Cross-Cultural Investigation of the Validity of Erikson’s Theory
of Personality Development

Rhona Ochse and Cornelis Plug
University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

A self-report questionnaire was constructed for measuring the personality components that, according to Erikson, are formed before the onset of old age. This was applied to a sample of 1,859 South African white and black men and women. The reliability of the total scale is high for white and black subjects. The reliabilities of the subscales are adequate. Evidence of the validity of the scale is discussed. The components of personality that theoretically develop in childhood seem strongly interrelated in adolescent and adult whites. White women appear to solve the identity crisis earlier and they experience a higher degree of intimacy than do white men, although the difference narrows with age. In both sexes, psychosocial development is related to well-being. Black men seem to resolve the identity crisis only after age 40, and there are indications that the psychosocial development of black adult women is frustrated.

Although Erik Erikson described personality in terms of a universal pattern of life-long development, most of the research based on his work has been confined to studies of adolescence and youth, and his suggestions concerning development during adulthood are still largely untested. We therefore decided to supplement the existing research by examining the validity of Erikson’s proposals concerning the development of the personality from adolescence to the onset of old age.

Erikson (1950, 1959, 1966, 1968a, 1968b) proposed that development of personality invariably proceeds through a fixed sequence of stages, each being critical for the development of a certain bipolar dimension of personality. The first stage (which corresponds with the first year of life) is critical for the development of trust versus mistrust, and the second stage, which occurs in the second year, for autonomy versus shame and doubt. Between the ages of about 3 to 5 years is a critical period for the development of initiative versus guilt, and from 6 to 11 for the development of industry versus inferiority. The crucial stage for identity-formation versus identity-diffusion occurs in adolescence, and for intimacy versus isolation in early adulthood (20–25 years of age). The years from ages 25 to 60 represent the critical period for the development of generativity versus stagnation, and the final stage of integrity versus despair is experienced in old age.

In each stage conflict arises between newly emerging personal needs and social demands, and culminates in a crisis. A crisis is a normal event. It represents a turning point in development rather than a catastrophe, and leaves both positive and negative residues that influence the course of future development. If the positive outweigh the negative, the ego is strengthened and the developing individual is endowed with favorable attitudes toward the world and toward him- or herself. Although the inevitable conflicts inherent in each stage of development can never be avoided, one is better able to cope with future conflicts if past crises have had a positive outcome.

The development of each successive dimension of personality depends on those that formed in earlier stages. This might suggest that the individual who is unable to positively resolve the crisis of any stage is doomed to develop negatively ever after—but Erikson is not that pessimistic. He allowed that the qualities developed in each stage are not always permanent (Erikson, 1950). Later conflicts may revolve over the preceding ones, and if the circumstances are favorable, a readjustment may occur. However, it is also possible that lack of success in coping with new conflicts may tip an existing positive balance in a negative direction.

What these suggestions imply is that those components of personality that have already passed their critical stages of development are interdependent and function as a system—which leads to the hypothesis that at any time of life there will be positive interrelations among all those personality components that have theoretically passed their critical stages.

Previous Studies

One of the few studies relating to the interrelations among all of Erikson’s personality components was conducted by Gruen (1964) on a sample of 56 men and 52 women representing the upper-middle, lower-middle, and working classes. Each subject was rated by a student interviewer on each of the eight personality dimensions on an 8-point scale. The results of Gruen’s investigations showed support for Erikson’s theory of epigenetic development, in that the correlations between the scores on the eight dimensions were consistently positive. Moreover, the highest correlations occurred between chronologically adjacent stages, a fact that Gruen believed indicates sequential rather than contemporaneous development of the personality components. Gruen’s analysis of variance (ANOVA) relating to age, sex, and social class revealed little of statistical significance, except that women had a significantly higher status on intimacy than did men, especially between the ages of 50 and 65 years. But, as Gruen admitted, these findings are not conclusive, as certain cells in the design contained only two or three cases.

The other studies relating to relations among personality components were conducted on more homogeneous samples. In a study of male college students, Waterman, Buebel, and Waterman (1970), using a self-report questionnaire developed by Constan-
tinople (1969), found that with the effects of social desirability partialed out, the correlations between identity and trust, autonomy, initiative, and industry were significantly positive. This result was confirmed by Rasmussen’s (1964) application of his Ego-Identity Scale to young American naval recruits. Rasmussen found no support for his hypothesis that ego-identity (a composite of the residues of the first five stages) would be positively related to intimacy, but he considered this quite understandable, as the subjects were too young to have resolved the intimacy crisis.

The first cross-cultural comparative study of Erikson’s personality dimensions was conducted by McClain (1975), who applied his Self-Description Blank to a sample of 2,609 teenagers from six countries in Europe and America. His ANOVA of the scores on the first six crisis residues indicated consistent differences among groups from various communities. For every measure, the subjects from Brussels, Munich, and the white subjects from Knoxville, Tennessee, had higher mean scores than did subjects from Charleville-Mezieres, France, Malaga, Spain, and the black subjects from Knoxville. In addition, the mean scores on autonomy and industry of all the male subjects combined were significantly higher than those of all the female subjects combined.

Other researchers studied the relations between residues of the first six crises and happiness, anomic, and mood (Constantinople, 1969, 1970; Reimannis, 1974; and Wessman & Ricks, 1966); all found a positive relation between Erikson’s personality dimensions and a sense of well-being in college students. Constantinople (1970) also found that, over a period of 3 years at college, there were changes in identity scores and scores on components that are presumed to have developed in childhood. This might suggest that personality components develop concurrently rather than sequentially, or that they continue to develop after their critical stages. But it is also possible that Constantinople’s findings reflect differences in the composition of her samples, caused by attrition of those subjects lacking in the positive aspects of industry and identity (Whitbourne, Jelsma, & Waterman, 1982).

On reviewing the literature, one finds that the majority of empirical investigations relating to Erikson’s theory focused on the formation of identity in college students, and that by far the greatest number of these are based on James Marcia’s (1966, 1976) concept of identity statuses. Many of these studies were reviewed by Bourne (1978). But although Marcia’s paradigm has dominated the research on identity, it is not suitable for examining the validity of Erikson’s developmental theory, as it focuses on only the fifth (and sometimes the sixth) stage of development, and it relates to various substages or patterns in the development of identity or intimacy, rather than to Erikson’s conceptions of bipolar personality dimensions. Moreover, identity statuses refer mainly to the exploration of and commitment to occupational and political ideals and goals, whereas Erikson’s concept of identity formation includes the development of a sense of continuity, consistency of the self-image, and a set of social—self-perceptions that correspond with the way one is viewed by others.

Studies relating to identity and intimacy statuses have however pointed to some differences between the sexes, giving reason for doubt as to whether the development of identity and intimacy follows the same pattern in men and women (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Kacerguis & Adams, 1980; La Voie, 1976; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Newman & Newman, 1978; Schenkel & Marcia, 1972; Toder & Marcia, 1973; Waterman, 1982). The findings of these studies are complex and sometimes inconsistent, which may be explained partly in terms of the various conceptions and measures of the identity statuses, and partly by the fact that the subjects of the studies were college students who are likely to be immature with respect to intimacy or even identity. But a few general suggestions have emerged from this research. First, it seems that in contrast to men, women may depend less on occupational factors and more on affective factors when forming their identities (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Josselson, 1973; La Voie, 1976; Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel & Marcia, 1972; Toder & Marcia, 1973). Second, it appears that although the foreclosure status is considered to be one of the less adaptive statuses for men, it is particularly adaptive for women (Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel, 1975; Toder & Marcia, 1973).

Third, it appears that regardless of their identity status, women score higher on intimacy measures than do men (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979), which corresponds with the findings of Gruen (1964) relating to middle-aged women. Indeed, it seems that the development of intimacy in women may not depend on the prior achievement of identity or that foreclosure of identity in women is sufficient for a highly successful development of intimacy.

These findings suggest that although Erikson makes no definite distinction between the overall patterns of development of men and women, any study relating to his theory of developmental stages should examine the possibility of there being some difference between the sexes in the development of intimacy. Therefore, it was decided to test the hypothesis that at any stage of adult development, women would experience a higher degree of intimacy than would men in the same age group.

Taken as a whole, the findings of research relating to Erikson’s work suggest that there may be some differences between various subgroups in the sequence and degree of their psychosocial development. To gain a clearer picture of such differences, one would have to examine the personality components described by Erikson in large heterogeneous samples of adults of various ages and cultural backgrounds. This would require an instrument for measuring the personality components developing before the onset of old age (that is, the components developing out of the first seven crises).

Although several instruments have already been constructed for measuring the components developing out of the first six stages, these were designed for young individuals and are unsuitable for cross-cultural research on adults. A Q-sort designed by Wessman and Ricks (1966), consisting of items representing the positive and the negative outcomes of the first six developmental crises, was adapted by Constantinople (1969) to take the form of a self-report questionnaire with 12 subscales, yielding indices for the positive and the negative dimensions of each of Erikson’s first six personality components. Although this scale has been used for various studies (e.g., by Constantinople, 1969, 1970; Orlofsky, 1978; Reimannis, 1974; Waterman et al., 1970), it seems unsuitable for cross-cultural research. Among the items are several that are not likely to make much sense to all subjects from varying cultural backgrounds, and are not in fact appropriate for all sections of an adult population—for example, some items, although suitable for young men, are not appropriate for middle-aged women.
Other scales for measuring the residues of the first six developmental crises described by Erikson are the Ego-Identity Scale designed by Rasmussen (1964) for American naval recruits, and the Self-Description Blank designed by McClain (1975) for adolescents from 12 to 18 years of age.

As none of these instruments is suitable for research on adult development, it was decided to construct a new scale for measuring the first seven components described by Erikson, in the form of a self-report questionnaire that would be suitable for large heterogeneous samples of black and white South African adults of both sexes and various ages.

**Psychometric Considerations**

At the outset, certain problems that pertain particularly to the measurement of Erikson's constructs had to be faced. In the first place, as noted by previous authors, Erikson's constructs are difficult to define in operational terms (Maddi, 1980); they are often imprecisely specified (Waterman, 1982), obscured by intangible referents (Simmons, 1970), and are complex, vague, and overlapping (Rosenthal, Gurney, & Moore 1981). However, although it is true that Erikson's constructs are difficult to define in terms of specific overt behaviors, he does explicitly state which types of subjective feelings and attitudes are likely to be experienced by those who have successfully or unsuccessfully resolved the crises involved in the various developmental stages. As such feelings are best known to the individual concerned, they may be measured through subjective report.

A further problem is whether each crisis residue should be measured on one continuum or on two continua. Erikson (1950) referred to strength gained through successful development as "the lasting outcome of the 'favourable ratios'" (p. 274) in crisis residues. But the question arises as to how one is to operationally define and to measure ratios representing the degree to which a crisis has been successfully resolved. Constantinople (1970) and Wessman and Ricks (1966) circumvented this problem by treating the positive and negative residues of each crisis as separate dimensions. For example, scores on trust and mistrust were not in any way combined to arrive at an estimate of how successfully the crisis had been resolved. Yet, Constantinople (1970) admitted that both "high scores on the positive scales and low scores on the negative scales are indicative of successful crisis resolution" (p. 3). However, when Orlofsky (1978) used Constantinople's scale, he combined measurements of the positive and negative residues of each crisis to form a single positive/negative continuum, explaining that "position on each stage-specific continuum was inferred from the difference between the 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' scores for that stage" (p. 423).

McClain (1975) apparently interpreted Erikson's term *favourable ratio* literally, and derived an index for indicating the success of each crisis resolution by computing a mathematical ratio, dividing the total score on each *success* subscale by its *failure* counterpart (p. 529). The main problem with this approach is that it must be assumed that the subscales are in fact ratio scales, as it makes no sense to divide scale points on anything less than a ratio scale (Nunnally, 1967). Clearly, McClain's scales cannot be considered to provide measurements on a ratio scale; in fact, very few psychometric scales can be legitimately regarded as being even real interval scales, let alone ratio scales.

Unlike Constantinople, Wessman and Ricks, and McClain, Rasmussen (1964) used a single-continuum approach and measured each of Erikson's personality components on a single subscale. For example, trust versus mistrust was measured on one subscale and a response that indicated a relatively high degree of trust was taken to also indicate a relatively low degree of mistrust.

In presenting an argument for the two-continua approach, it may be contended that opposites are not necessarily always on the same continuum. For example, as demonstrated by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1958) with respect to work satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and by Bradburn (1969) with regard to psychological well-being, opposites may be influenced by different sets of factors and may, to some extent, vary independently of one another. Something that increases positive affect may not necessarily decrease negative affect. When the aim of a study is to examine such independence, it becomes necessary to treat apparent opposites as two continua and to measure them on separate subscales. However, when the focus of interest is not on the independence of opposing dimensions, but on the resultant or balance between them, then the two dimensions should be combined. This was recognized by Bradburn. Although he asserted that pleasure and psychological pain vary independently, he conceived nevertheless that the individual's degree of well-being should be inferred from the degree to which feelings of pleasure exceed feelings of displeasure.

Erikson regarded every personality component as a result of, or balance between, the positive and negative residues of a developmental crisis. Although he referred to *favourable ratios* that build the strengths emerging from each crisis, he placed these words in inverted commas (Erikson, 1950, p. 274; 1959, p. 61), and probably does not intend *ratios* to be interpreted literally but as a balance between positive and negative elements of a crisis residue. It was therefore decided to treat each crisis residue as a single dimension. In this case, the subject's position between the positive and negative poles is assumed to be inherent in the response to each item, and the total score on each subscale provides a single index of the degree to which the crisis has been mastered.

Yet a further nuisance likely to be encountered when one measures Erikson's constructs is the response bias known as *social desirability* (Bourne, 1978). This is most likely to present a problem when the constructs under investigation are highly valued characteristics, such as the positive aspects of the personality components described by Erikson. A response that presents a favorable impression of the subject may indicate either that he or she is indeed favorably endowed with the constructs being measured or that he or she is exercising a tendency to report himself or herself favorably—and possibly a combination of both. Therefore, simply to avoid including items that refer to any valued qualities, or to discard those items from the original item pool that are shown to be related to social desirability, would amount to what Cattell (1974) described as throwing out "the baby of real data with the bath water of faking" (p. 116). When the construct of interest is a socially desirable trait, "real" variance may be lost.

The possible effects of socially desirable responses have been controlled in various ways with existing Erikson scales. McClain (1975) introduced subscales relating to social desirability into
his Eriksonian scale, and dropped from his sample those subjects whose scores on the social desirability subscales deviated by more than two standard deviations from the mean in the socially desirable direction—a procedure that may introduce some systematic bias into the distribution of the scores on the Eriksonian scale if responses on the social desirability subscales are positively related to responses on the Eriksonian scale. The method employed by Orlofsky (1978) and by Waterman et al. (1970) when using Constantinople's questionnaire was to partial out the effects of social desirability when analyzing the interrelations among the constructs of interest. Although this method does not purify the scale, it controls the contribution of spurious variance to the intercorrelations among the variables of interest. The items that load on social desirability are not discarded, but neither is that part of their variance that is attributable to social desirability allowed to contaminate the measures of relations between relevant constructs. This approach was also followed in the present investigation.

Scale Construction

A set of quotations from Erikson's writings referring to the relatively enduring positive or negative residues of the first seven stages of life, was compiled. Not all sets of residues were represented by the same number of quotations, as some are much more complex than others. For example, Erikson gave many and varied descriptions of the outcomes of the identity crisis—and it is clear that he considered this to be the major dimension of personality—but he said relatively little about the residues of the crisis of intimacy.

The quotations were then translated into statements to which true or false responses might be given. This format promised to be the simplest for the subjects to understand, and it controls for the effects of response styles of evasiveness and extremity. Although a serious attempt was made to write an equal number of positive and negative statements referring to both the positive and negative residues of each crisis (to control for the effects of acquiescence and negativity), this attempt at maintaining balance within each subscale created some problems. For example, Erikson (1950, 1959) said more about the negative than the positive residues of the crisis of autonomy, and problems were experienced with negatively worded statements referring to negative attitudes. It was therefore decided to sacrifice some balance in favor of content validity and clarity.

The items were next examined for theoretical validity by two independent judges who teach developmental psychology and by a group of postgraduate students. These judges discarded 11 items that did not clearly relate to the components they were intended to represent, and a small prepilot study was then conducted to discover whether subjects might have difficulty in understanding or responding to any of the remaining 171 items. The 5 subjects of this prepilot study, who were interviewed one-by-one in private, were asked to read the items and then to think aloud while they considered their responses. This showed where the wording of the items was confusing and where the content was likely to be misinterpreted. Several negatively phrased items that caused some confusion were rephrased in the positive and 18 troublesome items were discarded, leaving in all 153 items.

The provisional scale was then translated into Afrikaans, using the procedure proposed by Sechrest, Fay, and Zaidi (1972).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-39</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, a pilot study was conducted with the assistance of students enrolled in a fourth year course in developmental psychology offered by the University of South Africa (UNISA). The University of South Africa is a correspondence university, and the students, who reside in all parts of southern Africa, represent all cultural groups of this region. Each student recruited 4 subjects, one in each of four age groups: 15-19 years (representing the time during which the identity crisis is supposed to occur), 20-24 years (Erikson's stage of intimacy vs. isolation), 25-39 years (the first part of the stage of generativity vs. stagnation), and 40-60 (the latter part of the stage of generativity vs. stagnation). In all, there were 364 subjects in this pilot study, 210 women and 154 men.

The numbers of items in and reliabilities (Cronbach alpha) for the provisional version of the subscales used for this pilot study were trust, 19 items (.71); autonomy, 25 (.71); initiative, 16 (.70); industry, 17 (.62); identity, 39 (.84); intimacy, 14 (.70); generativity, 23 (.65); and total scale, 153 (.93). The most frequent complaints of the subjects—who had been asked to report on any problems they experienced with the items—were that the questionnaire was too long, that there was too much repetition of the same theme, and that the true–false format was too restricting.

Item analyses were performed, and 22 items that were not found to be contributing much to the reliability of the subscales were discarded. The format was then changed, allowing the subjects to choose one of four given responses, scored 1 to 4 (or 0 to 1); never, only occasionally or seldom, fairly often, and very often. The wording of certain items was changed to suit this new format, and an independent judge was again consulted to check the theoretical validity of the new scale, which consisted of 102 items.

The Main Study

Method

Subjects. Students enrolled in the second course in psychology offered by UNISA each recruited 4 subjects who belonged to his or her own ethnic group (one from each of the four age groups specified for the pilot study). Two major ethnic groups, English- and Afrikaans-speaking people of European descent (whites), and Africans (blacks), were well represented in the sample, but smaller ethnic groups (Indians, "coloreds," and Chinese) were eliminated from the study because of insufficient numbers. Some details of the age and sex of the subjects appear in Table 1. Of the white subjects, 19% met only the minimum requirement of 10 years of schooling, 38% had completed 12 years of schooling, and 43% had obtained some
higher educational qualification. The corresponding percentages for the black subjects were 22%, 49%, and 29%.

One does not presume that these samples are representative of the South African black and white populations, but the samples are at least far more heterogeneous than the samples of college students so frequently encountered in the literature on research relating to Erikson's theory. Included were a judge on the bench, ministers of religion, medical practitioners, lawyers, engineers, university lecturers, teachers, television personnel, nurses, clerks, typists, national servicemen, farmers, police constables, artisans, housewives, students, hotel staff, a deep-sea diver, and a lighthouse keeper.

Instruments: The questionnaire used for this study contained (a) the seven Erikson subscales, (see Appendix); (b) questions relating to biographical data; (c) The Index of Well-Being, a nine-item semantic differential designed by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976); and (c) a social desirability scale (Ochse, 1983), the items of which have a format similar to that of the Erikson subscales and were interspersed with them (see Appendix).

Item analyses of the Erikson subscales were performed on the combined data from all subjects, and item selections were made until final versions of the subscales with maximum reliability for the minimum number of items were obtained (see Appendix). Then the data from the blacks, English-speaking whites, and Afrikaans-speaking whites were processed separately to establish the means, standard deviations, and reliabilities of the subscales for each of these groups (shown in Table 2). This is because the English- and Afrikaans-speaking whites completed questionnaires in different languages, and it remains to be established that these forms are equivalent before combining data from the two language groups. As the blacks (who were from more than 10 different language groups) did not complete the questionnaire in their home language (but, in almost all cases, in English), some items may not have the same meaning for all of these subjects.

Scores on the total scale were calculated by adding the scores obtained on the seven subscales. It may be seen from Table 2 that the properties of the subscales and total scale are comparable for Afrikaans- and English-speaking whites, and it was therefore decided that these two groups could be combined for the purpose of further computations.

Validity: To examine the evidence for convergent and discriminant validity of the final forms of the scale, intercorrelations between scores on the subscales and the Well-Being and Social Desirability scales were computed. These are shown in Table 3. The scores on the Erikson scales are positively related to both well-being and social desirability, a result that might be expected in the light of previous findings. The significantly positive correlations between scores on all of the Erikson subscales and the Well-Being scale, as well as the fact that these correlations are higher than those between the Erikson scales and social desirability for white subjects, offer some indication of convergent validity. However, in the data from the black subjects, the latter result was not obtained. So, although there is some evidence of convergent validity of the Erikson scales, there are also indications that the scale is partly confounded with social desirability, especially for black subjects.

Factor structure: Separate factor analyses were performed on the Er-

Table 2
* Cronbach alpha.

Table 3
Correlations Among Scores on Erikson Subscales, Well-Being, and Social Desirability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.52</td>
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<td>.46</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winbeing</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Correlations for whites (N = 1,475) at upper right, and for blacks (N = 384) at lower left. All but three of the correlations (Initiative and Well-Being for whites, and Initiative and Social Desirability, and Well-Being and Social Desirability for blacks) are significant at the 1% level.
VALIDITY OF ERIKSON'S THEORY

Table 4
Summary of the Factor Analysis of the Erikson Scale for White and Black Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Variance (%)</th>
<th>Loadings over .4</th>
<th>Identification or content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White subjects (English- and Afrikaans-speaking combined)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Negative feelings about public image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Intimacy vs. isolation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Generativity-positive aspects</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Feelings of satisfaction and optimism</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sense of purpose and achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Feelings of personal inadequacy</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black subjects</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Erikson scale item scores obtained by the white and black subjects, so that clusters of related items could be examined to determine whether these correspond with the components of personality that the scale is intended to measure. An oblique factor rotation was considered appropriate because, in terms of Erikson's theory, it is to be expected that the personality components are interrelated. Seven factors were extracted.

In the results from the white subjects, the first factor contributes more than half of the variance. This indicates that, as expected, responses to items on the Erikson scale are influenced by a general factor (see Table 4). The factors that most distinctly represent Erikson's personality components are Factors 3 and 4, which represent intimacy and generativity—the components that develop in adulthood. The other factors are represented by a combination of items from various subscales. Although this is not ideal for showing the construct validity of the Erikson subscales, it is also not entirely inconsistent with what would be expected. First, the less distinct factors relate to components that theoretically develop during childhood and become integrated into the system of personality during adolescence. They could therefore have become evident in subjects older than 15 years of age. Second, the lack of distinct factors corresponding to subscales relating to childhood components may reflect the overlap in Erikson's constructs, which has been noted by other researchers (Rosenthal et al., 1981; Simmons, 1970).

In the results from black subjects, the first factor contributes just under one half of the variance of the scale (see Table 4). This once again suggests that a general factor underlies the test. It may be seen that the factor structure for the black group resembles that for the white group, in as much as the only factors that distinctly represent Erikson's personality components are those that represent the components that develop in adulthood. For reasons previously explained, this is not altogether surprising.

Results

It is well-known that repeated application of statistical techniques can lead to spurious "significant" results. The probability of such a Type I error—the error of mistakenly rejecting the null hypothesis—is equivalent to the level of significance decided upon by the investigator. In psychological research the level of significance is often set at 5%. Therefore, even if all null hypotheses are true, about one spuriously significant result can be expected in every 20 tests applied. In the present research the effect of spuriously significant results was reduced in two ways. First, the level of significance was set at 1% rather than at 5%, thereby considerably reducing the probability of spuriously significant results. Second, the interpretation of our results seldom depends on a single sample statistic. Usually a pattern of individual statistics is involved, thus further reducing the possibility that a conclusion will be based on a statistical artifact.

The results for white women, white men, black men, and black women are presented separately, to allow a comparison of the empirical data from each of these groups with Erikson's description of the epigenetic pattern of development.

Intercorrelations between childhood components. One would expect from Erikson's theory that, for each age group, the intercorrelations between those personality components that have passed their critical stages should be significantly positive. For the 15-19 age group, there are only three such components (autonomy, initiative, and industry), yielding six intercorrelations. No predictions are made for the remaining 15 intercorrelations among the seven subscales. For the 20-24 age group, identity should also have passed its critical stage, and consequently, 10 of the 21 intercorrelations are predicted to be significantly above zero. Intimacy and its correlation with the earlier five stages are to be added to the predictions for the 25-39 age group, and all 21 intercorrelations should be significantly above zero for the 40-60 age group.

These predictions are well supported by the data (summarized in Table 5) as far as white women and, to a somewhat lesser degree, white men are concerned, but not for blacks. This suggests that all residuals of the crises of childhood are well integrated in white adolescents. However, an examination of the number of significant intercorrelations among those for which no predictions are made (shown in Table 5) reveals that most of these are also significantly positive. This again implies that there is some common factor contributing to the variance of the subscales. As the effects of social desirability were partialed out when calculating each of these correlations, the common variance could be at-
Table 5
Proportion of Intercorrelations Among Personality Components

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF</td>
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<td>14/15</td>
<td>21/21</td>
</tr>
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<td>10/11</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>15/15</td>
<td>18/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NF</td>
<td>14/15</td>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>7/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>NF</td>
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<td>2/11</td>
<td>4/6</td>
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<tr>
<td>PF</td>
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<td>1/11</td>
<td>3/6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PF = proportion of intercorrelations that were predicted and found; NF = proportion of intercorrelations that were not predicted but were found. Effects of Social Desirability were partialed out.

Table 6
Mean Intercorrelations Among Scores on All Seven Personality Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>Black women</td>
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</table>

Note. Effects of Social Desirability were partialed out.

Table 7
Mean Scores on Intimacy Subscale for Women and Men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group and age</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Difference: p, one-tailed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–19</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–19</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>40–60</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>25.3</td>
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</table>

groups are not substantially lower than for the white groups, which indicates that the lack of significant intercorrelations mentioned in the previous paragraph is at least partly an artifact of sample size.

Sex differences in intimacy: Previous research (Constantino, 1975; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Rosenthal et al., 1981) has indicated that women usually score higher than men on intimacy, and a similar pattern was expected for the present study. The data relating to this prediction are presented in Table 7. In the case of the white subjects, the mean scores for the women for intimacy exceed that for men in all four subgroups, as expected. The difference is highly significant in the first three age groups, but appears to become less pronounced in middle age. This corresponds with the finding of Gurin, Veroff, and Feld (1960) that there is a decline with age in affiliative and related social needs in women, and with Neugarten and Gutmann’s (1958) suggestion that men, as they grow older, become more accepting of their affiliative impulses.

The expected sex differences in intimacy were not found for black subjects, and in fact, in three of the four age groups, the mean score was higher for men. On the other hand, the intimacy scores of the black women, like those of the white women, rose through each of the first three stages and fell off in the oldest age group. However, as in the case of the white male subjects, intimacy scores of the black male 40–60 age group were not lower than those for the corresponding 25–40 age group.

Personality components and well-being. Healthy psychosocial development is likely to be related to a sense of psychological well-being. This is not only implied in Erikson’s description of psychosocial development but has also consistently been shown in empirical studies (Constantino, 1969, 1970; Reimanis, 1974; Weissman & Ricks, 1966). We therefore expected to find significantly positive correlations between scores on the Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) Index of Well-Being and scores on those components that theoretically already have formed or are in a critical stage of formation.

This expectation was realized in the results for white women, shown in Table 8. Note that, for these subjects, the correlation between well-being and identity is highest in the adolescent group, that the correlation between well-being and intimacy is highest in the 24–29 age group, and that the correlation between well-being and generativity is highest in the 25–39 age group. In terms
Table 8
Correlations Between Scores on the Personality Components and Scores on the Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) Index of Well-Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group and age</th>
<th>Trust</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Intimacy</th>
<th>Generativity</th>
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<tr>
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<td>.33</td>
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<td>.17</td>
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<td>.39*</td>
<td>.31*</td>
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<td>.23</td>
<td>.38</td>
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<td>.30</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>.52*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>40–60</td>
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<td>.43*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Effects of Social Desirability were partialed out.
* p = .01.

of Erikson’s theory one might well expect this pattern, which indicates that each component of personality is most strongly related to well-being when it is currently in a critical stage of formation. This pattern is also partly present in the results for white men.

The relations between well-being and personality are on the whole weaker in black subjects, and because of the smaller sample sizes, most are not significant. In the case of black men, the relations are strongest in the 40–60 age group—the same group in which the intercorrelations between the personality components were highest (Table 7). In the case of black women, as in the case of white men, both sets of correlations are higher in the 25–39 age group. When considering the results for black women, note that the mean score on the Well-Being scale for the 25–39 age group is substantially lower than for any other subgroup of the sample (Table 9). The strong relations between identity, intimacy, and (lack of) well-being might suggest that although black women are biologically impelled to develop intimacy at this stage of life, this group has been frustrated by inadequate psychosocial well-being and by lack of identity formation, and has resolved the crisis of intimacy in a negative direction.

Relations between identity, intimacy, and generativity: One would expect in terms of Erikson’s theory that identity would become more highly related to intimacy in the early 20s than in adolescence, and that identity would become most highly related to generativity in middle age, when the crisis of generativity occurs. This is indeed the case for white women (Table 10). Only the prediction with regard to generativity holds for white and for black men. For both of these groups the relation between

Table 9
Mean Scores on the Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) Index of Well-Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Age group</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Black men</td>
<td>.37</td>
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<td>Black women</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White women</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black men</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Effects of Social Desirability were partialed out.
identity and intimacy is noticeably stronger in the two oldest age groups, indicating that intimacy and generativity may to some extent have a parallel development in men.

Effects of age, sex, and ethnic group. Three-way ANOVAs were performed on the scores on each subscale to determine the effects of age, sex, and ethnic group. Significant main effects of age were found for initiative (which declines with age) and for identity, intimacy, and generativity, all of which increase with age. Thus, although the components presumed to develop during and after adolescence grow with age, those that theoretically develop during childhood do not.

Significant main effects of sex were found for intimacy (already discussed) and for autonomy, initiative, and industry. For the latter three components, men scored higher than did women. This is not surprising, as the positive aspects of these components include elements of assertiveness or ambition, or both, which are associated with male stereotypes. Men usually score higher on these dimensions of personality scales (Edwards, 1954). Moreover, Rosenthal et al. (1981) found that male adolescents scored higher on autonomy and initiative, and McClain (1975) reported that his male adolescent subjects scored higher than the female adolescents on autonomy and industry.

The only personality component on which the main effect for ethnic group is significant at the 1% level is identity. It seems that black subjects experience less sense of identity than do white subjects.

Discussion

The internal consistencies of the Erikson subscales are acceptable for research purposes, although they are not impressive, especially where black subjects are concerned. It is likely that the internal consistency and also the validity of the scale are affected by a language problem when it is used for black subjects, and the results on blacks should therefore be interpreted with some reservation. The modest internal consistency of the subscales for white subjects may be partly explained in terms of the relatively few items and also by the fact that Erikson’s personality components are rather complex, each incorporating somewhat diverse elements. However, the high reliability for the total scale shows that some underlying factor is being systematically measured. The assumption is that this factor is psychosocial development, or identity, in the global sense, that is, the integrated system of personality components described by Erikson.

When it comes to evaluating the construct validity of the Erikson scale, one confronts a dilemma because construct validity refers to the simultaneous validating of the test and the construct (Fiske, 1971; Loevinger, 1957) and, as Cronbach and Meehl (1955) pointed out, usually both of the above are at stake, as evidence for validity of the test is not separable from evidence of the validity of the theory unless either the test or the construct have been well established. Although results that correspond with the theory may offer support for the validity of both the test and the theory, lack of correspondence may indicate that either the scale or the theory, or in fact both, are invalid.

Although this new scale may need further refining, there were several positive indications of its construct validity (and therefore also some indication of the validity of Erikson’s constructs). First, the factor analyses for the white and the black groups showed a common factor underlying all of the items representing personality components that Erikson believes to be interdependent. Second, the factors that represent Erikson’s personality components most distinctly are those that represent intimacy and generativity—the components that develop in adulthood.

Third, a three-way ANOVA of the scores on the Erikson subscales showed no main effects for age on those components that theoretically develop in childhood (excepting initiative, where the scores are progressively lower in each age group), but there are main effects for age on the components that theoretically increase over the stages of life represented by the age groups of the research sample.

A fourth indication of the construct validity of the Erikson scale is seen in positive relations between the scores on the Erikson scales and on Well-Being and Social Desirability, which might be expected in the light of previous findings.

When one considers the discriminant validity of the Erikson scale, it seems as though social desirability was an unsuitable choice of variable for demonstrating such validity. Individuals who score high on Erikson’s personality components are also likely to score high on a scale measuring social desirability—not necessarily because they wish to “fake” good, but perhaps because they really believe good of themselves and their social image. Such people are likely to concentrate on seeing the best side of themselves and their world and to enjoy a feeling of mutuality with society. After all, Erikson (1959) described identity as an awareness that one is faithful to and coping with the group’s mores, institutions, and social modes of functioning, which also implies that people with a high degree of psychosocial development would feel socially accepted and faithful to cultural norms. To measure these feelings is to measure both identity and the tendency to make socially desirable responses.

The results of our study suggest that the personality dimensions described by Erikson are usually but not invariably interrelated. Although the components that Erikson described as developing in childhood are shown to be integrated in adolescent and young-adult whites, those that theoretically develop in adulthood seem to some extent independent of those that develop in childhood. It also seems that the interdependence of various components varies across sexes, ethnic groups, and life stages.

It also appears that identity, intimacy, and generativity do not invariably reach a critical stage of development and become formed in the sequence and at the times of life suggested by Erikson. However, when interpreting the results of any empirical research on identity formation, it is necessary to realize that the concepts identity and identity formation include a complex set of ideas, and that the interpretation of the results must be made with due respect to the particular aspects of these constructs that have been measured. In past studies relating to identity status, where the focus of attention was on choice of and (professioned) commitment to occupational goals and ideologies, the achievement of identity was usually found to occur during the latter half of adolescence. This is only to be expected, as at this age young people (especially college students) have been educated to a point where they are in a position to make such choices (at least provisionally) and where there is a demand upon them to do so.
In contrast to the interviews traditionally used in research relating to identity status, the instrument for this study includes items relating to the aspect of identity that Bourne (1978) described as perhaps the most fundamental and distinguishable aspect of ego-identity. It is seen by Erikson (1959) as "reconciling the individual's conception of himself with his community's recognition of him" or as denoting "a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others." This ego identity does not make sense merely of oneself, but of oneself in a socially acknowledged way. It is not mere self-definition, but social self-definition. Conceivably, an individual might achieve a relatively stable self-conception, but insofar as that conception is neither recognized nor understood by his community, he would lack "ego identity" in Erikson's sense. (p. 227)

It is understandable that results relating to measures of this aspect of identity would reflect a pattern of identity formation that is somewhat different from that shown by studies relating to occupational and ideological choice.

Our findings suggest that the white women in the sample resolved the crisis of identity at a younger age than did the white men. If identity were measured mainly in terms of occupational goals and political ideology, the women's precocity might simply be attributed to their tendency to foreclose their identity by accepting that they are destined to be wives and mothers and to adopt reflected identity from their parents or husbands, or from both—which seems to be a common and, moreover, adaptive mode of identity formation for women (Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel, 1975; Toder & Marcia, 1973). However, premature foreclosure is not the only explanation of the relatively early formation of identity seen in the groups of white women in this study, particularly as identity is not mainly construed here in terms of vocational choice.

There are indications that the critical stage in the formation of identity occurs when intimacy and generativity have already developed to some extent, and that the white women have a start on the men as far as this is concerned. It is commonly held, and is again confirmed by the findings of this study, that white women develop intimacy before their male counterparts and are already relatively well imbued with a sense of intimacy in adolescence. And it is possible that the indications here of an earlier resolution of the identity crisis in women may be attributable to this earlier development of intimacy. In the case of the black women, it is possible that the indications of negative resolution of the identity crisis in the 25-39 age group may be attributable to their lack of opportunity to develop intimacy.

It moreover appears from the results of this study that not only women but also men may gain identity through experiencing intimacy. These results suggest not only that, in men, the critical period in the development of identity occurs well after adolescence (between the ages of 25 and 39), but also that the critical period in the formation of identity does not precede the development of intimacy. This makes sense when identity is construed as a psychosocial phenomenon. It is quite feasible that by sharing and risking themselves in close relationships, people may learn to know themselves, to reconcile their conception of themselves with the community's recognition of them, and to develop a sense of mutuality with their community.

Although the results pertaining to the black subjects should be interpreted with caution, there are indications that in black men a sense of identity develops only in late adulthood. It is also suggested that black women experience (strongly related) feelings of lack of self-definition, lack of intimacy, and lack of well-being in middle adulthood and that a (relatively negative) resolution of the identity crisis may occur at this time. Future research, using instruments more suited to black subjects, may cast more light on the nature and sequence of the developmental crises experienced by black men and women. It is especially important that such research be based on a longitudinal design, as there are very likely to be differences between the experiences and social definitions of Africans reared during different periods in a changing Western society. Differences attributable to social changes are likely to cause confounding cohort effects in cross-sectional research.

A further finding of this research is that healthy psychosocial development, as described by Erikson, appears to be related to a feeling of well-being in the white subjects. But this must be qualified because it would appear that the relation between psychosocial development and well-being is not simple. The results relating to African women indicate that the relation between psychosocial development and well-being may be stronger at lower levels of well-being than at higher levels. This suggests that, although a certain degree of well-being may be necessary for psychosocial development, a higher degree does not further enhance it. Further research on the relation between well-being and psychosocial development may more clearly indicate whether there is indeed such a nonlinear relation.

References


Loevinger, J. (1957). Objective tests as instruments of psychological theory. Psychological Reports, 3(Monograph Suppl. 9), 635-694.


(Appendix follows on next page)
Validity of Erikson's Theory

Appendix

Erikson and Social-Desirability Items

The Erikson and Social-Desirability items have been separated here to show the items belonging to each subscale. The number before each item indicates the position the item should occupy on the questionnaire. Those items marked with an asterisk should be negatively scored.

Instructions

The following questions are presented in the form of statements. We would like you to indicate how often each of these statements apply to you by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate square.

Place a ✓ in Square 0 if the statement never applies to you.

e.g., [✓] 1 2 3

Place a ✓ in Square 1 if the statement only occasionally or seldom applies to you.

e.g., 0 [✓] 2 3

Place a ✓ in Square 2 if the statement applies to you fairly often.

e.g., 0 1 [✓] 3

Place a ✓ in Square 3 if the statement applies to you very often.

e.g., 0 1 2 [✓]

Subscale 1: Trust Versus Mistrust

1. *I feel pessimistic about the future of mankind.

2. When I am looking forward to an event, I expect something to go wrong and spoil it.


4. *I feel that the world is a dangerous place.

5. I feel that I am unimportant.

6. *I feel that life is unfair.

Subscale 2: Autonomy Versus Shame and Doubt

2. *I have a feeling that I would like to “sink through the floor” or become invisible to those around me.

12. When people try to persuade me to do something I don’t want to, I refuse.

22. *After I have made a decision I feel I have made a mistake.

32. *I am unnecessarily apologetic.

42. *I feel that I am not very good at something.

52. *I worry that my friends will find fault with me.

62. *I feel frustrated if my daily routine is disturbed.

82. When I disagree with someone I tell them.

Subscale 3: Initiative Versus Guilt

4. *I feel guilty when I am enjoying myself.

14. I am prepared to take a risk to get what I want.

24. *I feel hesitant to try out a new way of doing something.

34. When I compete with others I try hard to win.

44. I am confident in carrying out my plans to a successful conclusion.

54. I am curious or inquisitive.

64. I make exciting plans for the future.

74. I feel what happens to me is the result of what I have done.

84. I enjoy competing.

77. *When I have difficulty in getting something right, I give up.

Subscale 4: Industry Versus Inferiority

5. I make the best of my abilities.

15. *When people look at something I have done, I feel embarrassed by the thought that they could have done it better.

25. *I lack the energy to get started on something I intended to do.

35. I get a great deal of pleasure from working.

45. *I lose interest in something and leave it unfinished.

55. *I feel too incompetent to do what I would really like to do in life.

65. I feel the thrill of doing something really well.

75. *I avoid doing something difficult because I feel I would fail.

85. I feel competent.

72. *People think I am lazy.

89. I have a sense of accomplishment.

Subscale 5: Identity Versus Identity Diffusion

6. *I wonder what sort of person I really am.

10. *People seem to change their opinion of me.

16. I feel certain about what I should do with my life.

20. *I feel uncertain as to whether something is morally right or wrong.

26. Most people seem to agree about what sort of person I am.

30. I feel my way of life suits me.

36. My worth is recognized by others.

40. *I feel freer to be my real self when I am away from those who know me very well.

46. *I feel that what I am doing in life is not really worthwhile.

50. I feel I fit in well in the community in which I live.

56. I feel proud to be the sort of person I am.

60. *People seem to see me very differently from the way I see myself.

66. *I feel left out.

70. *People seem to disapprove of me.

76. *I change my ideas about what I want from life.

80. *I am unsure as to how people feel about me.

86. *My feelings about myself change.

90. *I feel I am putting on an act or doing something for effect.

93. I feel proud to be a member of the society in which I live.

Subscale 6: Intimacy Versus Isolation

7. *I feel that no-one has ever known the real me.

17. I have a feeling of complete “togetherness” with someone.

27. *I feel it is better to remain free than to become committed to marriage for life.

37. I share my private thoughts with someone.

47. *I feel as though I am alone in the world.

57. Someone shares my joys and sorrows.

67. *I feel nobody really cares about me.

87. *I feel embarrassed when people tell me about their personal problems.

Subscale 7: Generativity Versus Stagnation

8. *I feel that, in the long run, children are more a burden than a pleasure.
18. *I feel young people forget what one has done for them.
20. *I feel that I have done nothing that will survive after I die.
22. *I help people to improve themselves.
24. I enjoy caring for young children.
26. *I feel my life is being wasted.
28. I enjoy guiding young people.
30. I have a good influence on people.
32. I do something of lasting value.
34. *I take great care of myself.

Social-Desirability Items
3. *I hide the fact that I have made a mistake.
9. *I am completely honest with everybody.
13. *I compare myself favorably with someone else.
19. *I am equally polite to everybody.

23. *I take a dislike to someone.
25. *I am able to like people who are unkind to me.
27. *I criticize someone behind his or her back.
29. *I feel that someone is less worthy than I am.
31. I have kind thoughts about everybody.
33. *I am pleased when people get into the trouble they deserve.
35. I see only the good in people.
37. *I feel jealous when someone succeeds where I have failed.
39. *I consider others before myself when making a decision.
41. *I tell a lie when I want to get out of something.
43. *I am glad when people point out my faults.
45. *I exaggerate when I describe someone's faults.
47. *I try to impress people.

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