplishments if they do not find pleasure in what they have made of themselves. However, for others, middle adulthood can be a creative, productive time after that individual has come to understand and accept himself. As noted, the course of women's lives may differ markedly from those of men.

### Psychological Well-Being

The concept of psychological well-being has been studied by many researchers (Bradburn, 1969; Sheehy, 1981; Baruch et al., 1983). Many researchers use the terms psychological well-being, life satisfaction, happiness, and personal adjustment interchangeably. For the purpose of clarity, where the researchers have used other terms in their investigations, the terms will be referred to as they have been documented in the data. For this study, however, psychological well-being has been selected as the measurable concept.

Psychological well-being is something intangible (Baruch et al., 1983). It cannot be touched or seen or weighed. Psychological well-being has been used by Sheehy (1981) to represent an "accumulated attitude, a sustained background tone of equanimity behind the more intense contrasts of daily events, behind even periods of unhappiness." Other researchers (Baruch et al., 1983) suggest a two-dimensional picture of well-being, the two major components of which are mastery (sense of control) and pleasure (satisfaction, happiness).

Psychologists base their assessment of a person's well-being on a variety of items and scales. Several global and domain specific measures of psychological well-being and life satisfaction have been developed for use with adults (Neugarten, Havighurst, & Tobin, 1961). However, few have been appropriate for, specifically, the middle adult population (Bell, 1983/1984). The Affective Balance Scale (ABS) (Bradburn, 1969) was normed on young and middle aged

adults and, according to Kozma and Stones (1978), is probably the best current measure of psychological well-being.

According to Kozma and Stones (1978), the ABS (Bradburn, 1969) has three advantages. First, it is an ideal scale to maintain differentiation between well-being and related constructs such as adjustment. Second, adjustment may be best understood as the strategies used to cope with affective states and may be more related to developmental task accomplishment than well-being. Third, since it is a measure of current levels of well-being, it should facilitate sensitivity to the short-term fluctuation in the associated measuring instruments in this investigation, Levenson's (1974) Internal-External Locus of Control Scale. Another advantage to the use of the ABS is that it is possible to use the measure for comparing the psychological well-being of several age groups, since it was normed on young and middle-aged adults (Bradburn, 1969; Bell, 1983/1984).

The literature indicates that some people experience lower levels of psychological well-being with the advent of middle adulthood, while others do not. Until recently, however, research has not delineated between male's and female's psychological well-being. This indicates that additional research is needed in regard to psychological well-being in middle adulthood. This research is designed to investigate if there is a gender and age difference with regard to psychological well-being.

#### Locus of control

Research has shown locus of control to have a significant relationship with psychological well-being (Baruch et al., 1983; Gould, 1978; Bell, 1983/1984). Locus of control has been defined by Levenson (1974) as felt mastery over one's own personal life (internal control) or the extent to which



people believe their destinies are controlled by change or powerful others (external control).

Effects of age on locus of control have been well documented (Milgram, 1971; Bradley & Webb, 1976; Bourque & Back, 1977). This suggests that as individuals age they tend to become more internally controlled. However, few studies have been concerned with perceived locus of control differences in men and women at various adult stages (Phares, 1976).

In the few studies that do report separate means for males and females, it is clear that sex often moderates the relationship between internal-external scale scores and other behaviors. For example, internality often is related to a variety of achievement behaviors in males but not in females. Similarly, the concept of defensive externality seems to appear more often in males than females. Because of greater cultural pressures for success, males seemingly have a greater need to protect or defend themselves against failures by recourse to external attributions (Phares, 1976).

Platt, Pomeranz, Eisenman, and DeLisser (1970) reported a variety of differences in adjustment and personality dimensions for internals and externals--particularly when scores for females are analyzed separately from those of males. They suggest that the moderating effects of gender may be due to the greater socialization undergone by females as contrasted to the greater responsiveness of males to situational considerations.

As research indicated, autonomy and independence are important to the masculine identity; however, the traditional view of women's identity is that she is dependent on her relationship with and the opinion of others (Melamed, 1983; Baruch et al., 1983; Notman, 1980). This indicates that women would be more externally controlled (Notman, 1980; Baruch et al., 1983; Friedan, 1963).

Gould (1978) says that when a woman chooses to bear children she must be dependent upon her husband to take care of her. The traditional woman's world affords little opportunity for her to exercise control over her own destiny. In her daily experience with a child, a mother's time is not her own. She deals with the world of child rearing, where hundreds of experts give contradictory advice; and the outcome cannot be measured for 15 to 20 years. A child's chaotic and disorderly passions require a woman who chooses a domestic career to become expert in the intuitive world if she is to produce a mentally healthy human being. While a domestic woman develops the expertise needed to work at an unending task, she forfeits the confidence she could have gained from mastering a finite, orderly world. Gradually, she comes to question her ability to master the world "outside," and her feeling of independence begins to slip away (Gould, 1978).

Men are socialized to be autonomous and independent. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume they would be more internally controlled. This is in keeping with Gould's (1978) view that people with careers outside the home live in a relatively crystalline world. Each job or organization has some set of discoverable rules; outcomes are immediate; and although the hierarchy may finally determine any exchange, the everyday dialogue usually consists of clearly expressed verbal contracts between adults. People with careers outside the home have increasing confidence as they gain competence and gain in the finite, orderly world they are mastering. They become more and more involved in that world as it rewards them with recognition of their abilities (Gould, 1978).

The research of Baruch et al. (1983) and Coleman and Antonucci (1983) supports Gould's (1978) findings that women who have careers outside the home have a greater sense of mastery than those who have no career outside the

home. Baruch's et al. (1983) and Coleman's et al. (1983) research was limited to a female population, however.

Baruch et al. (1983) found that married and (interestingly) divorced women with children who were employed outside the home were higher on the mastery scale than married women with or without children who were not employed outside the home. Coleman et al. (1983) supported facets of this research in a study of 389 subjects in middle adulthood. Middle-aged, married women who were working outside the home were higher on the mastery scale, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction than their counterparts who were not employed outside the home or who were single.

It is apparent that a sense of mastery or being internally controlled is important to an individual's psychological well-being. This sense of having control over one's destiny seems to be more frequent in those employed outside the home. This study of middle adulthood is an attempt to fill a void in the research, since there was no research on gender and age differences in middle adulthood with reference to locus of control.

### Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is often used in male adulthood studies, but has only recently been examined in reference to female adult studies, particularly middle-aged women.

In early adulthood, if the worker has made a commitment to a particular occupation and goes through the initial stages of a career in the form of some type of training, he will eventually be satisfied in terms of future prospect with his occupation (Levinson, 1976; Medlay, 1980). At first, this worker may be dissatisfied with his initial job due to relatively low income and increasing

economic demands, but with the prospect of rapid pay increases and promotions, his satisfaction generally improves (Medlay, 1980).

Job satisfaction in male middle adulthood may depend on whether there is disparity between what one has gained and what one wants for himself (Levinson, 1978). If middle adulthood is a time when one takes stock and reviews one's life, then one would compare the reality of his career with what Levinson (1978) terms "The Dream." Even if major career successes have been attained, the middle-aged male may feel dissatisfied if it does not match the dream of his early adulthood.

The pyramid structure of career progress adds to the middle aged male's feeling of disparity. In the beginning of one's career, there are many individuals at the same level of achievement presumably trying to reach the top of the pyramid (Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981). As one progresses up the structure, the chances of being promoted become less and less because there are fewer positions open. In a society where most organizations are hierarchical, the inevitable result is that some people will not achieve their career goals. Therefore, the early adult illusion that, if one works hard and does well, one will be rewarded is undermined (Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981; Gould, 1978). During middle adulthood, the male's career aspirations may need to be adjusted downward or changed.

The middle-aged female is in a unique position because there are no "typical" women's paths (Baruch et al., 1978) anymore. In the past, studies have tended to focus on one type of woman--married women with children who did not work outside the home--because they were the largest group. Too often it was assumed that what is true for these women was true for all women. Only recently, have studies been designed to examine the woman who works outside the home, married or not married, children or no children (Baruch et al., 1978).

When Baruch et al. (1978) did consider women who worked outside the home, they only "skimmed the surface of work" (p. 4), considering it to be less important in a woman's life than her family role. In a study of Americans' mental health at the University of Michigan of 3,200 subjects, Verhoff, Douvan, and Kulka (1981) found that ". . . work was a minor part of the experience of women in our study--and did not warrant special examination" (p. 24). This tended to be the prevailing attitude until very recently.

Gruneberg (1976) points out that job satisfaction has been linked to higher job levels and higher wages. Because, overall, women have lower levels of jobs and lower wages, it is logical that women would be less satisfied than men. In addition to the factors of wages and job level, there is the issue of societal norms concerning appropriate roles for men and women. Employed males are filling a role that society has come to expect of them. Despite the fact that women are working outside the home in increasing numbers, they are still in a relatively alien role when they are employed (Gruneberg, 1976). Furthermore, if women are married and working outside the home, they may be faced with a certain amount of role conflict, which may also affect their job satisfaction. Because research has not focused on gender differences in job satisfaction in adult development, there is a need to further research this construct (Gruneberg, 1976; Coleman et al, 1983; Cytrynbaum et al., 1980).

### Summary

This literature review illustrates the need for further research on gender differences with regard to the variables of psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction during early and middle adulthood. Although studies have been done in the adult development area, they have generally regarded the male developmental pattern as the norm (Notman, 1980; Gilligan,

1982; Baruch et al., 1983). Therefore, there is a need to further research gender differences, particularly with regard to adult development.

Although the variables psychological well-being (Bradburn, 1969), locus of control (Rotter, 1966), and job satisfaction (Locke, 1976) have been studied, they have not been studied with regard to gender during early and middle adulthood. It is the purpose of this study to gather information toward further understanding of gender differences in adult development with regard to psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Subjects

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from elementary middle and high school teachers listed in the Directory of Employees (1986) of a southwest metropolitan city's school district. The personnel manual lists only approximately 84% of the district's 2521 teachers because a listing in the manual is optional. From the 300 subjects contacted through the mail, 215 responded, which accounted for a total response rate of 64%. Four groups representing male and female and two age categories of 155 subjects were used from the total of the 215 responses returned. Sixty subjects were ineligible for use in the data analysis because they were not in the categories of interest.

Subjects for Group I were male school teachers from ages 22 through 31. There were 37 teachers in Group I which accounted for approximately 24% of the 155 subjects. Group II was female school teachers from ages 22 through 31. There were 27 teachers in Group II which accounted for approximately 17% of the 155 subjects. Group III was male school teachers from ages 42 through 51. There were 37 teachers in Group III which accounted for approximately 24% of the 155 subjects. Group IV was female school teachers from ages 42 through 51. There were 54 teachers in Group IV which accounted for approximately 35% of the subjects (see Tables 1 and 2). The teachers for the four groups were employed by a city school system for the 1985-86 school semester and were

Table 1

Demographic Information

Group	Gender	Age	n
I	male	22-31	37
II	female	22-31	27
III	male	42-51	37
IV	female	42-51	54



Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of the Dependent Variables by Groups

Groups	n	Job satisfaction		Locus of control		Affective balance scales	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.
Gender by age							
Male (22-31)	37	40.108	5.306	74.513	8.095	8.648	1.636
Male (42-51)	37	38.081	5.579	69.081	11.336	7.891	1.822
Female (22-31)	27	39.888	3.456	71.000	8.329	7.777	2.224
Female (42-51)	54	33.666	4.706	63.518	8.313	7.500	1.860
Gender							
Males	74	39.094	5.442	73.031	8.315	8.648	1.729
Females	81	28.663	4.081	65.903	7.612	7.638	2.042
Age							
22-31	64	39.998	4.381	72.756	8.212	8.212	1.930
42-51	91	35.873	5.142	66.299	9.824	7.695	1.841

listed in the city's Directory of Employees (1986). The results should only be generalized to similar populations.

### Demographic Information

Demographic information was gathered according to age groups. Age group I (22-31 year-olds) had 64 subjects who averaged 28.6 years old; 33 of the young adult subjects had held jobs prior to becoming teachers and 18 young adult subjects held jobs concurrently with teaching. Age group II (42-51 year-olds) had 91 subjects who averaged 45.6 years old; 68 of the middle-aged subjects held jobs prior to becoming teachers and 29 middle-aged subjects held jobs concurrently with teaching. The average teaching years of both age groups was 20.8 years.

### Instruments

#### Affective Balance Scale

The Affective Balance Scale (ABS) (see Appendix A) was selected to assess psychological well-being (Bradburn, 1969) because it can be used as a measure for comparing the psychological well-being of several age groups (Kozma & Stones, 1978). Therefore, the ABS (Bradburn, 1969) could be used for measuring psychological well-being in early and middle adulthood.

Psychological well-being has been defined by Bradburn (1969) as an assessment of the degree to which being an individual has positive and negative affect. An individual is considered to be high in terms of psychological well-being by the degree to which he has an excess of positive over negative affect, and is considered to be low in well-being by the degree to which negative affect dominates over positive (Bradburn, 1969).

The ABS was originally developed by the National Opinion Research Center in the early 1960s (Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965). It was further examined and applied to five different samples ranging in age from 21 to 59 (Bradburn, 1969). Test-retest reliability yielded values from .80 to .97.

The ABS is a ten-item scale that consists of two five-item subscales, the Positive Affect Scale (PAS) and the Negative Affect Scale (NAS). Each item is answered by a "yes" or "no" response with each "yes" response receiving one point and a "no" response a value of zero. Psychological well-being is derived from the sum of the negative affect items subtracted from the sum of the positive affect items, producing a range from -5 to +5. A constant of five is added to this number, producing scores ranging from 0 to 10. The total score for psychological well-being on the scale can range from 0 to 10 with higher scores reflecting more positive psychological well-being (Bradburn, 1969). Test-retest reliability for the subscales PAS was .83 and for the subscale NAS .81.

Bradburn (1969) assessed the relationship of numerous independent variables and the ABS, PAS, and NAS. He found, for example, that the PAS was related to sociability (.62), job status (.35 to .49), while the NAS was related to indices of worry (.32 to .49), anxiety (.55 to .67), and psychosomatic symptoms (.54 to .62). The PAS and NAS has an average correlation of .05 to each other (Bradburn, 1969). No formal training is required to administer or score the ABS, according to Bradburn (1969).

#### Internal-External Locus of Control Scales

The Internal-External Locus of Control Scales (Internals and Powerful Others) (Levenson, 1974) (see Appendix B) was used to measure an individual's orientation toward their own personal internal (I) control and their belief that powerful (P) others are in control. According to Bell (1983) and Bradley and

Webb (1976), the Internal-External Locus of Controls Scales (Levenson, 1974) would be an appropriate test because it was normed using different age groups.

Each scale (Internals and Powerful Others) consists of eight items in a six-point Likert format with a possible range on each scale of 0 to 48. The items on the Powerful Others Scale are reversed and then summed with the items on the Internal Scale to get a total locus of control score.

Internal consistency is moderately high and compares favorably with those of The Environmental Preference Scale (Rotter, 1966). For example, the Kuder-Richardson reliability yielded  $r = .64$  for the I scale and  $.74$  for the P scale. Split-half reliabilities were  $r = .62$  for the I scale and  $.66$  for the P scale. Test-retest reliability was  $.64$  for the I scale and  $.74$  for the P scale (Levenson, 1974).

The items on each scale differ from Rotter's (1966) Environmental Preference Scale in two ways. First, instead of the forced choice format on Rotter's Environmental Preference Scale (1966), the Likert format was used so that the scales are statistically independent of one another. Second, all of the items are phrased so as to pertain only to the individual rather than to people in general (Levenson, 1974).

The Internal-External Locus of Control Scales (Internals and Powerful Others) (Levenson, 1974) has been administered to three groups of males and females ages 5 to 15, 16 to 25, and 46 to 60 by Staats (1974). She found a significant ( $p < .01$ ) relationship in age and locus of perceived control. Consistent with the Penk (1969) and Milgram (1971) studies using the Environmental Preference Scale (Rotter, 1966) studies, she found that as human beings increase in age there is an increase in internal control. A tendency for males to be more internal than females was suggested, although not significant. The Internal-External Locus of Control Scales (Levenson, 1974) is

an appropriate scale to measure differences between gender and age groups, according to Staats (1974) and Bell (1983/1984).

### Job Satisfaction Index

The Job Satisfaction Index (Brayfield, Wells & Strate, 1957) (see Appendix C) was selected to assess employee's attitude toward work. This battery consists of 18 questions designed to obtain a general survey of workers' satisfaction with their jobs. The questions were chosen on the basis of their lack of reference to a specific aspect of a job (Robinson, Athanasiou & Head, 1969).

Likert scoring is applied to the items using a scale value to indicate scoring direction. Items representing degrees of satisfaction are scaled such that 5 points is for Strongly Agree, 4 for Agree, 3 for Undecided, etc. Items representing degrees of dissatisfaction are scaled such that 5 points is for Strongly Disagree, 4 for Disagree, etc. Test responses are then summed. The possible range of scores is therefore 18 to 90 points with a high score representing satisfaction. The "neutral" point is at 54. Using a split-half procedure for measuring reliability of the instrument was reported to be .87 with a split-half coefficient using a cross-sample age range of 231 female employees (Robinson et al., 1969).

The index is able to discriminate between groups who were assumed to be differentially satisfied with their jobs. The mean scores of 40 people in an adult night school course in Personnel Psychology who were also employed in a personnel position were contrasted with 51 people in the same course but who were not employed in personnel positions. Robinson et al. (1969) make this dichotomy based on the assumption that those persons in the class employed in occupations appropriate to their expressed interest should, on the average, be

more satisfied with their jobs than those members of the class employed in occupations inappropriate to their expressed interest in personnel work. The Personnel group's mean score was 76.9 and the Non-Personnel group's was 65.4. The difference in means is reported as being significantly different at the  $p < .01$  level. The JSI was also reported to concurrently be related ( $r = .92$ ) with the Hoppock (1935) blank measuring job satisfaction on the same night school population (Robinson et al., 1969).

### Procedure

Three hundred subjects were randomly selected and mailed a packet containing a cover letter, three instruments, and a demographic sheet in the 1986 Spring semester. The cover letter (see Appendix B), which explained the researcher's study and assured confidentiality, was mailed with the instruments to the subjects who were teachers listed in the 1985-86 personnel manual of the metropolitan city. Total test time took approximately 20 minutes, according to a pilot study conducted by the researcher. Subjects were provided a stamped, addressed envelope to return the instruments to the researcher. A follow-up postcard (see Appendix C) was mailed to subjects who had not returned the instruments after two weeks. A total of 215 instruments were completed and returned, representing a response rate of 72%. However, only 155 were eligible for use in the data analysis, since 60 of the subjects were either between the ages of 31 and 42 or over 51. The scores of each subject who returned the instrument were recorded within each gender and age category.

### Research Design

The research design was causal comparative. It was chosen because it allowed comparison of the independent variables of gender and age with the

dependent variables of psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction. The main weakness of the causal comparative design is the inability to control independent variables (Isaac & Michael, 1984). Another weakness, according to Isaac and Michael (1984), is that no single factor is the cause of an outcome but some combination and interaction of factors go together under certain conditions to yield a given outcome. All other possible reasons which might account for the results obtained should be considered when using the causal comparative design. Conclusions should be justified against other alternatives, thus allowing the researcher a position of relative strength (Isaac & Michael, 1984).

### Statistical Analysis

A two-by-two between subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed on the three dependent variables--job satisfaction, locus of control, and psychological well-being. The two independent variables were gender (male and female) and age (22 to 31 and 42 to 51).

SPSS MANOVA was used for the analyses with the sequential method which adjusts for unequal sample sizes and requests an orthogonal decomposition of the sums of squares. The order of the entry of the independent variables was gender, age, and gender by age.

The assumption of normality was met since, according to Tabachnick and Fidell (1983), there were more than 20 cases per cell following a reduction in the sample size for the 2 x 2 between-subjects design.

The test of the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance, as determined by Bartlett F, resulted in a nonsignificant F for each of the dependent variables with each main effect. Whereas the F value reported the Affective Balance Scale for gender is less than .05, the test is still robust to

this potential violation since  $p$  does not reach .001 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983) (see Table 3). A multivariate test for homogeneity of dispersion was performed and resulted in an  $F(18, 52614) = 1.358, p < .05$ , suggesting there were no significant differences in the variances for each of the three dependent variables at each level of the four independent groups (see Table 4). The assumption of multicollinearity and singularity was met since the determinant of the pooled variance-covariance matrix was less than zero (5513.279) (see Table 5).

To investigate the effects of each main effect and interaction on the individual dependent variables, and as directed by Tabachnick and Fidell (1983), Roy-Bargman Stepdown  $F$  tests were performed, on the basis of an a priori ordering of the importance of the dependent variables. Therefore, each dependent variable was analyzed, in turn, with high priority dependent variables treated as covariates and with the highest-priority dependent variable tested in a univariate ANOVA. Since a statistically significant interaction was found among the levels of the independent variables, Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference Test (Bartz, 1981) was utilized. The strength of association between the dependent and independent variables was measured by  $1 - \text{Wilks' Lambda}$ . The minimum requirement for significance was set at an alpha level of .05 to control the experimentwise error rate.

#### Null Hypotheses

Null hypothesis one (corresponding to research question one): There is no significant interaction between gender and age on the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction.



Table 3

Tests for Homogeneity of Variance Bartlett-Box F

Independent variable	Dependent variable	F value	P
Age	Job satisfaction	2.133	0.144
	Locus of control	2.242	0.134
	Affective balance	0.223	0.637
Gender	Job satisfaction	0.036	1.000
	Locus of control	1.734	0.188
	Affective balance	4.125	0.042

Table 4

Tests of Multivariate Test for Homogeneity  
of Dispersion

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BOXs M =	25.42719
F with (18,52614)	1.35793, p = .141 (approx.)
Chi-square (18)	24.45148, p = .41 (approx.)

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Table 5

Pooled Within-Cells Variance-Covariance Matrix  
Among Dependent Variables

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Dependent variables	Job satisfaction	Locus of control	Affective balance
Job satisfaction	23.96683		
Locus of control	14.90752	82.47339	
Affective balance	1.57658	5.27152	3.49779
Determinant of pooled variance-covariance matrix = 5513.27961			
Log (determinant)		=	8.61491

---

Null hypothesis two (corresponding to research question two): There is no significant difference between males and females on the variables of psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction.

Null hypothesis three (corresponding to research question three): There is no significant difference between age groups on the variables of psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the statistical analyses utilized to test the three hypotheses in the study. The emphasis of the study is to examine the relationship between gender and the variables of psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction in early and middle adulthood.

With the use of Wilk's ( $\Lambda$ ) criterion, the combined dependent variables were significantly affected by both age,  $F(3, 149) = 10.98, p > .001$ , and gender,  $F(3, 149) = 8.58$ , and the interaction between gender and age,  $F(3, 149) = 2.71, p < .05$  (see Table 6). This indicated that a significant construct had been formed between the combined dependent variables with each of the independent variables. The strength of association between the independent and the combined dependent variables--psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction--was calculated using  $1 - \Lambda$ . Therefore, gender  $1 - \Lambda = .14$ ; age  $1 - \Lambda = .18$ ; and the interaction between gender and age  $1 - \Lambda = .05$ . This indicates that the amount of variation shared by the dependent construct and gender and age, and the interaction between gender and age was 14, 18, and 5%, respectively.

#### Hypothesis One

A significant multivariate  $F$  was found for the two-way interactions of

Table 6

Multivariate Tests of Significance

Effect	Test name	Value	Approximate F	Degrees of Freedom	Significance
Gender by age	Wilks	.94818	2.71400	3/149	.047
Age	Wilks	.82011	10.89411	3/149	.000
Gender	Wilks	.85269	8.58059	3/149	.000

gender and age, and the construct psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction ( $F(3, 149) = 2.71, p < .05$ ). The Roy-Bargman Stepdown F showed that of the three dependent variables, job satisfaction was the only significant variable that contributed to the interaction between gender and age ( $F(1, 151) = 6.70, p > .05$ ). The strength of the relationship between job satisfaction and the interaction, as measured by  $1 - \Lambda = .05$ , which indicated that 5% of the statistical variance associated with job satisfaction can be attributed to gender and age. See Table 7 for results of the Roy-Bargman Stepdown F analysis. Subsequent univariate analysis supported this significant interaction ( $F(1, 151) = 6.70, p < .05$ ). See Table 8 for the description of the univariate Fs. Following Tukey's a posteriori comparisons between the cell means and the dependent variable, job satisfaction, it was found that young adult males were significantly more satisfied with their jobs ( $\bar{X} = 40.11$ ) than middle-aged females ( $\bar{X} = 33.67$ ). Also, young adult females were significantly more satisfied with their jobs ( $\bar{X} = 39.89$ ) than middle-aged females ( $\bar{X} = 33.67$ ). See Table 9 for a posteriori comparisons. After the pattern of differences measured by job satisfaction was entered, a nonsignificant difference was found regarding locus of control (stepdown  $F(1, 150) = 0.37, p > .05$ ); and psychological well-being as measured by the Affective Balance Scales (stepdown  $F(1, 149) = 1.43, p > .05$ ). See Table 7 for the results of the Roy-Bargman Stepdown F analysis. This information was also supported by results from the univariate F tests. See Table 8 for the description of the univariate Fs.

### Hypothesis Two

A significant construct was formed by the dependent variables for gender ( $F(3, 149) = 8.58, p < .001$ ) and can be accounted for by the variance associated

Table 7

Stepdown F Analyses of Three Ordered Dependent Variables for  
Gender by Age Interaction, Gender, and Age

Variable	Hypothesis mean square	Error mean square	Stepdown F	Hypothesis degrees of freedom	Error degrees of freedom	Significance of F
Gender by age						
Job satisfaction	160.566	23.966	6.699	1	151	0.011
Locus of control	2.743	73.688	0.037	1	150	0.847
Affective balance	4.553	3.184	1.429	1	149	0.234
Gender						
Job satisfaction	435.984	23.966	18.149	1	151	0.000
Locus of control	472.303	73.688	6.409	1	150	0.012
Affective balance	1.910	3.184	0.599	1	149	0.440
Age						
Job satisfaction	612.335	23.966	25.549	1	151	0.000
Locus of control	473.668	73.688	6.427	1	150	0.012
Affective balance	0.015	3.184	0.004	1	149	0.944

Table 8

Summary of Univariate Tests of Job Satisfaction, Locus of Control,  
and Affective Balance, and Their Interaction

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Univariate F	Degrees of freedom	Stepdown F	Degrees of freedom	Significance of F
Gender	Job satisfaction	18.149*	1, 151	18.149	1, 151	.001
	Locus of control	15.692*	1, 151	6.409	1, 150	.012
	Affective balance	5.077*	1, 151	0.599	1, 149	.440
Age	Job satisfaction	25.549*	1, 151	25.549	1, 151	.000
	Locus of control	18.372*	1, 151	6.428	1, 150	.012
	Affective balance	2.828	1, 151	0.005	1, 149	.944
Gender by age interaction	Job satisfaction	6.699*	1, 151	6.699	1, 151	.011
	Locus of control	0.464	1, 151	0.037	1, 150	.847
	Affective balance	0.598	1, 151	1.429	1, 149	.234

\*  $p < .05$ .



Table 9

Tukey's A Posteriori Comparisons Between  
Gender and Age on Job Satisfaction

	$\bar{Y}_1^a$	$\bar{Y}_2$	$\bar{Y}_3$	$\bar{Y}_4$
	(40.11)	(38.08)	(39.89)	(33.67)
$\bar{Y}_1^b$ (40.11)	---	2.03	0.22	6.44*
$\bar{Y}_2$ (38.08)		---	1.88	4.41
$\bar{Y}_3$ (39.89)			---	6.22*
$\bar{Y}_4$ (33.67)				---

Critical difference ( $q_R$ ) (151,  $\alpha.05$ ) = 3.69.

\*  $p < .05$ .

$^a\bar{Y}_1$  = Males (22-31 years of age).

$\bar{Y}_2$  = Males (42-51 years of age).

$\bar{Y}_3$  = Females (22-31 years of age).

$\bar{Y}_4$  = Females (42-51 years of age).

$^b$  Numbers in parentheses represent the mean score of the respective group.

with gender. The strength of association between the dependent and independent variables, as indexed by  $1 - \Lambda$ , was .14, indicating that 14% of the variance is accounted for by job satisfaction (see Table 6). Roy-Bargman's Stepdown F tests revealed that, in order of priority, job satisfaction contributed most ( $F(1, 151) = 18.15, p < .001$ ), followed by locus of control ( $F(1, 150) = 6.41, p < .05$ ) to the prediction of differences between the groups on the basis of gender. The results of these analyses, as shown in Table 7, were also supported by the univariate F tests (see Table 8) in that a significant difference was found between males and females in terms of their degree of satisfaction with their jobs ( $F(1, 151) = 18.15, p < .001$ ). That is, males appeared to be more satisfied with their jobs ( $\bar{X} = 39.09$ ) than females ( $\bar{X} = 28.66$ ). A statistically significant difference was also observed between males and females in terms of their locus of control ( $F(1, 151) = 15.69, p < .001$ ). Males appeared to be more internally controlled ( $\bar{X} = 73.03$ ) than females ( $\bar{X} = 65.90$ ). A statistically significant univariate comparison ( $F(1, 151) = 5.08, p < .05$ ) revealed that in terms of psychological well-being, as measured by the Affective Balance Scale, males appeared to have a higher level ( $\bar{X} = 8.64$ ) than females ( $\bar{X} = 7.63$ ) (see Table 10). The contribution of this latter variable, as presented in Table 7 of the stepdown Fs, was not found to be a significant contributor for predicting gender after measures of job satisfaction and locus of control had been entered in the analyses.

### Hypothesis Three

A unique contribution to predicting differences between young and middle-aged adults was made by the construct job satisfaction, locus of control, and psychological well-being ( $F(3, 149) = 10.89, p < .001$ ). The results of the Roy-Bargman Stepdown Fs revealed that in order of priority, job satisfaction

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations of the Dependent Variables by Groups

Groups	n	Job satisfaction		Locus of control		Affective balance scales	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.
Gender by age							
Male (22-31)	37	40.108	5.306	74.513	8.095	8.648	1.636
Male (42-51)	37	38.081	5.579	69.081	11.336	7.891	1.822
Female (22-31)	27	39.888	3.456	71.000	8.329	7.777	2.224
Female (42-51)	54	33.666	4.706	63.518	8.313	7.500	1.860
Gender							
Males	74	39.094	5.442	73.031	8.315	8.648	1.729
Females	81	28.663	4.081	65.903	7.612	7.638	2.042
Age							
22-31	64	39.998	4.381	72.756	8.212	8.212	1.930
42-51	91	35.873	5.142	66.299	9.824	7.695	1.841

made the greatest contribution ( $F(1, 151) = 23.97, p < .001$ ) followed by locus of control ( $F(1, 150) = 73.69, p < .05$ ) to the prediction of differences between the two age groups. The dependent variable of psychological well-being was not found to be significant when ordered among the prioritized dependent variables ( $F(1, 149) = 3.18, p > .05$ ). The strength of the association between the dependent variables of job satisfaction and locus of control as indexed by  $1 - \Lambda$  was .18, indicating that 18% of the variance associated with job satisfaction and locus of control can be attributed to age differences (see Table 7 for results of the Roy-Bargman Stepdown F analysis).

Examination of the univariate Fs supports the stepdown analyses in that statistically significant differences were found between the mean scores of the young and middle aged groups for job satisfaction ( $F(1, 151) = 25.55, p < .001$ ) and locus of control ( $F(1, 151) = 18.37, p < .001$ ) (see Table 8 for description of the univariate Fs). Therefore, young adults appeared to be more satisfied with their jobs ( $\bar{X} = 39.998$ ) than middle aged adults ( $\bar{X} = 35.873$ ), while young adults appeared to be more internally controlled ( $\bar{X} = 72.76$ ) than middle aged adults ( $\bar{X} = 66.23$ ) (see Table 10). No significant difference was found between young and middle aged adults' psychological well-being, as measured by the Affective Balance Scale, for the two age groups ( $F(1, 151) = 2.83, p > .05$ ) (see Table 8).

### Summary

The results showed that the dependent variables were significantly related to gender, age, and the interaction between gender and age. This indicated that a significant construct had been formed between the combined dependent variables with each of the independent variables. Stepdown tests indicated that job satisfaction was the only significant dependent variable that contributed to the interaction between gender and age. A significant construct

was formed by the dependent variables for the independent variable gender. Stepdown tests revealed that job satisfaction and locus of control contributed to the prediction of differences between the groups on the basis of gender. A significant construct was also formed for the independent variable age. Stepdown tests revealed that job satisfaction made the greatest contribution to the main effect, followed by locus of control.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This research investigated the relationship between gender and the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction in early and middle adulthood. Currently, research in adult development is based primarily on male samples and the research regarding the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction is incomplete. Baruch et al. (1983) and Coleman et al. (1983) have suggested the need for additional research on gender differences in adulthood. Although the variables psychological well-being (Bradburn, 1969), locus of control (Rotter, 1966), and job satisfaction (Locke, 1976) have been studied, they had not been researched as a construct. Coleman et al. (1983), Baruch et al. (1983), and Notman (1980) established the need to further research psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction. The literature did not offer conclusive evidence concerning gender and age differences with regard to the variables. Therefore, this study was designed to fill a void in the research by focusing on gender and age differences in adulthood with regard to these variables.

Data were collected from 215 subjects who were elementary, middle, and high school teachers in a southwest metropolitan school district. Four groups representing male and female and two age categories of 155 subjects were used from the total number of responses. The remaining 60 responses were deleted

because the subjects were in between the age categories (22-31 years old and 42-51 years old) or because they were older than 51 years of age.

Three hundred subjects, of which 215 responded, were randomly selected and mailed a survey which included three instruments--Job Satisfaction Index (Brayfield et al., 1957), Internal-External Locus of Control Scales (Internal and Powerful Others) (Levenson, 1974), and Affective Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969)--and a demographic sheet during the 1986 Spring semester. A cover letter which explained the researcher's study and assured confidentiality was mailed with the instruments to the subjects, who were teachers listed in the 1985-86 personnel manual of the metropolitan city. Subjects were provided a stamped, addressed envelope to return the instruments to the researcher.

A two-by-three multivariate analysis of variance was used to analyze the data and test the three hypotheses. Gender and age were the fixed, categorical independent variables. The dependent variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction were tested for significance in males and females across two levels of age, 22 to 31 and 42 to 51.

Examination of the data showed the dependent variables were significantly related to both gender, age, and the interaction between gender and age. This indicated that a significant construct had been formed between the combined dependent variables with each of the independent variables. Hypothesis one was rejected after examination of the results for a two-way interaction between gender and age on the construct psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction indicated a significant difference. Hypothesis two was rejected after examination of the data indicated a significant difference for gender on the construct psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction. Hypothesis three was also rejected because examination of the

data revealed a significant difference for age on the construct psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction.

### Conclusions

On the basis of the results of this study, the following conclusions about the previously identified hypotheses are drawn:

Hypothesis one: Although the literature was inconclusive regarding the interaction of gender and age on the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction in adulthood, it did indicate a trend linking the three variables. This study indicates that there is an interaction between gender and age levels to create differences in the construct psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction which includes the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction.

Further examination of the data shows that job satisfaction was the variable within the construct where a significant difference occurred. Middle-aged women were the least satisfied with their jobs. Gould's (1978) work supports the theory that a middle-aged female may be caught in the traditional role of women's development--that of primarily wife and mother. Doering et al. (1983) and Kelleher (1973) also suggest a gender and age difference in job satisfaction. A working middle-aged woman may be in a job, such as teaching, that satisfied the nurturing aspect of her personality instead of a lifelong career of choice. Perhaps teaching was the middle-aged woman's choice because it was convenient for a working wife and mother. Also, 20 years ago women were not encouraged, nor perhaps allowed, to go into "men's" careers such as medicine, research, and law. Another reason for lower job satisfaction in middle-aged women could be salaries. Salaries have been linked to job satisfaction (Doering et al., 1983). The geographic area the sample was taken from is among the



lowest 10 in the nation's 50 states for teachers' salaries. If teaching were chosen as a convenient career, the middle-aged woman may now resent her low salary. Recent social changes that have allowed young women to freely choose any career may account for the lower job satisfaction in middle-aged women.

Hypothesis two: The researcher's outcome is consistent with research by Gilligan (1982), Notman (1980), and Coleman et al. (1983). Although research has been inconclusive as to whether males or females have higher or lower psychological well-being, are more internally or externally controlled, or have greater or lesser job satisfaction, many studies indicate a difference in the sexes. This study supports the findings that women have lower psychological well-being (Friedan, 1963; Melamed, 1983), are more externally controlled (Notman, 1980; Baruch et al., 1983), and have less job satisfaction (Doering et al., 1983).

Although the literature shows gender differences, previous adult developmental research used male subjects. Consequently, many developmental theorists adopted the male pattern as the norm and viewed any women's development that deviated from men's as maladjusted (Spence & Helmreich, 1978; Gilligan, 1982). The researcher's study supports the theoretical framework that women have different, developmental patterns than men. When examining the data, all the variables--psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction--of the construct showed a significant difference across gender. This can be supported in studies by Gilligan (1982), Sheehy (1978), Melamed (1983), Platt et al. (1970), and Baruch et al. (1978).

The researcher suggests that a reason for women's lowered psychological well-being may be that a sense of mastery or internal control is important to well-being. If the woman is not highly internally controlled, she may express a lower psychological well-being than men. The women in the study may be more externally controlled because they feel dependent on others for their jobs and

salaries. If salaries are not adequate to meet living expenses, the women must be dependent on the husbands' salaries. The depressed economy in the school district the sample was taken could be a possible contributor to the external control women expressed. Perhaps the women were fearful of losing their jobs for the next year. Although the researcher is unsure of the percentage of females to males who lost their jobs in the district the sample was taken, several hundred teachers were cut from staff for the coming year. It is common practice for the females to be cut from the work force first. This is because of the traditional view that females' salary is "extra money" in the family and not the primary income.

Hypothesis three: Middle-aged adults were less satisfied with their jobs and were more externally controlled than younger adults. Psychological well-being was not affected by age in this study. Researchers have found age to be a critical factor when measuring the variable job satisfaction, particularly in males (Erikson, 1963; Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978). Many middle-aged males review their career successes and compare them with their "dream" of early adulthood (Levinson, 1978). Many times the middle-aged male may feel disillusioned or dissatisfied with his career accomplishments (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978). Thus he would exhibit lower job satisfaction than the young adult male. The middle-aged working female is unique because there have been no "typical" woman's career development in the past (Baruch et al., 1978). Some middle-aged women may have been forced--because of economic necessity, divorce, or death of spouse--into the working world without the necessary skills for a career of their choice and may therefore be dissatisfied (Baruch et al., 1978; Gould, 1978; Friedan, 1963; Melamed, 1983). This research supports the theory that middle-aged workers are less satisfied with their jobs than workers in early adulthood. Perhaps young adult workers are more idealistic than middle-aged

adults. They have just begun on their jobs and have not had many disillusionments or disappointments. Another possible reason for higher job satisfaction in early adulthood may be that because fewer young adult workers are married and have children, they have not had the economic demands placed on them that most middle-aged adults have.

This study did not support the work of Milgram (1971) and Bradley and Webb (1976) which showed that individuals became more internally controlled as they aged. Again, the researcher suggests that the economic depression of the geographical area the sample was taken from could have influenced locus of control. Because teachers were aware of the possibility of termination, perhaps they felt very externally controlled. The younger workers may have been more idealistic and optimistic about teacher lay-offs and thus exhibited more internal control.

A theoretical problem is that although a statistical construct has been formed with the combined dependent variables of psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction, no name for the underlying construct has emerged. The concept of a life structure provides a way of looking at the individual and his or her world. Levinson (1978) defines a life structure as "the basic pattern or design of a person's life at a given time" (p. 41). A life structure engulfs both the person, the world, and the relationships between them. Levinson showed that the life structure goes through a process of development in adulthood. Therefore, the life structure evolves during the adult years. The adequacy of the life structure could be considered as the underlying construct of the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction. The researcher measured the variables in an attempt to gain information about the adequacy of the life structure between males and females in early and middle adulthood.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are presented as a result of this study:

1. Although this research supports the theory that gender and age interact to make a significant difference on the variables psychological well-being, locus of control, and job satisfaction, future research should test the hypothesis in a nonacademic population. The teacher sample was drawn from one southwestern metropolitan school district and may have represented a rather limited population. Thus the results of this study will be generalizable only to subjects in similar settings. A more diverse population may provide different results.

2. Another recommendation is that more studies examine women's developmental patterns in comparison to men's development. Also, it is recommended that more studies focus on the middle-aged female to determine the reasons for the significant difference in gender.

3. Because there are very few "typical" women's paths for the non-traditional female (Baruch et al., 1983), it is the researcher's opinion that the study be repeated in the future to see if the middle adult female's job satisfaction, locus of control, and psychological well-being has been affected by recent social change. In the past 15 years, females have been encouraged and allowed to enter traditionally male-oriented professions. Perhaps if the study were repeated in the future, middle-aged females would have higher job satisfaction, be more internally controlled, and have higher psychological well-being.

4. Because the Job Satisfaction Index is a very general assessment, it is recommended that a more specific instrument be given to discover the reasons for the significant difference in gender and age with relation to job satisfac-

tion. Lower salaries for teachers and females have been mentioned as one possible reason for lower job satisfaction in middle-aged females.

5. Because the Affective Balance Scale is a general instrument, it is recommended by the researcher that a Likert format be included to expand the range of each item. Future research should examine psychological well-being at different periods in the life cycle using a more precise instrument.

6. Because this study did not support the work of Milgram (1971) and Bradley and Webb (1976) which found that individuals become more internally controlled as they aged, it is recommended that the study be repeated using a different population and a different instrument.

7. Because this study was researched in a city school system which is economically depressed and has terminated many teachers, it is recommended the study be replicated in a non-depressed economic area using more subjects. Perhaps teachers in other geographical areas would exhibit higher job satisfaction.

8. A follow-up study of the teachers in the same geographical area might produce different results. It would be interesting to see if the results would be repeated in ten years.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS

## Part I

## Job Questionnaire

Some jobs are more interesting and satisfying than others. We want to know how people feel about different jobs. This blank contains 18 statements about jobs. You are to cross out the phrase below each statement which best describes how you feel about your present job. There are no right or wrong answers. We should like your honest opinion on each of the statements. Work out the sample item numbered (0).

0. There are some conditions concerning my job that could be improved.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
1. My job is like a hobby to me.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
2. My job is usually interesting enough to keep me from getting bored.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
3. It seems that my friends are more interested in their jobs.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
4. I consider my job rather unpleasant.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
5. I enjoy my work more than my leisure time.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
6. I am often bored with my job.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
7. I feel fairly well satisfied with my present job.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
8. Most of the time I have to force myself to go to work.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
9. I am satisfied with my job for the time being.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
10. I feel that my job is no more interesting than others I could get.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
11. I definitely dislike my work.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
12. I feel that I am happier in my work than others.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

13. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
14. Each day of work seems like it will never end.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
15. I like my job better than the average worker does.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
16. My job is pretty uninteresting.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
17. I find real enjoyment in my work.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
18. I am disappointed that I ever took this job.  
Strongly Agree   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

## Part II

## The Internal-External Locus of Control Scales

Circle the number to the right of the statement that you think best represents the degree of your belief in that statement. One represents hardly ever and six almost always.

1. Whether or not I get to be a leader depends mostly on my ability.                                  1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful people.                                  1 2 3 4 5 6
3. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on how good a driver I am.                                  1 2 3 4 5 6
4. When I make plans, I am almost certain to make them work.                                                          1 2 3 4 5 6
5. Although I might have good ability, I will not be given leadership responsibility without appealing to those in positions of power.                                  1 2 3 4 5 6
6. How many friends I have depends on how nice a person I am.                                                          1 2 3 4 5 6
7. My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others.                                                                                  1 2 3 4 5 6
8. People like myself have very little chance of protecting our personal interests when they conflict with those of strong pressure groups.                                  1 2 3 4 5 6

- |     |                                                                                                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9.  | Getting what I want requires pleasing those people above me.                                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. | If important people were to decide they did not like me, I probably would not make many friends.           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. | I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.                                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. | I am usually able to protect my personal interests.                                                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. | Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on the other driver.                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. | When I get what I want, it's usually because I worked hard for it.                                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. | In order to have my plans work, I make sure they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16. | My life is determined by my own actions.                                                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

### Part III

#### Affective Balance Scale

Please encircle "Yes" or "No" on the following statements.

During the past few weeks, did you ever feel:

- |     |    |     |                                                                   |
|-----|----|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yes | No | 1.  | Pleased about having accomplished something?                      |
| Yes | No | 2.  | So restless that you couldn't sit long in a chair?                |
| Yes | No | 3.  | That things were going your way?                                  |
| Yes | No | 4.  | Bored?                                                            |
| Yes | No | 5.  | Proud because someone complimented you on something you had done? |
| Yes | No | 6.  | Depressed?                                                        |
| Yes | No | 7.  | Particularly excited or interested in something?                  |
| Yes | No | 8.  | Very lonely or remote from other people?                          |
| Yes | No | 9.  | On top of the world?                                              |
| Yes | No | 10. | Upset because someone criticized you?                             |

Part IV  
Demographic Information

Please check or fill in the following information.

Gender: Male  Female

Age:

Current Marital Status:\*

Single  Married  Separated  Divorced  Widowed

\* If your current marital status is anything other than single, please indicate how long you have been in this status:

0-5 Months

6-11 Months

1-2 Years

3-5 Years

6-10 Years

11-15 Years

16-20 Years

Over 21 Years

Have you held any other job prior to becoming a teacher? Yes  No

Do you currently hold any other jobs in addition to teaching?

Yes  No

How many years have you been teaching, including the current year?



APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER



*Oklahoma State University*

APPLIED BEHAVIORAL STUDIES IN EDUCATION  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078  
116 NORTH MURRAY HALL  
(405) 624-6040

April 10, 1986

Dear

I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University studying adult development. Since the literature is still incomplete as to which variables are related to adult development, I am requesting your help.

Enclosed is a packet consisting of three attitudinal scales followed by a brief demographic sheet. I would appreciate it if you would take a few moments of your time to complete these forms. The sheets have been coded for keeping track of returns only. Since all information will be reported by group rather than by individual, no one will be identified by responses and confidentiality is assured.

In a response questionnaire study, every response is extremely important, so I would appreciate your taking the time to complete the forms and returning them in the enclosed, stamped, addressed envelope.

If you would like to have a summary of our findings, please write your name and address on the enclosed index card. If you consent to participate in the study, simply fill out and return the enclosed questionnaires. Please feel free to contact me at 918/487-5221 if you have any questions about the study. Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Susan S. Frusher  
Doctoral Candidate

Enclosures

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph Pearl  
Dissertation Adviser

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD

Dear Teacher:

Recently I mailed you a packet containing a cover letter which described my research project, three instruments, a demographic data sheet, and an addressed, stamped envelope. I would appreciate it if you would take the time to fill out the instruments and demographic sheet, as it is important to my research that I have every reply possible.

If you have lost the instruments and/or demographic sheet or have any questions about the research in general, feel free to call me at 918/487-5221 or write me at Rt. 1, Box 255G, Gore, OK 74435.

Thank you.

Susan S. Frusher

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VITA

Susan Stephens Frusher

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

**Thesis:** THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND THE CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, LOCUS OF CONTROL, AND JOB SATISFACTION IN EARLY AND MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

**Major Field:** Applied Behavioral Studies

**Biographical:**

**Personal Data:** Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, July 1, 1953, the daughter of Richard E. and Olevia Boan Stephens. Married to Robert E. (Gene) Frusher; mother of Cody Eston Frusher.

**Education:** Graduated from Bonner Springs High School, Bonner Springs, Kansas, in May, 1971; received the Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, May, 1977; received the Master of Education degree from Northeastern State University, July, 1980; completed requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1986.

**Professional Experience:** Assistant Professor of Education, NSU, August, 1986, to present; Adjunct Instructor, Department of Psychology and Education, NSU, January, 1979, to May, 1986; Copy Editor with the Tulsa World, Tulsa, Oklahoma, September, 1977, to January, 1979.

**Professional Societies:** Kappa Delta Pi, National Educators Association, Oklahoma Educators Association, Oklahoma Association for Counseling and Development, National Association for Counseling and Development.