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IDENTITY FORMATION IN TAIWANESE AND AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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IDENTITY FORMATION IN TAIWANESE AND AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

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I thank God for His guidance, love, mercy, and grace.

May the Lord continue to lead me in Him and be my peace, joys, and blessing.
identity formation is an important developmental task for adolescents (Erikson, 1968). Socio-cultural factors play an important role in identity process. However, little is known about how differing cultural goals may impact youth’s identity development. The goals of the study thus are designed to compare the identity development of youth in Taiwan, a collectivist culture, and youth in the United States, an individualistic culture. 275 Taiwanese and 171 American-White undergraduate college youth ranging from 18-24 years old participated in the study. The EOM-EIS, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, Trait-anxiety Inventory, Satisfaction with Life Scale, and a new scale assessing identity authenticity were implemented in the study.

Findings revealed that being both independent and connected to others had an important influence on youth’s identity formation, and the two goals coexist within a culture. Gender and culture impacted the process of identity development. The complexity of culture is more adequately accounted for when gender is included as an explanatory variable. Taiwanese culture emphasized interpersonal issues more than ideological issues in youth identity formation. Americans rated higher in identity
Achievement than did Taiwanese in the ideological domain only, but the difference was primarily accounted for by the lowered scores of Taiwanese women.

Interpersonal issues were more important for women than for men, while ideological issues were more important for men than for women. However, men and women experienced these two issues differently as a result of differing cultural expectations. American women were more advanced in identity development in both domains. Taiwanese women were the least advanced. They also felt the least authentic in their identities, denoting a major compromise of their autonomy. American men were found to be particularly vulnerable to the passive self-images entailed by identity Diffusion. Taiwanese men only experienced the negative effects of identity Diffusion in the ideological domain.

Identity Achievement predicted higher psychosocial well-being across cultures and genders. To have goals for both independence and connectedness met in the identity process is thus beneficial universally. Identity Achievement predicted higher identity authenticity, except for Taiwanese men, while identity Foreclosure predicted lower identity authenticity. The process of identity exploration is thus critical for finding one’s true self.

Taiwanese youth’s identity Achievement was found to be influenced by a core cultural value, filial piety. The transitional nature of current Taiwan society also had impact on youth’s identity. Many Taiwanese youth were in prolonged identity Moratorium and Diffusion. However, moratorium in the ideology domain rendered no
harmful effect as the ambiguity was the social norm. Future research directions and implications for social policies are recommended.

Keywords: ego-identity, authenticity, cross-culture, gender, adolescence
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I. INTRODUCTION

Erikson’s construct of ego identity has become one of the major principles for understanding adolescent development (Erikson, 1968). In his theory, which describes the psychological tasks of human development, Erikson considered adolescence as a critical life stage in which one needs to integrate past and present life experiences and to arrive at a clear sense of personal identity. Success in resolving one’s identity crisis gives the individual a sense of coherence and life direction. Failure to resolve the crisis results in “role confusion”.

Erikson described a sense of identity as a sense of sameness and continuity. One of the main ideas of the ego identity construct is that it entails an expression of one’s individuality and a feeling of being the “real me”. Erikson also emphasized that identity does not occur in isolation. Identities are only made meaningful when they are recognized and validated by others. Therefore, identity formation has been described as a process involving a balance between self and others (Kroger, 1998).

Building upon Erikson’s construct of ego identity, Marcia (1966) argued that identity is an inner self-structure, which reflects one’s organization of values, beliefs, abilities, and individual history in various life domains, such as occupation, religion, and sex-role concepts. The self-structure is formed through two processes: crisis/exploration and commitment. Crisis/exploration refers to a period of questioning and searching for alternatives in life domains. Commitment refers to the firmness with which one holds a set of values or beliefs. Based on the presence and absence of the two processes, four
types of “identity status” are recognized: *Achievement* (commitment made after exploration), *Foreclosure* (premature commitment without previous exploration), *Moratorium* (in the process of exploration with very vague commitment), and *Diffusion* (lack of exploration and commitment).

Since Marcia’s identity status framework was introduced, there has been a large and growing body of research based on this paradigm (e.g., Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, & Nielsen, 1985; Cramer, 2000; Grotevant & Adams, 1984; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985; Waterman, 1982). Some studies have focused on the timing and developmental sequence of the identity statuses (e.g., Waterman & Waterman, 1971). Others have attempted to identify their antecedents, such as personality and family variables (e.g., Adams et al., 1985; Cramer, 2000; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985; Read, Adams, & Dobson, 1984). Some have investigated the links between identity status and psychological and social functioning, such as self-esteem, well-being, and social behavior (e.g., Adams, et al., 1985; Rotheram-Borus, 1989; Slugoski, Marica, & Koopman, 1984).

Some have argued that Marcia’s identity status paradigm does not adequately account for issues of authenticity. Waterman (1993) has pointed out that many individuals make life commitments based on instrumental consideration rather than their intrinsic interests. Thus, there might not be a necessary link between identity status and the “real me” as depicted by Erikson. The issue of authenticity is an important one. Susan Harter’s research demonstrates that as adolescents are asked to take on more social roles, they are very concerned with their ability to behave authentically across social relationships.
(Harter, 2002). Adolescents can readily discern between behavior that is authentic and unauthentic, and indicate that they like their true self-behavior more than false self-behavior (Harter, Bresnick, Bouchey, & Shitesell, 1997). Therefore, authenticity is central to adolescents’ well-being. As adolescents are forming their identities, to what extent is their true-self incorporated into their identity and how it is related to their well-being? Unfortunately, there have been very few studies that have examined this issue.

In addition, although research on identity status has been rich, most of this work has been conducted with populations representing the mainstream U.S. culture. Only a small number of studies have been conducted in other cultural contexts (e.g., Abraham, 1986; Meeus, 1996; Rotheram-Borus, 1989; Streitmatter, 1988; Taylor & Oskay, 1995). As stressed by Erickson (1968), identity is developed through one’s interaction with his or her environment. Sociocultural factors play a central role in one’s identity formation. For this reason, it is important to examine cross-cultural differences in the processes and outcomes associated with identity formation.

Different cultures provide different goals and values that are deemed acceptable and valuable for their members. Cultures are often roughly dichotomized into two broad templates - Western individualism and Eastern collectivism - which differ in terms of the priority placed on goals and the ways the self is construed (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Western individualistic cultures, such as the U.S., are said to support individual rights and personal goals. A self-seeking attempt such as identity exploration therefore is encouraged, and a firm personal commitment is also valued. However, the processes of
exploration and commitment may not be equally supported in Asian collective cultures, such as Taiwan and Japan. In collectivist cultures, the self is said to be defined in terms of interpersonal roles and duties, and personal goals and self-assertiveness are largely downplayed.

An interesting question, therefore, is how adolescents from collectivist cultures form their ego-identity. Does this process differ from that of their American counterpart? How are different identity statuses related to psychological and social functioning in the two cultures? Is there a particular identity status that is more adaptive in one culture than the other? How significant is the issue of authenticity in the two cultures? Unfortunately, there is little empirical data available to address these questions. The present study, therefore, is designed to compare Taiwanese and American college students in terms of the prevalence, authenticity, and mental health consequences of the four identity statuses.
II. IDENTITY AND THE TRUE SELF

Ego-Identity Theories

Erikson’s Theory on Ego-Identity

Erikson’s ego-identity construct has its roots in psychoanalytic theory. According to Freud (1933), the founder of psychoanalytic theory, three components constitute one’s personality: the id, the ego, and the super-ego. The id is one’s instinctual drives, mostly impulsive and irrational. The ego is the rational part of the individual, which connects one to reality. The super-ego is one’s internalized moral standards. Freud believed that it is the inborn instinct, especially the sexual urges that drive human behavior and development. Thus, the id is deemed the most important aspect of the human psyche, according to Freud.

Although Erikson was influenced by psychoanalysis, he was not satisfied with psychoanalytic theories because they do not take into account one’s social environment in the development of personality. Instead of viewing the id as the decisive part of human motivation, Erikson put more emphasis on the ego and its adaptive functions. As an “inner agency”, the ego acts to organize one’s life experiences, in which the environment plays an essential role. Erikson maintained that environment is not an “outer part” or merely some “object” surrounding man, but is also “in” man. The “former” environment is forever in us. Thus, he suggested that one’s inner condition and outer situation actually converge to create one’s identity. Therefore, identity formation is a continuous interaction between self and one’s environment. This interaction is always changing and developing
throughout one’s life. Identity never comes to an “achieved” end.

Although Erikson viewed identity as a life-long process, he emphasized that the process has its normative crisis in adolescence. With increasing cognitive capacities, physical maturation, and the imminence of taking on adult roles in society, adolescents are confronted with the task of searching for a meaningful sense of self. This task is called an “identity crisis”. Adolescence is a time to sum up one’s past and current experiences to arrive at a sense of identity, which in turn will guide one’s future plans.

Then, what exactly is the sense of identity that confronts adolescents? Erikson (1968) said that the sense of identity was “a subjective sense of an invigorating sameness and continuity” (p.19). In elaborating on this notion, he quoted a pioneer psychologist William James’s words, “when it came upon him, he felt himself most deeply and intensely active and alive. At such moments there is a voice inside which speaks and says: ‘This is the real me!’” (p.19). Therefore, a sense of identity provides a sense of sameness between one’s past and present and induces a feeling of having found the “real me”. In other words, one feels that one’s past continues to the present coherently and one’s “true self” is being expressed.

A sense of coherence between past and the present does not refer to an intact continuity, but a transformation process that requires a relinquishment of old and infantile gratification and absorption of a new identification, which adolescents confront in society. In other words, identity formation is an increasing differentiation process, which involves a departure from parental figures and a turn toward new identifications that adolescents
are attracted to while searching in society. It is in this transformation process that adolescents may find the identity that matches their “true self” and expresses their individuality.

Besides expressing one’s individuality, how do social factors come into play in the process of identity formation as suggested by Erikson? What social aspects constitute identity? Erikson (1968) said the following:

Ego identity then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego’s synthesizing methods, the style of one’s individuality, and this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one’s meaning for significant others in the immediate community. (p.50)

He points out the fact that when forming their identity, adolescents not only need to make sense of their selves, but also need to be recognized by significant others in the society. Identities are made meaningful only when one’s individuality is recognized and validated by others.

The estrangement during this stage results in “identity confusion”. According to Erikson, a successful resolution to an identity crisis gives the person a sense of identity; while failure to resolve the crisis results in “role confusion”. Role confusion implies an inability to take on the roles that are imposed by society, or when one cannot make use of the opportunities provided by society to arrive at self-definitions. In a sense, role confusion might be a state of regression as an attempt to postpone, avoid, or minimize the commitments one should make. Instead of actively searching or committing, role
confused adolescents simply “wait things out”.

Erikson mentioned two areas as crucial for adolescent identity development: occupation and institutional ideology. With respect to occupation, Erikson (1968) said, “In most instances, however, it is the inability to settle on an occupation identity which disturbed individual young people”(p.132). In speaking of institutional ideology, he said, “For the social institution which is the guardian of identity is what we call ideology….For it is through their [adolescents’] ideology that social systems enter into the fiber of the next generation”(p.133-134). James Marcia (1966) later adopted the occupational and ideological aspects in identity formation to develop the most commonly used identity research paradigm that is presented later.

Taken together, resolving the identity crisis is a psychosocial task dealing with both the self and the social environment. Identity formation hinges on two aspects. The first deals with individuality that emphasizes a sense of continuity and a sense of being one’s true self. The process of achieving individuality requires a relinquishment of one’s childhood gratification and the adoption of newly developed identifications in the societal realm. The second deals with a connection between self and the society. An achievement of identity does not happen in isolation, but through being known, namely, the sense of self being recognized and validated by others. These two aspects constitute one’s identity.

Marcia’s Ego-Identity Status Paradigm

Many researchers have tried to operationalize Erickson’s theory on identity crisis (e.g., Marcia, 1966; McClain, 1975; Tan, Kendis, Fine, & Porac, 1977). Among them,
Marcia’s (1966) “ego-identity status” framework has gained the most empirical attention. This framework was derived from Erikson’s theory with regard to the process of identity crisis resolution, focusing especially on the identity exploration and commitment. Marcia pointed out that when searching for new identifications in society, adolescents experience a period of doubt and questioning and also actively look for alternatives. This is a period of “crisis”. The decisions adolescents make for their life plans, such as occupation or beliefs concerning social systems, are the expressions of their identities. This is a period of “commitment”. Thus, Marcia argued that “crisis/exploration” and “commitment” are two essential processes to arrive at identity achievement. Crisis/exploration refers to the adolescents’ period of questioning and engagement in choosing among meaningful alternatives; commitment refers to the degree of personal investment the individual exhibits (Marcia, 1966).

Based on the absence or presence of crisis/exploration and commitment, four identity statuses were proposed: Identity Diffusion, Identity Foreclosure, Identity Moratorium, and Identity Achievement. Identity Diffusion describes adolescents who do not make firm commitments to a set of values and goals, nor are they engaged in active exploration for life choices. Marcia argued that adolescents in identity diffusion are largely defined by their circumstances, and are considered to be in the least developmentally advanced status (Marcia, 1993). This status is parallel to Erikson’s “role confusion”. Identity Foreclosure describes adolescents who make commitments without experiencing a period of crisis. For some, Foreclosure represents a developmental starting
point, from which a period of crisis/exploration may ensue. However, as an identity resolution, Foreclosure is considered by Marcia to be a less developmentally advanced status compared to identity Moratorium and Achievement (Pattern, Sochting, & Marcia, 1992). Marcia (1993) argued that Foreclosures reflect little sophisticated syntheses of earlier identifications. Most of the values and beliefs they commit to are reflective of their parents’ expectations. Life issues have not yet been reformulated in their own terms.

Identity Moratorium describes adolescents who are currently actively searching for alternatives, but have not yet made commitments or the commitments are vague. Marcia’s identity Moratorium refers to a process of forging an identity, thus it is considered to be more a stage than a resolution, although some people apparently remain in a Moratorium status for a very long period of time and are not able to commit. Identity Achievement describes adolescents who have experienced a period of crisis and made firm commitments to the set of values and goals they adopt during the period of exploration. This is the most developmentally advanced status. It is the resolution of the identity crisis as depicted by Erikson.

Although the identity status paradigm was initially developed as a methodological device to operationalize Erikson’s ego identity construct, Marcia (1980) claimed that the four identity statues might be best described as four modes of dealing with the identity crisis characteristic of late adolescence. He also argued that by expanding Erikson’s dichotomy of identity achievement versus role confusion, the identity status paradigm provides greater specificity with regards to the various styles
available for dealing with identity issues. The four statuses are thus both outcomes of the process of identity formation and a structural feature of one’s personality. Each status portrays a mode of experiencing the world (Pattern, et. al, 1992).

Marcia assessed individuals’ identity status through a semistructured interview, the Identity Status Interview (1966). The initial identity domains only included occupation and ideology, both of which were specified by Erikson as especially relevant to identity formation during adolescence. The ideology domain was characterized as encompassing beliefs about religion and politics by Marcia (1966). In addition, because Erikson’s early writing about identity only referred to male subjects, they were the sole focus at the beginning of Marcia’s identity status investigation (e.g., Marcia, 1966, 1967). Later on, more content areas were gradually added in order to examine female’s identity issues and to capture gender as well as cultural differences in identity formation. For instance, interpersonal issues such as sexual attitudes, sex-role concepts, dating, and friendship were added with special concern for female’s identities (Bennion & Adams, 1986; Grotevant, Thorbecke, & Meyer, 1982; Schenkel & Marcia, 1972). A domain of school identity was added when examining New Zealand youth as it was considered especially important to this cultural group (Bosma, 1992). As a result, the current identity domains are generally split into two broad categories: the ideology domain (including contents areas such as occupation, religion, politics, and values) and the interpersonal domain (including content areas such as sex-role concepts, friendship, dating, and recreation).
Furthermore, a few paper-and-pencil objective measurements of identity statuses based on Marcia’s framework have also been successfully developed (e.g., Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979; Balistreri, Busch-Rosnagel, & Geisinger, 1995; Bennion & Adams, 1986). However, the congruence of identity statuses as assessed by interview method and the paper-and-pencil method is not excellent. Researchers have picked different measurement tools largely depending on what tools were available at that time. Thus, although identity concepts and measurement tools have improved and expanded over time, variation in assessment methods and in the content areas being assessed certainly complicate the interpretation of empirical findings. Inconsistent findings are not rare in the research literature. With this caveat in mind, below are reviewed empirical findings relevant to the present study.

**Empirical Findings on the Psychosocial Correlates of Identity Statuses**

Since Marcia put forth the identity status framework, there has been a large and growing body of research based on this paradigm (e.g., Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, & Nielsen, 1985; Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979; Cramer, 2000; Grotevant & Adams, 1984; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985; Marcia, 1967; Waterman & Waterman, 1971). Available literature generally finds that this paradigm can discriminate among a variety of cognitive, psychological, social, and behavior correlates associated with the four statuses, thereby deeming it an effective and valid framework in identity research.

As Marcia postulates that the four identity statuses represent adolescents’ four coping strategies in the face of an identity crisis, and there has been many empirical...
examinations of how psychosocial functioning correlates with the four statuses (e.g., Markstrom-Adams & Adams, 1995; Meeus, 1996). They include, but are not limited to, self-esteem, anxiety, well-being, depression, problem behavior, interpersonal styles, and sense of autonomy. According to Marcia (1980), identity Achievement and Moratorium are generally more developmentally advanced than are identity Foreclosure and Diffusion, given that both Achievements and Moratoriums display active exploring for alternatives, which may require higher ego synthesizing abilities. Likewise, many empirical findings also demonstrated that Moratoriums resembled Achievements in many aspects, such as cognitive complexity (Adams, et al., 1985) and achievement motivation (Orlofsky, 1978).

Marcia also argued that each style likely has its adaptive function. There are both healthy and pathological aspects associated to each of the statuses, with the possible exception of identity Achievement (Marcia, 1980; Patterson, et al., 1992). Thus, each style may present strengths and also liabilities in different psychosocial areas. The present study will focus on self-esteem and the psychological well-being variables such as anxiety and depression. They are some of the most well-established outcomes of identity resolution and would help differentiate the statuses (Marcia, 1993).

**Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is defined as a positive evaluation of one’s attributes and sense of self-worthiness (Rosenberg, 1965). Although self-esteem has received considerate research attention in relation to identity status, it has been surprisingly difficult to demonstrate consistent differences among the four statuses (Marcia, 1993). Possible
reasons arise from the different instruments researchers applied to measure identity status and self-esteem. In addition, failure to consider possible gender differences might also result in inconsistent findings. Empirical studies done on college students with consideration of measurement methods and gender differences are reviewed below.

Most early investigations used Marcia’s Identity Status Interview and focused only on male subjects. Although later investigations also included female subjects, the identity status instruments and identity content areas varied from study to study. In the original studies, Marcia (1966, 1967) used male college students and his Identity Status Interview (only including occupation, religion, and politics content areas) to test for the validity of the status paradigm. He failed to demonstrate differences among identity statuses in self-esteem. However, Breuer (1973) found that identity Achievement and Moratorium males scored higher than did identity Foreclosure and Diffusion males in self-esteem. Cabin (1966) found that identity Achievement and Moratorium males had higher self-ratings in self-esteem than did identity Foreclosure and Diffusion males. A later study conducted by Orlofsky (1978) also found that identity Achievement and Moratorium males scored higher in self-reported attractiveness to the opposite sex than did identity Foreclosure and Diffusion males.

For female subjects, Marcia and Friedman (1970) added one additional sexual attitude content area into the interview protocol, and found that it was identity Foreclosures who scored highest in self-esteem; whereas identity Achievements scored the lowest. The authors thus concluded that identity Foreclosure might be more adaptive
for women than for men. In a replicating study (Schenkel & Marcia, 1972), when using occupation, religion, and politics as the identity content areas, no self-esteem differences was found among the four identity statuses. However, when using sexual attitude as the content area, identity Achievement women appeared to have the highest self-esteem. The authors concluded that sexual attitude and affiliation elements might be more important than occupation and politics in women’s self-definition. These interpretations make sense since the society at that time had little support for women to develop their sense of self. Two latter studies conducted by Orlofsky (1977) and Fannin (1979) did not find self-esteem differences among identity statuses when content areas of occupation, religion, politics, and sexual attitude were combined.

Taken together, early findings using the interview method, though inconsistent, seem to suggest that for males, identity Achievement and Moratorium are likely to result in higher self-esteem. For females, the trend is less clear, but identity Achievement and Foreclosure are seemingly more likely to result in higher self-esteem. Identity Foreclosure was considered more adaptive for women; while identity Moratorium was considered more adaptive for men.

Later studies more frequently used objective methods (paper-and-pencil) to measure identity statuses (e.g., the EOM-EIS, Bennion & Adams, 1986; the EIPQ, Balistreri et al., 1995). In addition, the identity content areas also have been expanded to include more issues, such as values and interpersonal ideology (e.g., friendship). Cramer (2000) used EOM-EIS (Extended Objective Measure-Ego Identity Statuses) to measure
identity statuses. She found that for both men and women, identity Achievement was positively correlated with self-esteem; identity Diffusion was negatively associated with self-esteem; but identity Foreclosure was not associated with self-esteem. For identity Moratorium, a negative correlation appeared only for males; the correlation for females was negligible (r=-.01). This pattern applied for both ideological and interpersonal domains. Also using EOM-EIS, Taylor and Oskay (1995) found that for American students, identity Achievement was positively associated with self-esteem, while identity Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion were all negatively associated with self-esteem. This pattern applied for both ideological and interpersonal domains except for ideological Diffusion, which was not significantly correlated with self-esteem. This study did not examine gender differences. Balistreri and associates (1995) used EIPQ to measure identity status, and found that regardless of gender, identity Achievement and Foreclosure scored significantly higher in self-esteem than did identity Moratorium and Diffusion. In addition, self-esteem was positively correlated with commitment scores but not with exploration scores.

In conclusion, later findings, using the objective measurements present fewer gender differences in the associations between identity status and self-esteem. More robust findings go to identity Achievement and Diffusion. Regardless of gender, Achievements tend to have higher self-esteem, while Diffusions to have lower self-esteem in both mean and correlation comparisons. In terms of identity Moratorium, most findings indicated a negative effect on self-esteem. Findings for identity Foreclosure are
inconsistent. A few did not find difference; some found a negative effect; others indicated a positive effect. The inconsistency suggests that identity Foreclosure may have adaptive effects in some cases. More studies are in need to clarify these findings regarding self-esteem.

**Psychological Well-being**

Common indicators of psychological well-being usually include variables such as anxiety, depression, and happiness.

**Anxiety.** Anxiety is one of the variables that has received the most empirical examination in identity research. Marcia (1993) argued that the ability to bind anxiety, to perform effectively in the face of inner turmoil is a characteristic of a higher level of ego functioning. Thus, it should associate with identity status. Compared to self-esteem, empirical findings concerning anxiety are more consistent regardless of the measurement tools used. It is found that uncommitted statuses (identity Moratorium and Diffusion) tend to be higher in anxiety compared to committed statuses (identity Foreclosure and Achievement). Marcia (1967) found that among college male students, identity Foreclosures had the lowest anxiety, but the identity Moratoriums had the highest. Similar findings were found among female students with identity Foreclosures scoring the lowest, and Diffusions scoring the highest (Marcia & Friedman, 1970; Schenkel & Marcia, 1972). A recent study conducted by Wautier (2000) also found that uncommitted statuses scored higher in anxiety than did committed statuses. Cramer (2000) also found that identity Achievement and Foreclosure was negatively associated with anxiety for
both females and males; identity Moratorium and Diffusion were positively associated with anxiety for males, but not for females. The author argued that females seemed to be less influenced by uncommitted status of Moratorium than were males.

The finding that the highest anxiety scores occurred for identity Moratorium individuals was interpreted as suggesting that it is normal for individuals to experience anxiety when in the midst of crisis (Marcia, 1993). Marcia also cautioned that the low anxiety levels found for Foreclosures might be due to their reluctance to admit their real mood and a desire to respond in a socially acceptable way.

**Well-being and depression.** Meeus (1996) conducted a study on a representative sample of Dutch aged 12 to 24 to test for the relationship between identity status and well-being and depression. He used a local identity measurement developed in Dutch. This study only included interpersonal content areas. He found that across age groups, except for the youngest ones (aged 12-14), committed statuses (Achievement and Foreclosure) scored higher in well-being than uncommitted statuses. For the college group, which is the focus of the present study, identity Achievements scored higher in well-being than did identity Foreclosures, who in turn scored higher than identity Diffusions. Identity Moratoriums, however, scored the lowest. By contrast, identity Moratoriums scored the highest in depression, followed by identity Achievements, Foreclosures and Diffusions. In Cramer’s study (2000), for both males and females, identity Achievement was negatively associated with depression while identity Diffusion was positively associated with depression. Identity Moratorium was positively associated
with depression for male participants only; while identity Foreclosure was negatively associated with depression for female participants only.

In conclusion, youth in committed statuses appear to have better psychological well-being than those in uncommitted statuses in terms of anxiety, depression, and well-being.

**Critics of the Identity Status Paradigm**

Cote and Levine (1988) have pointed out that Marcia’s formulation of Erikson’s work is not totally congruent with Erikson’s original theory. Marcia’s framework can be considered an offshoot that stands on its own with some relationship to Erikson’s work, but it is not isomorphic with that work.

From a eudaimonist point of view, Waterman (1990, 1992, 1993) argued that one’s identity should reflect the innate potentials toward which his/her life is directed. He argued that in Marcia’s framework, however, the achievement of identity does not necessarily imply that one’s potentials be expressed. Marcia’s conceptualization of identity Achievement status assumes that after exploring alternatives and making choices among them, one would deeply care about the chosen identity elements. However, according to Waterman, this is often not the case. Many individuals make life choices based mostly on instrumental considerations rather than on their intrinsic interests. In other words, they are more apt to “finding something to do” rather than “finding someone to be” (Waterman, 1993). He argued that an additional dimension that would reflect one’s efforts to live up to one’s potentials or “true self” should be taken into account in identity
research. He proposed the additional dimension should be labeled “personal expressiveness”, which will be discussed in the next section.

Authenticity and Identity

Recently, there has been increasing attention paid to issues of “true-false self” or “authenticity” and its implications for adolescent development (e.g., Harter, 2002; Harter, Marold, & Whitesell, 1996; Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1997; Menzies & Davidson, 2002; Neff & Harter, 2002; Neff & Harter, 2003; Waterman, 1990; Waterman, 1993; You, Y. G., 2002). The notion of being true to the self has important implications for one’s identity. In fact, a sense of “being the real me” or “authenticity” is not extraneous to Erikson’s conceptualization of ego identity. Instead, it is indeed an essential part of one’s identity. However, empirical attention in identity research has largely neglected the significance of “authenticity” in identity formation. Little is known regarding the extent to which one’s chosen values and goals reflect one’s true self and how one’s true self might be manifested in identity formation. This section discusses theories and empirical findings concerning authenticity and its implications for identity status.

Theoretical Background of Authenticity

Authenticity implies owning one’s inner personal experiences, such as thoughts, feelings, wants, beliefs, or needs, and expressing oneself in a way that is consistent with those inner experiences (Harter, 2002). The concept of authenticity has its root in the ancient Greek philosophy of eudaimonism. Eudaimonism is an ethics theory. It believes
that each individual holds unique potentials or innate talents or aptitudes. This potential is termed “daimon” or “true self”. Daimon is an ideal in the sense of being an excellence. It is comprised of one’s highest potentials for which one strives. The endeavor of eudaimonism calls upon human beings to recognize and live in accordance with their own daimon. As Norton (1976) noted, the “individual is obliged to know and live in truth to his daimon, thereby progressively actualizing an excellence that is his innately and potentially” (p.9). Two principles underlie this theory: “Know your self” and “Become what you are”. Accordingly, an authentic person recognizes and holds the set of values, attitudes, and beliefs that correspond to his/her daimon, and he/she also behaves according to the daimon.

In the field of psychology, the theme of “true self” emerged mostly from the pioneering work of Freudian psychoanalysis. Much of this clinical work focuses on the opposite of the true self, namely, the false self. Psychoanalysts study the way in which false self is developed, especially at an early age, and how it disguises the true self and causes pathological symptoms later in life. True self was described by psychoanalysts, such as Horney (1950) and Winnicott (1965), as the spontaneity of one’s feelings and intentions. Winnicott believed that an infant’s gestures express its spontaneous impulse; the source of the gesture is the true self. When the true self is not validated by caregivers, the false self is formed in a compliant manner in order to cope with environmental demands and to protect the true self. Horney defined the true self as “the alive, unique, personal center of ourselves; the only part that can, and wants to grow” (p.155). “it
produces the ‘reactions of spontaneity’ to our feelings and to our thoughts” (p.157).

Horney believed that it’s the neurotic attempt to actualize one’s idealized self that causes inauthenticity. The idealized self contains many good attributes or expectations that the individual receives from significant others and also believes that he/she ought to fulfill. In order to live up to the idealized self, one’s actions might depart from spontaneity. The result is an “alienation from one’s real self.”

When the false self is developed in such a manner that the true self becomes inaccessible, the consequence may be a loss of personal identity, as described by Winnicott (1965). Some of Winnicott’s patients frequently complained that they “had not started to exist” (p.142). However, according to Horney (1950), when one’s true self is activated, “our real self…enables us to make decisions and assume responsibility for them. It therefore leads to genuine integration and a sound sense of wholeness, oneness…they [those in whom the real self has emerged] function without serious inner conflicts” (p.157).

Taken together, one’s true self could be viewed as one’s intrinsic aptitudes and the spontaneity one feels in his/her behavior. The activation of the true-self brings in a feeling of being alive and a sense of wholeness, which gives rise to a sense of identity. On the contrary, when the true self is not validated by significant others or when one feels suppressed to satisfy others’ expectations or feel obligated to live up to some idealized self-images, the true-self becomes alienated. Its liability is a loss of personal identity.

Thus, it is clear that there is a link between one’s experience of self being true
and the sense of identity, or identity achievement, and between one’s experience of self being false and the loss of identity, or identity diffusion. The next two sections will further discuss how the concern of “real me” is played out in adolescence and how “true-self” is related to the four identity statuses.

**Authenticity in Adolescence**

Although there have been many profound analyses of the notion of true-false self, efforts have rarely been made to empirically examine this construct, especially as it is played out among adolescents. Susan Harter is one of the few scholars who have embarked on the investigation of true/false self-behavior among adolescents. She argues that as adolescents face their developmental tasks, the notion of authenticity is an important concern for them. Harter linked the significance of adolescents’ concern for authenticity to the issue of their emerging multiple selves (Harter, 2002).

With increased cognitive capacities and social demands, adolescents often find that they behave differently in different relationships. For instance, they may be depressed around their parents, cheerful with best friends, and at the same time rebellious toward teachers. There thus are multiple selves created within an adolescent in order to deal with varying role-related demands in an array of relationships. Among the multiple selves, some attributes appear to be contradictory to each other (e.g., quiet vs. rowdy); some of them even cause a feeling of “conflict” or a sense of “clash” in personality within adolescents. Because of the seemingly contradictory attributes, many adolescents thus agonize about which one is the “real me” (Harter, 2002). According to Harter,
adolescents can readily distinguish between behaviors that reflect “true self” and those that reflect “false self”. They seem to be aware of their own genuine or phony behavior. True self-behavior is usually described as “real me inside,” “saying what you really think”; while false self-behavior is described as “being phony”, “saying what you think others want to hear” (Harter, Bresnick, et al., 1997).

Concerns with true and false self-behavior are central to adolescents’ psychosocial well-being. Susan Harter and associates (Harter, et al. 1996; Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1998) have demonstrated that adolescents highest in false self-behavior reported the lowest global self-esteem and were the mostly likely to report depressed symptoms and hopelessness. In addition, when adolescents displayed false self-behavior, they experienced conflict or discomfort inside. Adolescents also reported that they liked their true self-attributes more than false self-attributes. Accordingly, Harter’s research showed that for adolescents, authenticity is a value, or goal. Most young people like to be in touch with and strive to live up to their “true self.”

As the emerging of multiple selves and the concern for true self are normative developmental courses for adolescents, bringing multiple selves into harmony or coherence is the developmental task of adolescence as depicted by Erikson in his concern for identity development. Susan Harter argues that late adolescents are more ready to bring multiple selves into consonance (Harter, 2002). Thus, as adolescents are actively searching for their identities in various life domains, they are also ready to make multiple decisions that will not compromise their sense of authenticity. An interesting question,
therefore, is how significant the true self is in the process of identity formation.

**Authenticity in Identity Formation**

Identity has been described as the commitments one makes across various life domains. As aforementioned, identity theorists and researchers have identified an array of content areas relevant to adolescent identity formation, such as occupation, politics, friendship, and so on. As identity formation takes place, one’s true self is readily to be manifested in the goals and values in each defined content area. The extent to which one’s true self is manifested among the set of content areas can be termed *identity authenticity*.

In the literature of identity research, research conducted on the topic of authenticity is scarce. Waterman (1990, 1993) has argued that personal identity should reflect one’s potential or “true-self.” He bases his perspectives on the ancient Greek philosophy of eudaimonism and maintains that an individual’s sense of identity represents present outcomes of one’s efforts to recognize and live up to one’s daimon or the true self. One’s daimon is manifested when one experiences intensive and in-depth involvement in certain activities and when a feeling of “match” or “right” ensues. He named this kind of match between activity and feeling as “personal expressiveness.” Personal expressiveness can function as a signifier for identity choices, denoting that one has acted on his/her daimon in that particular identity element.

Waterman (1993) also contended that the commitments one makes among life choices may not necessarily reflect a real “match” of one’s daimon. Many of the
individuals select life choices based mostly on instrumental considerations rather than on their intrinsic interests. Because Marcia’s framework does not necessarily imply that the *daimon* is included in the process of identity formation, Waterman proposed personal expressiveness be the third defining dimension of identity in addition to exploration and commitment.

He devised a measure of personal expressiveness by asking individuals to list five activities that are most descriptive of them as a person, then asking the individuals to rate how much they feel each activity gives them a sense of personal expressiveness. The activities individuals list may not be the same as the identity content areas under investigation. For instance, they might list activities such as playing the piano or visiting the nursing home, which are more specific than identity content areas. Identity content areas are more general in nature and cover a broader range of life domains from ideological to interpersonal issues. Hence, the personal expressive construct is to serve as a third construct independent and apart from ego-identity, according to Waterman (1990).

Gordon (1990) conducted a study among 131 college and graduate students to test for the relationship between Marcia’s four identity statuses and Waterman’s personal expressiveness. Gordon used EOM-EIS to measure identity status. The finding demonstrated a strong positive and significant relationship between identity Achievement scores and personal expressiveness (r=.57), and strong and negative relationships between identity Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion scores and personal expressiveness (-.45, -.45, & -.55, respectively). The negative relationships between
Moratorium and Foreclosure with personal expressiveness led the author to suspect that both identity Moratorium and Foreclosure individuals might have inhibited personal expressive behavior. It might be that the lack of following one’s daimon or true self inhibits the attainment of an achieved identity status.

A study conducted by Waterman also showed that identity Achievement was positively and identity Diffusion was negatively correlated with personal expressiveness. However, the correlations between personal expressiveness and identity Moratorium and identity Foreclosure were not significant (as cited in Schwartz, Mullis, Waterman, & Dunham, 2000). In a study conducted by Schwartz and associates (2000), the researchers found that in their first sample, those in the Achievement status scored highest in personal expressiveness; they scored significantly higher than identity Diffusion, but not higher than identity Moratorium and Foreclosure. In their second sample, identity Achievements also scored higher than Foreclosures, Moratoriums, and Diffusions, respectively. And, there was no difference in personal expressiveness between identity Foreclosure and Moratorium. The authors speculated that commitments following exploration, as reflected in identity Achievement status, are more likely to result in higher personal expressiveness. For identity Foreclosures, personal expressiveness may not be a concern. For identity Moratoriums, the insignificant correlation may imply that they simply have not found their daimon yet.

Taken together, the identity Achievement status appears to be more close to one’s daimon (represented by personal expressiveness scores) than other statuses.
Diffusions appeared to be the least in touch with their daimon. Inconsistent findings were obtained among identity Foreclosure and Moratorium statuses. Gordon’s (1990) study indicated that Foreclosures and Moratoriums might not follow their “true-self” in their identity process, although Waterman’s and Schwartz, et al.’s studies (2000) did not find this to be the case.

One limitation of the personal expressiveness construct is its generality. In other words, it does not directly assess the felt authenticity of one’s identity status in a particular domain. Instead, it assesses the authenticity of one’s chosen activities in a global manner. However, it is likely that authenticity varies according to the particular life domain under consideration, as is suggested in Harter’s research on multiple selves (e.g., Harter, Bresnick, et al., 1997). For instance, it may be the case that one’s political identity reflects one’s true self but that one’s occupational identity does not. For this reason, the current study proposes to examine the felt authenticity of individuals’ identity status in particular life domains (termed “identity authenticity.”) Based on Gordon’s findings (1990), it is likely that identity Achievement tends to be felt as authentic, while identity Foreclosure, Diffusion, and Moratorium tends not to be.

So far, this review has mainly focused on individual-level variables that may impact the identity formation processes among adolescents. The next section will consider the influence of group variables such as gender and culture.
III. GENDER, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY

Gender Differences in Identity Status

From the discussion in the last chapter, it is clear that notable gender differences have been found in most of the identity research. For this reason it is worth considering the interaction between gender and identity formation. Many theorists argue that males and females differ in their self-definition (Cross & Madsen, 1997; Gilligan, 1982; Josselson, 1990). Females are said to define their selves primarily through association (or by relating to others). They are described as connected, caring, relationship-oriented, and communal. Males, on the other hand, are said to define themselves through disassociation (or separating themselves from others). They are depicted as independent, autonomous, and focused on individuation and agency.

Most literature on identity formation observes a similar trend. In earlier studies, ego-identity construction was exclusively descriptive of male development. Erikson did not include female subjects in his initial construction of the ego-identity. Later, in response to criticism, Erikson (1968) wrote a separate chapter addressing female’s identity in terms of “inner space”. Erikson argued that women’s somatic design to bear the offspring of a given man determines their identities. He wrote that:

Young women often ask whether they can “have an identity” before they know whom they will marry and for whom they will make a home. Granted that something in the young woman’s identity must keep itself open for the peculiarities of the man to be joined and of the children to be brought up. (p.283)
Erikson believed that a woman’s main anatomic feature, the womb, forms the source of her identity. Therefore, a woman’s identity will remain diffused and will not be fully achieved until her reproductive power is fulfilled. Her pursuit of an occupation and ideology becomes peripheral since all her psychical energy will be directed to finding a mate and subsequently, to be a mother. In other words, while Erikson portrayed a man’s identity in terms of occupation and ideology, he primarily described a woman’s identity in relational terms, namely, as a wife and/or mother.

Since Erikson’s introduction of his theory on female identity four decades ago, the examination of gender differences in identity formation has burgeoned in the field of psychology. Some have argued that boys and girls achieve identity discriminately by confronting different issues and going through different pathways. Boys seek out their self-definitions by settling on a career pathway and developing knowledge and perspectives of the world, in order to achieve a table sense of self as a contributing adult in society. On the contrary, girls seek out their meaningful sense of self in their relationships with significant others. They are often concerned what roles they can fulfill be in relation to others. In other words, a girl’s feeling of success and sense of self derives from how well she can get along with others (Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Hodgson & Fisher, 1979; Jesselson, 1990).

Accordingly, identity researchers have speculated that the content areas of ideological and interpersonal domains may not be equally significant in men and women’s identity formation process. Namely, interpersonal issues are more important to
women while ideological issues are more important to men. Other researchers have also questioned whether the construction of ego-identity might be biased toward women by placing more importance on separateness over connectedness. The four identity statuses may function differently for men and women, especially in terms of their relatively adaptiveness (Archer, 1989, 1993; Josselson, 1990; Kroger, 1997).

**Gender Differences in Identity Content Areas**

A review of the literature concerning gender differences in identity content areas suggests that interpersonal concerns may be more important for female’s identity than for males’ (Marcia, 1993). However, this interpretation considered in relation to cohort and the measurement effects (Patterson, Sochting, & Marcia, 1992). In an attempt to capture female identity formation as postulated by Erikson as “inner space”, Marcia and Friedman (1970) added a content area of “attitudes toward premarital sex” into their identity status interview protocol in addition to occupation, religion, and politics. Some researchers later replaced the sexual attitudes content area with sex-role attitudes (e.g., Matteson, 1972). Empirical findings from studies in the 1970s that used the interview method revealed that there were more females in Achievement or Moratorium status in the sexual attitude or sex-role attitude content areas than were males. In contrast, males tended to be in Foreclosure status more often in these two content areas (Hodgson & Fisher, 1979; Kacerguis & Adams, 1980). On the other hand, in the ideological content areas (occupation, religion, and politics), females tended to be in Foreclose status more often, while males tended to be in Achievement or Moratorium status (Adams & Fitch,

These early findings led researchers to conclude that ideological domains such as occupation and politics might be salient in male identity formation, while sexual or sex-role attitudes might be more salient for female identity formation. In other words, men and women were able to recognize and work on issues that were more important to their self-definitions (namely, be in identity Achievement and/or Moratorium more often), while invest less time and energy on areas that were relatively less relevant to their self-definitions (namely, be in identity Foreclosure and/or Diffusion more often).

However, such difference in male and female identity content areas might be a result of differing social expectations on proper gender roles at that particular historical moment in time. One might argue that women’s lack of identity Achievement in occupational and political areas stemmed from the very limited opportunities they were granted by society. Thus most of their energy and concern went to marital issues that society encouraged them to pursue that time. On the other hand, men were traditionally not encouraged to invest their time and energy in interpersonal relationships. Thus, there was not much in-depth exploration exhibited among male subjects in this area.

However, a more recent study by Pastorino and Dunham (1997) presented similar findings with those conducted in the early era, pointing to low involvement in the ideological content areas among women. They found that males were more likely to explore and commit in politics whereas females were more likely to explore in sex-roles and to commit in religion and dating. In politics, fewer males were in the identity
Diffusion status; in contrast, for dating and sex-roles, fewer females were in the Diffusion status. Kroger (1997) also found that in New Zealand, males tended to represent in identity Achievement status in occupation and politics, while women tended to represent in identity Foreclosure status in these two content areas. Kroger concluded that the lack of societal support for women to pursue alternative identity-defining possibilities in their occupations and their sociopolitical involvement contributed to their decreased identity Achievement and increased Foreclosure among them.

Research conducted after 1985 mostly used paper-and-pencil measurements such as EOM-EIS. Empirical findings using EOM-EIS have not been very consistent. Benson et al. (1992) found that females were more achieved in the interpersonal domain while males were more diffused. Similar findings were reported by Jensen et al. (1998). In their American sample, they found that females were more achieved in the interpersonal domain; males were more diffused in the interpersonal domain. And, females were also found to be more diffused in the ideological domain. A very recent study conducted by Schwartz and Montgomery (2002) found that females were more achieved in both the ideological and interpersonal domains; while males were more diffused in the interpersonal domain. Based on the aforementioned three studies, interpersonal issues seemed to more prominent in women’s identity than in men’s. However, there were also some studies presenting different results. Willemsen & Waterman (1991) found exactly the opposite: females were more diffused in the interpersonal domain, while males were more identity achieved in both the ideological and interpersonal domains. Schwartz and
associates (2000) did not find gender difference.

With regards to identity Foreclosure and Moratorium, Schwartz and Montgomery (2002) found that males were more foreclosed in both the ideological and interpersonal domains. Recall they also found that females scored higher in identity Achievement than did males in both domains. They thus concluded that females were more advanced in identity formation. Jensen and associates (1998) found that males were more foreclosed in the ideological domain. The finding of the higher rate for men to represent in the identity Foreclosure in the ideological domain is contradictory to the general expression saying that ideological issues are more of a male issue. Furthermore, Jensen and associates found that females were more in moratorium in both ideological and interpersonal domains than were men. Cramer (2000) also found that females scored higher in the ideological moratorium than did men. These two studies suggested that in contemporary society, women, in comparison to men, might be experiencing more crises in resolving their identities than did men.

By and large, more recent studies that have used the two methods (interview and paper-and-pencil) have shown that interpersonal issues still seem to have some dominant influences on women’s identity formation. Women were frequently found to score higher on identity Achievement in the interpersonal domain while men scored higher on identity Diffusion in this area. With regards to the ideological domain, men were not as frequently found to be more identity achieved than were women in this area, as it was before. Some studies even found that males were more foreclosed than females (Jensen, et al., 1998;
Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002). The increased exploration in the ideological domain among women might result from the increasing acceptance of nontraditional gender roles and the increasing sociopolitical opportunities for women. As a result of growing array of identity opportunities, there was also some indication that women might be experiencing more identity crises than men, as evidenced in the heightened levels of identity Moratorium among women in both domains (Cramer, 2000; Jensen, et al., 1998). However, inconsistent findings in by means of EOM-EIS suggest that more research is needed in order to further clarify the gender differences found in identity status.

**Relative Adaptiveness of the Identity Statuses**

In speaking of women’s identity being interpersonal in nature, it implies that women’s identity process tends to favor foreclosure, since joining her parents may be important to her sense of self. Moreover, some women may remain diffused until she is married to a man through whom her identity is said to be defined. As a matter of fact, some research findings have indicated that the four identity statuses seem to function differently for men and women.

Earlier studies frequently found that identity Achievement and Foreclosure functioned similarly among women, while identity Achievement and Moratorium functioned similarly among men. Identity Foreclosure individuals resembled identity Achievement individuals in many psychological and social variables for women, such as self-esteem, responses to social pressure, and Field-independence (Schenkel, 1975; Toder & Marcia, 1973). Yet, for men, identity Moratorium individuals seemed to resemble
identity Achievement individuals in such outcomes as Locus of Control and decision making styles (Marcia, 1980; Waterman & Waterman, 1974).

Marcia (1980) argued that the differences might be due to the lower degree of societal support women receive in their identity development. Thus, for women, the experience of identity moratorium may render more threat than promise that comes along. As a result, for women, identity Foreclosure may function more adaptively than identity Moratorium. It also implies that when society provides equal opportunities and support for men and women, both genders may follow the same pathways.

In comparison to earlier studies, recent research has found fewer gender differences in response patterns, as concluded by Matteson (1993) and Pattern and associates (1992) in their empirical reviews. In Cramer’s study (2000), she found that identity Foreclosure was negatively correlated with depression for women. For men, identity Moratorium was positively correlated with depression and anxiety. It suggested that in contemporary society, identity Foreclosure functioned more adaptively for women than for men. Yet, women were also freer from the detrimental effects of being in moratorium than were men. In contrast, men were especially distressed when they were in the indecisive status of identity Moratorium.

In fact, Cramer (2000) also found an unexpected response pattern for women who were in moratorium. In her study, she found that no personality measure significantly associated with females who were in identity Moratorium status. She speculated that her female subjects struggled with more developmental issues than the
male subjects did. Kroger (1997) noted that identity concerns among women involve not
only decisions within content areas, but also questions on how to balance among
competing commitments while at the same time considering the implications for
significant others. Archer (1989) thus concludes that women may face a more complex
task in identity formation than do men.

In addition to issues discussed above, most of the gender comparisons, however,
did not account for the education level of men and women. Some scholars argued that
some gender differences stem solely from the fact that women were generally less
educated than were men (Archer, 1993). Low social economic status was found to be
associated with lower in identity formation, such as higher identity Diffusion, higher
identity Foreclosure, and lower identity Achievement (e.g., Abraham, 1986; Markstrom-
Adams & Adams, 1995). Therefore, future studies should take education levels into
account.

**Culture and Identity Development**

Although research on identity has been rich, very little of it has touched on the
significance of culture and its influence on identity formation. Most of the identity studies
have been conducted with populations representing mainstream U.S. culture. Only a
small number of studies have been conducted in other cultural contexts (e.g., Abraham,
1986; Meeus, 1996; Rotheram-Borus, 1989; Streitmatter, 1988; Taylor & Oskay, 1995).
For Erikson, human development is a constant interaction between the individual and the
environment. The growth of ego and the formation of identity are deeply grounded in a given culture. He posited that as a child grows up, it is important for him/her to be aware that his/her individual way of mastering experience is in accordance with the life plan offered in his/her culture. The coincidence of one’s physical maturity and the attached cultural meanings is important for the ego to grow step by step into a well-organized whole within a social reality (Erikson, 1968). Cultural meanings of maturity and ways of mastering experiences vary from culture to culture. However, as mentioned above, the cultural aspect of identity has been largely neglected in empirical research.

Culture is a very complex phenomenon. It includes all the attainments and activities of a specific group of people in a specific time period and space (Triandis, 1980). Given the complexity of human activities, it is difficult to define the meaning of culture. Different writers have offered different definitions tapping different aspects of this construct. Herskovits (1948) gave a succinct definition as “Culture is the man-made part of the environment” (p.17). It includes both objective (e.g., tools, roads) and subjective (e.g., beliefs, goals, roles) aspects of human activities. Those aspects, however, are not separated; rather, they are interconnected to form a coherent whole. Each culture provides its members with unique sets of values, goals, and beliefs, and also ways of thinking, perceiving, processing information, and behaving.

Anthropologists have long acknowledged the importance of culture in shaping one’s perception, emotion, and behavior (Triandis, 2000). One’s psychological process reflects one’s cultural belief system, thus a single psychological construct might entail
different meanings and significance between cultures and might not be fully compatible across cultures. Because each culture is unique, focus should be put on investigating the specific cultural meanings of psychological constructs.

While anthropologists have for decades been devoted to the field of cultural studies, psychologists have only recently begun to show concern for cultural differences in human development. An increasing interest in cross-cultural comparison has burgeoned in recent years. Cross-cultural psychologists are interested in testing for the generaliability of psychological laws to different cultural contexts. They believe that although cultures may differ in form and content and direct their members to particular ways of adaptation, human beings also have much in common. For any given psychological construct, cultural differences may reflect the unique ways of adaptation that are deemed culturally appropriate. Thus, cross-cultural research continues to seek to understand the diversities that are unique to specific cultures as well as the universals that humans share as a species (Triandis, 2000).

**Cultures and the Self**

One of the important issues that have garnered much attention from cultural psychologists is the different ways the self is understood in cultures. The self has taken a central role in psychology as a key variable in explaining cultural differences in human development (Okazaki, 2002). One clear distinction that distinguishes cultures, especially between western and eastern cultures, is how the self is defined in relation to others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2000). Theorists have offered different models to
explain variations in the self and its relation to others. Perhaps the most influential theory is offered by Markus and Kitayama (1991). In an attempt to challenge the universal view of self, Markus and Kitayama analyzed many scholars’ work about cultural differences and proposed two very different views of the self existing primarily between the West and the East, namely the independent self-construal and the interdependent self-construal.

It is believed that Western cultures, mainly those of North America and Western Europe, define the self in terms of separateness. The self is seen as separate from others with its unique attributes. The self is autonomous in that it is the dynamic center of one’s awareness, emotion, judgement, and actions. It stands independent from the context and maintains a distinctive whole against the context. In contrast, Eastern cultures, many of which are in Asia, define the self in terms of connectedness. The self is not regarded as a distinct and separate whole from its context; instead, it is defined by the context. The self is viewed through its social relationships. Within a given social relationship, all participants are interdependent with one another. No one is seen as standing outside of this relationship. The self is thus not regarded as autonomous in that one recognizes that one’s behavior, to a large extent, is determined and contingent on what he/she perceives how he/she is defined in the relationship and what others’ thoughts and feelings are in the relationships. So, in Eastern cultures, one’s attributes are less important in determining one’s behavior (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2000).

*Self-construal and Identity Status*

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), cultural differences related to
whether the self is defined as independent or interdependent reflect the goals of that culture. The pursuit of cultural goals has crucial implications for one’s identity formation. The independent self-construal is presumably shaped in the individualistic cultures. In individualistic cultures, the focal is the individual, and the goals are to be independent from others, to discover and express one’s self-attributes, and to assert one’s uniqueness. Within this type of culture, a self-seeking attempt, such as identity exploration, is much promoted. Being clear about one’s beliefs and being assertive are also valued. Thus, the identity process that advocates self-exploration and/or firm commitment following exploration, as reflected in such as identity Moratorium and identity Achievement, is thus favorable. On the other hand, the identity process that lets others define the self, such as identity Foreclosure, or that leaves the self largely undefined, such as identity Diffusion, is likely to be debased. As a result of the high levels of self-exploration, individuals are likely to have clear knowledge about their self-attributes, likes, and dislikes, including those they feel like their “real me” and those not feeling like “real me”. Thus, it is speculated that the freedom to explore and express the self and the high levels of understanding of self-attributes will in turn result in higher levels of true-self being expressed in identities.

In contrast, in collectivist cultures, the interdependent self-construal is predominant. In this type of culture, the focus is the relationship in a social group. Cultural goals do not emphasize individuality, but interconnection among members in the relationships. To a large extent, it is not self-attributes but role duties defined in the
relationship that determine human behavior (Suh, 2002). Thus, a self-seeking attempt such as identity exploration is less likely to be emphasized; rather, it would be discouraged. Individuals are much more encouraged to follow group norms, defined role duties, and the authority figures’ desires as the guidance for their behavior. Hence, identity process that advocates self-exploration, such as identity Achievement and/or identity Moratorium, is unlikely to prevail in this type of culture. Instead, identity process that allows room to connect to others, such as identity Foreclosure and identity Diffusion, is more preferred. As a result of the limited self-exploration, individuals usually hold vague ideas about their self-attributes, likes, and dislikes. What is “real me” may also be ambiguous to individuals. In addition, because individuals’ behavior is usually guided by group norms and role duties, personal preference is largely suppressed. As a result, people might feel that their “true-self” is less expressed in the identities that they form.

One important dimension of identity development is the process of exploration. Theoretically, adolescents are assumed to freely explore and try out various identities and then make decisions among them. Some psychologists, however, have argued that this model is based on viewing the self as being separate from others. For adolescents whose cultures value a sense of self as being connected to others, the free spirits of exploration and commitment may not be supported. Their identity crises may resolve into simply following the plans or expectations that their society prepares for them (Adams & Marshall, 1996). Thus, identity Foreclosure might be a preferred and prevalent mode and can be considered adaptive. Its adaptive function could be manifested in higher identity
Foreclosure scores as well as positive relationships to psychological or social consequences.

Although classifying cultures into these two categories might be a useful tool to examine and interpret differences in human behavior existing among cultures, many scholars caution not to overgeneralize (Neff, 2003; Wainryb, 1997). Independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal are not mutually exclusive of each other. Actually, studies have revealed that these two types of self-construal actually co-exist in collectivist as well as individualistic cultures (Miller, 2002; Singelis et al., 1999). A recent meta-analysis by Oyserman and associates (2002) showed that differences in independent and interdependent self-construals between individualistic and collectivist countries were not as large as usually believed. In addition, the differences did not hold true for certain groups, such as Latino and African-Americans, and the effect sizes varied across Eastern countries. Therefore, it may be the case that identity processes within individualistic and collectivistic cultures are more similar than one might assume, and a large amount of empirical research will be needed to determine the extent of differences and similarities.

Below is a review of the cross-cultural studies in the area of identity research with a discussion of the aforementioned issues.

**Cross-cultural Findings on Identity Status**

Cross-cultural studies in the field of ego-identity have not been many. Some of them did not focus on identity status (e.g., McClain, 1975; Ochse & Plug, 1986). The
majority of them were conducted to compare American whites with other ethnic groups in the United States or with youth in other countries as a contrast of differing sociocultural influences in an attempt to test for the universality of the Eriksonian epigenetic view of human development. Below is a review of the existing cross-cultural studies applying the identity status paradigm.

**Studies Comparing Ethnic Groups in the U.S.**

Psychologists in the U.S. have been concerned that members of different ethnic groups may differ in their identity process (e.g., Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990). A general picture of the empirical findings was that ethnic minority youth tended to score higher on identity Foreclosure, especially in the ideological domain, than did their white counterparts.

In 1972, Hauser made an effort to research this topic. He conducted a 3-year longitudinal study to compare changes of self-images among 22 black and 22 white male college students. He found that black students’ self-images were more fixed in content and integration, and, to some extent, more structurally simple compared to white students. Hauser thus concluded that the configuration of identity among Black students was more foreclosed than that among whites.

Applying EOM-EIS, Abraham (1986) conducted a study to compare 157 Mexican-American and 684 Anglo-American high school students. A discriminant function analysis on mean scores, after controlling for SES effect, indicated that the only difference appeared in ideological Foreclosure, with Mexican-Americans scoring higher
than Anglo-Americans. Markstrom-Adams and Adams (1995) also reported a similar finding. They compared among 38 Mexican-American, 36 African-American, 19 American Indian, and 30 Angle-American high school students, and found that, after controlling for SES effect, Angle-American students scored significantly lower in ideological Foreclosure than did each of the other three ethnic groups.

Another study by Abraham (1983) using OM-EIS (assessing only the ideological domain) revealed that Mexican-American high school students scored higher on identity Foreclosure and lower on identity Achievement than did white students to an extent that approached significance. Yet Anglo-Americans scored significant higher than Mexican-Americans on identity Diffusion. Applying OM-EIS, Rotheram-Borus (1989) reported that American white high school students scored significantly higher on identity Moratorium than did non-whites.

A study conducted by Streitmatter (1988) among a younger population (7th-8th graders) also revealed similar findings. She compared among 367 white, Latino, black, Asian, and other ethnicity students, and reported that white students scored significantly lower on identity Foreclosure in both ideological and interpersonal domains than did non-white students as a whole.

More recently, with a different identity measurement, the EIPQ - that measures exploration and commitment dimensions separately- Brailsford (1999) found that for the ideological domain, white students scored higher on exploration dimension than did black students; while black students scored higher on commitment dimension than did white
students. Forbes (2000), however, did not find significant differences in identity statuses among 82 black, 120 Latino, and 98 white college students, after controlling for SES effect.

Based on the literature reviewed above, it appears that the identity status that most clearly varied among ethnic groups was the status of Foreclosure, especially in the ideological domain. Other than that, the studies showed that there was only very minor difference between ethnic groups related to identity process. It is argued that the different cultural goals inherent in different types of cultures may contribute to the differing prevalence of identity Foreclosure. Minority groups in the U.S. are believed to live in a sociocultural context that is more collectivist in nature compared to whites. The collectivist cultures value interpersonal connection over being independent from others. Others play important roles in one’s self-definitions. Thus, it is likely that connecting to parental values as a source of self-definition is generally quite acceptable.

However, it is also possible that this difference might actually reflect the unique sociocultural circumstances in which the minority students lived. Minority youth generally face a unique cultural identity issue. That is, they need to develop a dual-identity concerning their own culture as well as the mainstream culture. Literature in the field of acculturation has widely documented that immigrant parents are often concerned that their children will lose their cultural heritage by being too Americanized, and thus put more constraints on their children’s adoption of mainstream values (Baptiste; 1993; Chiu, Feldman, & Rosenthal, 1992). Parents of minority youth thus might intentionally
socialize their children adopt their cultural heritages, particularly concerning values in the areas of career, religion, or life styles. Given the analyses presented above, how identity statuses, especially the status of Foreclosure, are associated with psychological or social outcomes warrants more investigation.

Unfortunately, this issue has been only minimally researched. One study by Owen (1984) compared identity Achievement and Foreclosure statuses among Anglo-American and Cuban-American college students. Owen found that the identity Achievement status was associated with higher psychological development for both cultural groups. However, identity Foreclosure status was associated with higher psychological development for Cuban-Americans than for Anglo-Americans. A study conducted by Rotheram-Borus (1989) among high school students of different ethnic backgrounds, however, did not detect significant ethnic differences in the associations between identity status and behavioral problems. Thus, with limited evidence, identity Foreclosure seemed to be more adaptive for minority youth than for their Anglo-American peers; while identity Achievement was positively relevant to both cultural groups.

In conclusion, an important question then arises: it is not clear whether the preference of identity Foreclosure is due to cultural value differences (such as valuing connectedness over separation) or is simply a reflection of socio-economic circumstances confronting minority groups in relation to the mainstream (such as acculturation stress). Studies that compared Americans and youth in other countries are likely to eliminate the
confounding effects associated with minority groups concerning acculturation. In addition, most of the studies were conducted among high school students. There were very few conducting among college students. As identity crises come into its significance the most during college years, it could be expected that more differences might be emerging when studying college students.

Cross-National Studies

Findings from cross-national studies of identity process have not been consistent. The results not only reflected differences in cultural values inherent to the two broader cultural types of collectivism and individualism, but also the unique historical, political, and economic environment in the given societies.

An early effort was made by McClain (1975), who investigated resolution rates of the first six developmental tasks detailed by Erikson (1968) among seven cultural groups (Belgian, German, American-White, American-Black, French, and Spaniard). Although identity status was not assessed in this study, an examination of the crisis resolution rate of the fifth stage, identity achievement versus role confusion, indicated that American-White, German, and Belgian adolescents had higher resolution rates (identity achievement) than did American-Black, French, and Spaniard. McClain argued that different cultures provided different levels of support for the developing adolescents. He pointed out that the different economic environments among the 6 cultural groups might account for the variations. The three cultural groups that scored higher on identity resolution, had better economic environments than did the other three cultural groups. He
also proposed that perhaps high economic security offered more opportunities for adolescents to anticipate their future roles.

Jensen and associates (1998) compared 56 Norwegian and 1498 American college students. They found that Norwegian participants scored significantly lower than did American participants in all identity statuses for both ideological and interpersonal domains. Another study with a new set of Norwegians ($n = 58$) fully replicated the results (Stegarud, et al., 1999). The authors argued that Norway’s unique social, political, and economic structure might contribute to the more moderate identity exploration and commitment experienced by its youth. The economic system of Norway is characterized as a mixed liberal welfare state, which stresses the equality of individuals, with individuality being largely downplayed. Children are told very clearly not to be too different from others and that no one is special. The moderate exploration and commitment reflected youth’s adaptation to this social climate.

In Taylor and Oskay’s study (1995), which compared Turkish and American college students, American participants scored higher than did Turkish participants on 6 out of the 8 scales in EOM-EIS. The statistic significances of the mean differences between Americans and Turkish appeared in three of them: American youth scored higher in identity Moratorium and Foreclosure in the ideological domain, and identity Achievement in the interpersonal domain. The authors argued that the more controlling parenting styles might partially account for the lower levels of identity Moratorium and Achievement among Turkish. In addition, the restrictive parenting in Turkey might be
undergoing some changes; thus, Turkish youth legitimately felt less identity foreclosed when the parental control levels appeared similar in the two nations.

Portes and associates (2000) used the EIPQ (the Ego Identity Process Questionnaire) to compare among 50 Colombian youth, 187 American middle and early adolescents, and 59 Haitian youth. SES, gender, and age were included into research design. They found that Americans and Haitians scored significantly higher on both exploration and commitment dimensions than did Colombians. In addition, a comparison of identity status distribution indicated that younger Colombians were more likely to occupy a Diffused identity status; while older Colombians and Haitians were more likely to occupy a Foreclosed status. Meanwhile, Americans were more likely to occupy an Achieved status. The authors argued that in less individualistic societies, identity development could be considered “achieved” when identity Foreclosure was adopted in light of the limited options provided by the societies.

The four studies reviewed above compared Americans with youth from countries such as Turkey, Norway, and Columbia. These countries are relatively less individualistic compared to the United States. In Hofstede’s study (1980), the U.S. scored the highest in the individualism dimension. Turkey, Columbia, and Span were among the lower half of the 39 participating countries. The findings showed that identity processes of exploration and commitment were both more supported in the U.S. than in other countries. Both cultural goals and the politic and economic environments in the countries contributed to the differences. Cultural goals of being independent and unique as well as the free market
nature of the American society provide opportunities and encouragement for extended identity exploration and firm commitment. These factors were reflected in the high identity Achievement scores in the study reviewed above.

Brione’s study (1998) showed that in the personal domain (career goals, sense of self, and long-term life goals), there were more youth in the U.S. characterized as “explored” (identity Achievement & identity Moratorium) than in China. The reverse was true for “non-explored” statuses (identity Foreclosure & identity Diffusion). In the world view domain (religion, morality, and politics), Chinese were more often in identity Moratorium and Diffusion than were Americans; while Americans from Miami were more often in identity Achievement than were the Chinese. In the interpersonal domain (friendship, belonging to groups, gender-role, and sexuality), more Chinese were in identity Moratorium and Diffusion than were Americans; while Americans were more often identity Achievement than were the Chinese. However, Americans from Nebraska were more identity Foreclosed than were the Chinese.

Brione’s study also revealed that Americans were more frequently in identity Achievement than were Chinese. However, the high prevalence of identity Moratorium and Diffusion in content areas concerning both interpersonal and ideological issues among Chinese warrants more investigation. The high Moratorium and Diffusion might reflect one nature of its society: the rapid economic growth. China has experienced considerable social change since it started to receive Western thoughts and technologies (Terrill, 2003). The social changes occurring in China might have partly contributed to
the indecision and confusion among youth. Nevertheless, the low level of commitment might also be a feature of the collectivist culture in China – that is, in a collectivist culture, one’s self-definitions are more context-dependent. Chinese might be quite reluctant to make any firm commitment, but rather tended to keep it open for a particular context to be encompassed. However, these speculations warrant more investigation, especially among Chinese cultural groups, such as Taiwan.

To the author’s knowledge, only one cross-national study, conducted by Taylor and Oskay (1995), has examined the psychological or social consequences of identity statuses. The results revealed that for both Americans and Turkish, ideological and interpersonal identity Achievement was positively correlated with self-esteem while identity Diffusion was negatively correlated with self-esteem. However, the identity Foreclosure status in both ideological and interpersonal domains was negatively correlated with self-esteem for Americans only. Foreclosure was not correlated with self-esteem for Turkish. In terms of Moratorium, ideological Moratorium was negatively correlated with self-esteem in both cultures; while interpersonal Moratorium was negatively correlated with Americans only. This study indicated that Foreclosure might be considered a negative self-image for Americans, but more acceptable for Turkish.

A further examination of the studies reviewed above revealed that most of them failed to take into account of important confounding demographic variables, such as SES, gender, and age. Thus, future studies should take them into consideration in order to clarify further the cultural effects on identity formation.
Taken together, although the cross-national findings are inconsistent, American youth seemed to be more likely to be identity Achieved than were youth from other countries. This might be a result of the individualistic cultural values that emphasize exploration and firm commitment. On the contrary, countries that did not support both processes scored lower in both dimensions as revealed in the Norwegian studies. Countries that encouraged following social norms and familial values might tend to be high in identity Foreclosure, especially regarding personal goals and values, as revealed in the findings on Colombians. In addition, some nature of the society, such as changing socioeconomic environment, may also render more confusion on the part of youth, as revealed in the high rates of identity Moratorium and Diffusion among Chinese. Finally, with limited evidence, identity Foreclosure appeared to be less adaptive for Americans as it was for youth in Turkey.

**Gender and Culture Interactions**

The research examining gender and identity, as well as the research examining culture and identity, can both be understood in terms of differences in self-construal. As discussed earlier, females are believed to have a more connected sense of self (or interdependent self) compared to men who are believed to have more separate sense of self (or independent self). Similarly, many researchers (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991) argue that individuals from collectivistic cultures have a more interdependent sense of self than those from individualistic cultures, who are believed to have more independent sense of self, and this model has been used to explain cross-cultural differences in
identity formation. Thus, an interesting question arises: Does culture or gender have a greater effect? For instance, in terms of an independent sense of self, are Western males higher than Western females, and are these in turn higher than Eastern males, and Eastern males higher than Eastern females? Or, do males have higher independent self-construal than do females regardless of culture, with Western males scoring the highest and Eastern females scoring the lowest? There are a few studies that address this issue.

A study conducted by Miller (2002) among college students in the U.S. indicated that Asian-American men and women scored higher in interdependent self-construal than did American-White men and women, and the cultural main effect was significant when controlling for gender. With respect to within cultural differences, White women scored significantly higher than did White men. However, in contrast to expectations, Asian-American men scored significantly higher in interdependent self-construal than did Asian-American women. A study conducted by White (2003) among college students in the U.S. and the Philippines also revealed that Philippine men and women scored higher in the trait of Concern for Others than did American men and women. With regard to within cultural differences, as expected, American women scored higher than did American men. However, no gender difference was found in the Philippine sample. These results suggest that both gender and culture are playing a role in self-construal, but the relative impact of gender versus culture is still unclear.

Unfortunately, most of the cross-cultural research on identity does not pay much attention to the simultaneous impact of culture and gender, or possible gender and
cultural interactions. One exception to this is a study conducted by Schwartz and Montgomery (2002), which examined the influence of gender and acculturation on identity formation. They found that both generation and gender had significant impact on identity status. However, the interaction effect was not significant. In addition, there were more significant univariate effects on identity formation for gender than for generation. The authors thus concluded that the overall impact of gender-related experience was greater than the impact of culture-related experience on identity formation. However, it is clear that more research needs to be conducted that explores the impact of both gender and culture on identity formation.

Another important consideration to take into account when examining cultural influences on identity formation is the increased blending of cultures occurring across the world. In particular, many collectivist cultures are receiving an influx of Western thoughts and values as a result of increasing industrialization. New ideas that youth receive may lead them to cast doubts on their old, traditional ways. As a result, an increasing identity Moratorium may ensue among youth at the juncture of societal transformations. For this reason, this study proposes to examine identity formation in Taiwan, a culture currently undergoing significant cultural and economic transformations.

**Adolescent Identity Development in Taiwan**

Under the strong influence of Chinese culture, Taiwanese culture is often categorized as collectivist (Hofstede, 1980). Interpersonal connections usually precede
personal goals. Many scholars have argued that the Chinese collectivist mentally is based on the ideology of the family as a unit stressed in Confucianism (Fei, 1993; Tu, 1985; Yang, 1992). The importance of the Chinese family in shaping its members’ personalities lies not only in the quality of interactions among members, which operates through early memory, but also in the principles of relationships that the child gradually learns and internalizes, which later become the prototypes for all other relationships that he/she will encounter in the society. The social behavior of Chinese people is said to be an enlargement of his/her interpersonal relations within the family (Cheng, 1992; Yang, 1992). Others thus become part of the individual’s personality structure. Interactions are usually determined by the roles and duties associated with the two persons in the dyad given a situation. Thus, the nature of the interdependent sense of self is characterized as being fluctuating and context-dependent as well as hierarchical. It is argued that in Chinese culture, the notion of “relationship” should be always included in a sense of self.

Although Taiwan is regarded as a collectivist culture, the society has undergone significant changes given its special geological, historical, and political background. Since the arrival of the Nationalist (Kuomintang) party in Taiwan from Mainland China over 50 years ago, Taiwan has been striving to catch up with the mainstream world and to demonstrate its competitive power. It has increasingly opened its society to the world in order to remain socioeconomically competitive as a means to exert greater political influences. Besides industrialization, Taiwan has incorporated many Western thoughts and values. The country’s rapid industrialization, modernization, and Westernalization
have certainly impacted Taiwanese society. Social systems - such as in the areas of education, politics, economics, health - have experienced a considerable amount of change and reform.

Although outward changes have been many, some scholars continued to argue that no matter how many outward changes are made in Taiwan’s social systems, the core values and traditions of Chinese culture, such as familialism, filial piety, and respect for elders will not change significantly with respect to hierarchical roles and interpersonal connections (Fei, 1993; Wang & Hsueh, 2000). However, as these core elements interact with some new Western ideas, Taiwan is creating a new culture that represents the interaction of the two (Huang, 1995). In a recent study, Lin (1998) interviewed Taiwanese mothers of elementary students and found three sets of parenting beliefs: those reflecting Chinese traditions (such as belief control), those coming from the West (such as encouraging autonomy), and those blending these two (such as teaching children based on the beliefs that children are capable to learn by themselves).

**Cultural Significance of Identity Content Areas**

Some scholars have argued that the significance of different content areas in identity formation differs from culture to culture (Bosma, 1993; Meeus, 1996). For instance, some content areas in a youth’s identity development may be more relevant in some cultures than in the others. A review of the content areas in the EOM-EIS suggested that the eight content areas as some basic identity issues are appropriate in Chinese culture as well. The following section will present and discuss these areas’ cultural
meaning in terms of identity formation in a Chinese-based society.

The significance of the four basic ideological issues, career, politics, religion, and life style, in Taiwanese youth’s life can be understood in light of the influence of traditional Chinese philosophy, especially Confucianism.

Traditional Chinese philosophy is basically “ethicoreligious” in nature (Tu, 1985). This religiousness can be seen in many important Chinese philosophies, such as Confucianism and Taoism. The central idea in the most influential philosophy, Confucianism, is that there exists an ultimate “Tao” (way, literally) in the universe, namely, the Tao of Heaven (Tien Tao). Every human being’s purpose is to understand and live out this “Tao”. Hence, the basic idea of human existence in Confucianism is actually rooted in a religious-like belief.

Confucianism also believes the self has its full resources to appreciate and reach the Tao of Heaven, which requires diligent self-cultivation. As the idea of Tao is quite abstract, Confucius believed that the Tao could be made real via one’s relations to others. It is through participating in social relationships that one is able to cultivate the self and face up the reality of who he/she is. Hence, the interdependent sense of self in Chinese collectivist culture is based on the acknowledgement that others are essential to not only the self that is to be defined, but also for the self that is to be cultivated.

Confucianism has been particularly famous of its comprehensive and systematic ideology regarding interpersonal relationships. There are detailed descriptions of principles and ways of behaving in different relationships. One of the most important
relationships detailed in Confucianism is the dyad between ruler and the ruled. Being a government official was deemed the most ideal career in ancient Chinese society. Its privilege not only glorifies the family name to the uttermost, while simultaneously successfully fulfills one’s role as a son, but is also deemed the most successful path to achieving the Tao of Heaven as compared to other roles and relationships. The ancient educational system was tailored to assist young men in becoming an official while largely ignoring other career choices (Wen, 1989). To pursue a career mostly meant becoming a government official, which coincided with the pursuit of cultivating the self.

From the above analyses, it is clear that there is actually not a clear distinction between religion, career, politics, and life style. Moreover, their significance is diminished to serve the purpose of the Tao of Heaven, which is primarily carried out through interpersonal interactions. Interpersonal relationships are important and prominent because it is a means or an avenue to pursuing the ultimate Tao of Heaven. Ideological issues, on the other hand, are hardly important on its own right in defining the self. Their significance is pretty much hidden behind one’s work toward building social interactions. Thus, some researchers once believed that the ideological issues were not important for Taiwanese youth’s identity formation. Some researchers even took out some content areas as they studied identity formation (e.g., Chang, 1998).

However, the rapid economic growth and the Westernization of the sociopolitical arena in Taiwan may have changed the relationship between interpersonal and ideological issues. For instance, today, ideological issues are much more important than there were in
traditional Chinese society. Interpersonal relations may now represent a means not for
pursuing the ultimate Tao, but for achieving ideological attainments. In fact, Yang (1992)
has pointed out that one of the important features of Chinese social behavior is the
“relationship orientation,” denoting how relationship is viewed as a resource or social
capital for one’s social gains.

The changes of significance of some content areas in Taiwan society as a result
of social changes are presented below.

**Social Changes in Identity Content Areas**

In Taiwan society, adolescents historically have not been granted much
autonomy and freedom. They are mostly constrained to organize their life around schools
and the family, and are encouraged to follow social norms rather than to create their own
personal goals. Recently, however, significant changes can be observed in many identity
content areas, such as politics, religion, and sex-role concepts. It once was believed that
Taiwanese youth had less concern with politics than did Americans (Chang, 1998).
However, in recent years, Taiwan’s political stance in relation to China has become a hot
issue. Young people have become more and more interested in politics, because they are
concerned more and more about their national identity. They have been very active in
voting whenever there is an election. Political candidates often devote much energy to
attract young people in order to increase their votes. Thus, it is expected that there will be
more exploration in the political content areas currently than before.

Sex-role is another area that might have earned more exploration. The gender-
roles of the Taiwanese have been very traditional and rigid with males assuming a higher status and females the lower status (Lee & Jong, 1996). However, in recent years, a gender-role revolution movement has been opened up by many feminist scholars trained in the West (e.g., Liu, 2000). This movement has brought forth many reforms in the educational system. Many educational conferences, materials, and other forms of educational propaganda have been carried out to teach students the equity of men and women (e.g., Taoyuan Bureau of Education, 1999). Therefore, it is expected that youth in Taiwan will also experience more exploration in this content area.

Religion has not been a very salient issue for most Taiwanese youth, partly because religious practices, mostly Taoism, have been interwoven into many social conventions and family traditions for a large part of Taiwanese families. However, in the recent decade, there were many Buddhists who used to live in isolation to society starting to teach their doctrine to people living in the modern society. Frequently, some social events associated with them would be reported in the mass media (e.g., TV, newspaper). It is thus speculated that more and more people have begun to be aware of religious issues. Hence, it is expected that youth in Taiwan will also experience exploration in their religious identities, including not only Buddhism, but also others such as Christianity, which actually has longer history in influencing a modern Taiwanese society while also having a considerable number of believers.

Below are reviewed empirical studies in Taiwan with consideration of gender differences.
Empirical Findings in Ego-identity Status

How do contemporary Taiwanese college students experience their identity crises? Chang (1998) investigated occupational identity status among 938 junior college students and found that there were more men and women in Foreclosure status compared to other identity statuses, and there were even more women in this status. There were more men in Achievement status. There were more women in Moratorium status. Chang’s study indicated that Taiwanese were still very traditional in their occupational choices despite of high industrialisation. Most men and women still followed their parents’ plans, women especially so. It implies that though men and women are both not encouraged to make their own occupational decisions, women are especially subject to this situation.

A study conducted by Huang (2002) among 617 college students showed that social activity involvement significantly predicted ego identity statuses in the interpersonal domain, but not in the ideological domain. More social activities were associated with higher interpersonal identity Achievement while fewer social activities were associated with higher interpersonal identity Diffusion. Moreover, men scored higher in ideological Achievement and interpersonal Foreclosure than did women. A study conducted by Yang and Lin (1998) among 514 college students also found that males had higher ideological and interpersonal Achievement scores than did females. Males also had higher interpersonal Foreclosure than did females. Females had higher ideological and interpersonal Moratorium than did males. These two studies together with
Changs’ (1998) indicate that men were more likely to be in Achievement status than were women, especially in the ideological domain. Women, on the other hand, were more likely to be in an indecisive status, namely Moratorium.

Perhaps Taiwan society was more supportive of men’s identity development, compared to women’s. It resulted in higher identity Achievement in men than in women. High Moratorium in contemporary Taiwanese women implies that women may be experiencing a prolonged period of struggle among identity alternatives. Social change with regard to gender-role discussed above may contribute to the high Moratorium scores in women. As Kroger (1997) and Archer (1989) noted, women’s identity development may be more complicated than that of men, because women tend to make choices in consideration of their implications for significant others. Taiwanese women may experience a similar crisis.

In terms of identity Foreclosure status, Huang’s (2002) study indicated that males were more often in interpersonal Foreclosure, while Yang and Lin’s study indicated that females were more often in interpersonal Foreclosure. The causes of these contradictory findings are unknown. In collectivist cultures, interpersonal connections are important issues for both men and women. Interpersonal relationships in Taiwanese culture are not merely a social norm or an orientation, but also an important means toward success and achievement. Thus, the antecedents of interpersonal Foreclosure for males and for females might be different. The higher interpersonal Foreclosure among men may indicate that they are less willing to question the beneficial status they enjoy in
interpersonal relationships. For females, interpersonal Foreclosure may reflect their close connection with their parents, since parental attachment has been demonstrated to be especially relevant to female’s identity development, but not to males’ in Western society (e.g., Enright, Lapsley, Drivas, & Fehr, 1980; Perosa, Perosa, & Tam, 1996).

As shown in cross-national findings discussed earlier, individuals from societies that support identity development tend to score high in identity Achievement. In a similar manner, men in Taiwan also score higher in identity Achievement than do women presumably as a result of the greater support that men received. In addition, interpersonal concerns were demonstrated to be more relevant for women’s identity in Western literature; however, with limited evidence, the pattern is less pronounced in Taiwan. Perhaps, for a collectivist culture such as Taiwan, interpersonal concerns are important for both men and women, thus the gender differences in interpersonal identity issues may not be as significant as those in an individualistic culture.
IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

Overview

This study will examine the relationships between identity, authenticity, and psychological well-being, as well as considering how gender and cultural variables might impact these relationships. To achieve these ends, the study will examine identity processes among college-aged men and women in Taiwan and the United States. Given that there have been very few studies addressing these issues, the present study will be exploratory in nature. Tentative hypotheses will be advanced regarding cross-cultural differences in study variables. Because of the confusing and inconsistent findings regarding gender and identity, however, and the sparse research examining gender, culture, and identity simultaneously, no specific hypotheses are advanced regarding expected differences due to gender or due to gender/culture interactions. However, all statistical analyses will explore possible group differences. Moreover, because cultural differences may be confounded by participants’ SES (Social Economic Status), all analysis will control for SES variation.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: What are the differences in identity status scores (Achievement, Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion) among college students in Taiwan and the U.S.?

Hypothesis:

1. American students will score higher in ideological and interpersonal identity
Achievement than do Taiwanese students. Taiwanese students will score higher in ideological and interpersonal identity Diffusion and Foreclosure than do American students. No hypothesis is made regarding potential differences in identity Moratorium scores between the two countries.

Rationale: Previous findings have consistently indicated that youth in the U.S. scored higher in identity Achievement and, in some cases, lower in identity Diffusion than did youth in other countries (e.g., Briones, 1998; Portes, et al., 2000; Taylor & Oskay, 1995). In addition, since Taiwan is characterized as a collectivist culture, identity exploration and firm commitment are likely to be less important than following the social and/or parental expectations. Thus, both identity Diffusion and Foreclosure are likely to be higher in Taiwan than in the U.S. Although one might also expect identity Moratorium to be higher in the U.S. given the emphasis of exploration in this culture, Moratorium might also be highly prevalent in Taiwan given the current climate of social change. Thus, no hypothesis is made regarding culture differences in Moratorium status.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between identity status and psychological well-being among students in Taiwan and the U.S.?

Hypothesis:

2. For both countries, identity Achievement scores will positively correlate with psychosocial well-being. Two uncommitted statuses, identity Moratorium and Diffusion, will negatively correlate with psychosocial well-being. In terms of identity Foreclosure, the two countries will differ in correlation with Taiwan showing better adaptive features
than does the U.S.

Rationale: Previous studies consistently indicated that identity Achievement is positively correlated with self-esteem. Previous empirical findings consistently indicated that committed statuses had better psychological well-being, such as anxiety and depression, than did uncommitted statuses (e.g., Cramer, 2000; Wautier, 2000). The same pattern is expected to be replicated in Taiwan. Given that identity Foreclosure is expected to be more adaptive for Taiwanese than for Americans, the correlation for Foreclosure will be stronger in Taiwan than in the U.S. Taylor and Oskay’s study (1995) indicated that identity Foreclosure was negatively correlated with self-esteem for American college students but had no effect on Turkish students.

Research Question 3: What are the differences in identity authenticity among college students in Taiwan and the U.S.?

Hypothesis:

3. Taiwanese students will score lower in identity authenticity than American students.

Rationale: Taiwanese society is characterized as collectivist oriented. Individuals are not encouraged to explore their uniqueness. Instead, they are encouraged to follow social and/or parental expectations. A lack of knowledge about one’s self-attributes and the de-emphasis of personal preference may result in lower level of identity authenticity scores.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between identity status and identity authenticity among college students in Taiwan and the U.S.?
Hypothesis:

4. For both countries, identity status will predict identity authenticity. In particular, those who are identity achieved are more likely to experience their identity as authentic. **Rationale:** Waterman (1993) indicated that commitment made after exploration is likely to express one’s true self. Gordon’s study (1990) showed that identity Achievement was positively associated with personal expressiveness.

**Methods**

**Procedure**

The participants of the present study were college students from Taiwan and the U.S. The study was approved by the IRB in each university before data collection.

American students were recruited from the Subject Pool in the Department of Educational Psychology in the University of Texas at Austin. Students were contacted via email, which briefly introduced them about the study and asked them to join in one of the prearranged time sections at their convenience to fill out the questionnaires (as attached in Appendix A). The questionnaires were administered in group. Students came to the classrooms in their chosen time. They were asked to read the consent form before they started to work on the questionnaires (the consent form attached in Appendix B). Questionnaires and the consent form were put in an envelope to protect their confidentiality. They were also reminded to make sure that they did not omit any item.
On average, it took about 20 minutes for them to complete the questionnaires.

For students who did not respond or could not come to the study sections due to time conflict, another email was sent to them, asking them to pick up their questionnaires and the consent form, complete them at their free time, and then return them back. Questionnaires and the consent forms were also put in their envelopes. About 8% of the participants were recruited via this way. The total data collection procedure lasted about three weeks. There were in total 185 White students (90 males, 95 females) collected.

Taiwanese students were recruited from six classrooms in four four-year colleges located in two metropolitan areas in north Taiwan. Permissions for data collection were obtained from class instructors as well as the heads of the Departments prior to the data collection (a sample permission letter attached in Appendix D). Students were told by their class instructors to assist in a dissertation by filling out a set of questionnaires. The implementation of the study took place in their regular class-hour 30 minutes before the class was dismissed. I came to the classroom at the prearranged time, briefly introduced to students about the study, and passed down the consent forms and questionnaires. Students were asked to read the consent form first and were also reminded to make sure that they did not omit any item. The procedure was similar to what done in the U.S. Consent forms and the questionnaires were in Chinese (attached in Appendix C). On averaged, it took about 25 minutes for them to complete the questionnaires.

Two classrooms were administered the study by their instructors, due to schedule conflict. The implementation of the study also took place in regular class-hour 30 minutes
before class dismissal. Instruction about how to implement the study was given to the
class instructors to control for the procedure. The total data collection procedure in
Taiwan lasted about 2 weeks. There were in total 303 Taiwanese students (148 males, 153
females, 2 missing) collected.

Participants

The present study was intended to target college students who are between 18
and 24 years old. Thus, participants who are either graduate students or older than 24
years old were excluded from the study. Some questionnaires, which omitted background
information or missed too many items (such as half of a questionnaire), were considered
invalid, because it was suspected that these students might not be willing to cooperate for
the study. In addition, 2 participants were further excluded due to extreme values (as
described after). As a result, the final data set consists of 275 Taiwanese (130 males; 145
females) and 171 Americans (82 males; 89 females), yielding 446 in total.

Of the 446 questionnaires, the amount of missing data was very low. Thus, the
missing data were replaced by the series means for the Self-esteem, Life Satisfaction, and
Anxiety measurements. A missed parental education data was predicted by another
parent’s education level by means of simple regression. Missed data in EOM-EIS
questionnaire were replaced by the values of their equivalent items. Normality check with
Skewness and Kurtosis yielded satisfactory results. All variables of interests in the two
countries had Skewness and Kurtosis values, raging from –2 to +2, except for one
variable. A boxplot graphic check for that variable indicated that there were two cases
falling outside 3.0 times of the box length, which meant that they were extreme values and could be considered outliers. Thus, these two cases were deleted. After deleting the two cases, the Skewness and Kurtosis values fell in the range between –2 and +2.

The averaged age of the Taiwanese sample is 19.79 ($SD = 1.46$), ranging from 18 to 24. The averaged age of the American sample is 20.96 ($SD = 1.05$), ranging from 18 to 24. A two-tailed independent $t$-test indicated that there was significant age difference between the two nations, $t = 9.84$, $p = .000$, with the American sample significantly older.

Parents’ educational levels were regrouped into 6 levels as opposed to the original 8 levels in the questionnaires, because of small sample sizes in some education levels. For instance, there was only 1 case of “Some high school” in the American sample, and there were only 4 cases of “Postgraduate degree” in the Taiwanese sample. Thus, “Some high school” was combined with “High school diploma” to form a new category named “High school”. “Postgraduate degree” was combined with “Master’s degree” to create a new category named “Graduate degree”. Accordingly, the resulting 6 educational levels are: 7 years or less, Middle school, High school, Some college, Bachelor’s degree, and Graduate degree.

With the new categories, the averaged father’s educational level was 3.23 ($SD = 1.45$) for the Taiwanese sample, and 4.93 ($SD = .96$) for the American sample. A two-tailed independent $t$-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the two countries ($t = 14.90$, $p = .000$) with the American sample scoring higher. The correlation between father’s educational levels and mother’s educational levels is .77 for the
Taiwanese sample, and .50 for the American sample.

Overall, American sample is older and its parental educational levels are higher than Taiwanese sample. Age and socioeconomic levels (as indicated by parental education levels in the present study) were found to be associated with youth’s identity formation in the literature (Abraham, 1986; Markstrom-Adams & Adams, 1995). Thus, their effects should be partialled out whenever a significant influence is evident. In the present study, Pearson correlations showed that there were some significant associations of age and parental education levels with identity statuses, identity authenticity, and psychosocial well-being measures (see Table A-1 & A-2). For instance, in Taiwan, age was significantly associated with identity Achievement. Father’s education level was significantly associated with identity Diffusion. Thus, age and parental education levels were put into the remaining analyses as covariates.

**Instruments**

*The Extended Objective Measure of Ego-Identity Status (EOM-EIS-2; Bennion & Adams, 1986)*. The EOM-EIS-2 is a self-report instrument consisting of 64 items allowing for an examination of two forms of identity status-ideological and interpersonal. The content of ideological domain includes occupation, religion, politics, and values. The content of interpersonal domain includes friendship, dating, sex role, and recreation. Subjects respond to items on a 6-point Likert scale. There are 8 items for each of the eight content areas. Each item was written in a way to assess one status in one content area. Sample item for identity Diffusion in religion is “I don’t give religion much thought
and it does not bother me one way or the other.” Raw scale scores for identity
Achievement, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Diffusion are calculated (range from 8 to 48),
and identity status can be assigned for ideological, interpersonal, and overall identity.

Scoring of the instrument may occur in two different ways. The first one is to use
continuous subscale scores, which is suggested by Adams et al. (1979) as the preferred
technique. The second one is to classify subjects into one of the four identity statuses.
The latter technique is recommended when sample sizes are large. The present study will
use the first technique, treating the four status scores as individuals' identity profile rather
than mutually exclusive categories. The median test-retest reliability was .76. Reported
internal reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) for the eight scales varied from .58 to .80
(median=.63).

The EMO-EIS-2 has been translated into Chinese by Yang and Lin (1998) in
Taiwan. They administrated the translated questionnaire to 514 college students in
Taiwan and obtained internal reliability values (Cronbach’s alpha) for the eight scales
ranging from .61 to .84. A confirmatory factor analysis yielded significant factor loading
for each item on its belonged factor. Thus, this scale has good reliability and validity for
college students in Taiwan. In the present study, the Cronbach alpha for the eight scales
ranged from .57 to .84 for the Taiwanese sample, and from .55 to .81 for the American
sample. Combining domains, the reliability for the four identity statuses ranged from .71
to .89 for the Taiwanese sample, and from .75 to .89 for the American sample

*Identity Authenticity*. The identity authenticity items will be added into the
EOM-EIS-2 for the purpose of the present study. For each of the 8 content areas, one additional item will ask respondents to indicate to what extent they believe that their commitment reflects their true self. A similar procedure was used by Neff & Harter (2002). The response scale is the same 6-point Likert scale, from –3 very false, -2 somewhat false, -1 a little false, +1 a little true, +2 somewhat true, and +3 very true. A sample item for the area of occupation is “To what extent do you think that your occupational plans reflect your true self versus feeling of false or phony?”

In order to administer the questionnaire to students in Taiwan, I translated the questionnaires into Chinese. A Taiwanese Ph.D. student in the Linguistic Department in the University back translated it into English. Some disagreements were resolved by discussion and consulting an American Linguistic Ph.D. student. The Cronbach alpha of the questionnaire was .71 for the Taiwanese sample, and .77 for the American sample.

*Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale* (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965). The Rosenberg self-esteem scale is a widely used self-esteem measurement. The RSE consists of 10 items. Participants indicate their disagreement level for each item along a four point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem. This scale has been translated into Chinese. In Lee’s study (1991) among college students in Taiwan, she reported a reliability (Cronbach alpha) .87. Thus, it is a reliable test for college students in Taiwan. In the present study, the Cronbach alpha was .84 for the Taiwanese sample, and .88 for the American sample.

*State-Trait Anxiety Inventory* (STAI; Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, &
Jacobs, 1983). The STAI is a self-report scale, consisting of two subscales: the State Anxiety which indicates how an individual feels at a particular moment in time, and the Trait Anxiety which indicates how an individual generally feels. The present study used only the trait-anxiety subscale. The subscale consists of 20 items. Each item is rated on a Likert-scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much). Sample item is “I feel rested”. A high score represents high level of anxiety. Some items need to be reversed before summed up. The test-retest reliability from college students was reported ranging from .73 to .86; the internal consistency was from .86 to .92. (Spielberger et al., 1980).

The scale has been translated into Chinese (e.g., Wang, 1997). Lin (1998) reported the internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) as .90. In the present study, the Cronbach alpha of the questionnaire was .88 for the Taiwanese sample, and .91 for the American sample.

*Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffen, 1985). The SWLS is a 5-item scale that asks participants to rate the extent to which they feel satisfied with their life on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Sample item is such as “I am satisfied with my life.” The ratings will be summed to produce a composite SWLS score. The SWLS has high test-retest reliability over a two-month period, .82, and a coefficient alpha of .87. Correlates of the measure include a variety of personality measures (e.g. self-esteem). This scale has been translated into Chinese. In the present study, the Cronbach alpha was .86 for the Taiwanese sample, and .88 for the American sample.
Table A-1  Intercorrelations among Variables in Taiwanese Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fa Edu</th>
<th>Ma Edu</th>
<th>Ach</th>
<th>Mor</th>
<th>Fore</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>Authen</th>
<th>Esteem</th>
<th>Anxi</th>
<th>LS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.163**</td>
<td>-.208**</td>
<td>.235**</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>-.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa Edu</td>
<td>.770**</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.231**</td>
<td>.155*</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>.060</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma Edu</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>-.122*</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>-.138*</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>-.096</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ach</td>
<td></td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.275**</td>
<td>-.277**</td>
<td>.228**</td>
<td>.246**</td>
<td>-.156*</td>
<td>.229**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mor</td>
<td></td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.147*</td>
<td>-.202**</td>
<td>-.138*</td>
<td>.256**</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fore</td>
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<td>-.174**</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td></td>
<td>.216**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff</td>
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<td>-.102</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authen</td>
<td></td>
<td>.339**</td>
<td>-.371**</td>
<td>.218**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.640**</td>
<td>.436**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.505**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*p<.05   ** p<.01
Table A-2  Intercorrelations among Variables in the U.S. Sample

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fa Edu</th>
<th>Ma Edu</th>
<th>Ach</th>
<th>Mor</th>
<th>Fore</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>Authen</th>
<th>Esteem</th>
<th>Anxi</th>
<th>LS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>-.123</td>
<td>-.043</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa Edu</td>
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<td>-.055</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>-.049</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma Edu</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>-.089</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ach</td>
<td>-.258**</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.422**</td>
<td>.443**</td>
<td>.171*</td>
<td>-.216**</td>
<td>.334**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mor</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>.455**</td>
<td>-.384**</td>
<td>-.227**</td>
<td>.209**</td>
<td>-.213**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fore</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>-.156*</td>
<td>-.094</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.012</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-.438**</td>
<td>-.148</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.229**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authen</td>
<td></td>
<td>.220**</td>
<td>-.318**</td>
<td>.482**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.729**</td>
<td>.534**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxi</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.577**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p< .05  ** p< .01
V. RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Construct Validity of the EOM-EIS

In order to help establish the validity of the measure of identity statuses (EOM-EIS) in the Taiwanese versus American samples, some preliminary analyses were conducted. The intercorrelations of identity statuses in the ideological and interpersonal domains are presented in Table A-3. Given the meaning of the identity constructs, it was expected that identity Achievement would be negatively correlated with Diffusion, and either uncorrelated or negatively correlated with Moratorium and Foreclosure. Identity Diffusion was also expected to show a low significant correlation with either Moratorium or Foreclosure (Bennion & Adams, 1986).

In the present study, consistent with expectations and with previous findings (Bennion & Adams, 1986; Taylor & Oskay, 1995), identity Achievement was negatively correlated with identity Diffusion regardless of domain and culture with one exception: two between-domain correlations in the Taiwanese sample were not significant. Still, they both were in the expected direction.

As expected, identity Achievement was either uncorrelated or negatively correlated with Moratorium with two exceptions: the correlation between identity Achievement and Moratorium in the interpersonal domain and the correlation between identity Achievement in the ideological domain and Moratorium in the interpersonal domain were positively and significantly correlated in the Taiwanese sample. However,
these two correlations were very small (.12, .14). Because the sample size was quite large (N=275), even a small $r$ value will show significance. Thus, the correlations between these variables were not considered sufficiently large to discount the validity of these identity measures for the Taiwanese sample.

Table A-3  
Correlations among Identity Statuses in Ideological and Interpersonal Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taiwanese students</th>
<th>Ideological</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mor</td>
<td>Fore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>-.120*</td>
<td>.235**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.176**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>.170**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>-.093</td>
<td>.152*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.179*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American students</th>
<th>Ideological</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mor</td>
<td>Fore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>-.416**</td>
<td>-.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>.648**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>-.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>-.248**</td>
<td>.217**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>-.078</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>-.047</td>
<td>.179*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>.255**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$  

The expected zero or negative correlation between identity Achievement and Foreclosure was only supported in the U.S. sample. Regardless of domain, correlations between identity Achievement and Foreclosure in the U.S. sample were negative and/or
not significant. On the contrary, the correlations in Taiwan were positive and significant, and of a magnitude to warrant some concern (e.g., .24, .19). These differential patterns of correlation suggest that identity Achievement and Foreclosure may be measuring distinct constructs in the U.S., but that the constructs may have some slight overlap in the Taiwanese sample.

Consistent with previous findings, the correlations between identity Diffusion and Moratorium and between identity Diffusion and Foreclosure were positive and in some cases significant in the two nations. This means that these three identity statuses (identity Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion) may measure distinct but overlapping constructs (Bennion & Adams, 1986; Taylor & Oskay, 1995).

Overall, the findings were as expected and consistent with previous findings (e.g., Bennion & Adams, 1986; Taylor & Oskay, 1995). With some minor differences, the two nations demonstrated good comparability in the EOM-EIS measurement. One noteworthy difference is between identity Achievement and identity Foreclosure. In the U.S. these two statuses appeared to measure different constructs, whereas in Taiwan, they seemed to share some common variance. This point will be taken up again in the discussion section.

**Hypothesis Testing**

*Research Question 1: What are the differences in identity status scores (Identity Achievement, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Diffusion) among college students in Taiwan*
Hypothesis 1. American students will score higher in ideological and interpersonal identity Achievement than do Taiwanese students. Taiwanese students will score higher in ideological and interpersonal identity Diffusion and Foreclosure than do American students. No hypothesis is made to the differences in identity Moratorium scores between the two countries.

To test this hypothesis, two 2 (Nation) × 2 (Gender) MANCOVA with four identity statuses as dependent variables, controlling for age and parental education effects, were performed separately for the ideological domain and the interpersonal domain. When MANCOVA indicated significant, univariate ANCOVAs with Bonferroni Type-I error adjustment were then conducted to identity where the differences occurred. The ideological domain and interpersonal domain are discussed separately.

A) Ideological domain.

A 2 (Nation) × 2 (Gender) MANCOVA of identity statuses in the ideological domain was performed to test for overall significance. Results were presented in Table 1-1 Column 2-3.

Two significant effects emerged: (a) the nation main effect and (b) the nation by gender interaction effect. The gender main effect was not significant. It means that there was at least one cross-national difference and at least one nation by gender interaction among the means of the four identity statuses. The adjusted means and standard errors of identity status scores among males and females in the two nations are presented in Table
1-2 and Figure 1-1. A review of the adjusted means in Table 1-2 in the two nations indicates that in Taiwan, among the four identity statuses, Moratorium obtained the highest score and Foreclosure the lowest. In the U.S., Achievement obtained the highest score and Foreclosure the lowest.

### Table 1-1
**Summary of 2 (nations) × 2 (gender) MANCOVA of Four Identity Statuses in Ideological and Interpersonal Domains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Ideological</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F (df = 4)</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father education</td>
<td>1.78 (.133)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother education</td>
<td>.46 (.764)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>3.86 (.004**)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>24.08 (.000***)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1.65 (.161)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender</td>
<td>3.77 (.005**)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p<.01. *** p<.001.

### Table 1-2
**Means and Standard Errors of Identity Statuses in the Ideological Domain (Adjusted for Age and Parental Education)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taiwan</th>
<th>The U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>3.70 (.07)</td>
<td>3.41 (.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>3.77 (.07)</td>
<td>3.81 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>2.49 (.08)</td>
<td>2.46 (.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>3.87 (.07)</td>
<td>3.79 (.07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to uncover the source of the significant findings in the omnibus MANCOVA, a series of 2 (nation) × 2 (gender) ANCOVAs were conducted that compared means among males and females in the two nations for each identity statuses. The results are presented in Table 1-3.

Table 1-3 indicates that all nation main effects were significant except for identity Foreclosure. A review of adjusted means presented in Table 1-2 showed that as expected, American participants scored higher on identity Achievement than did Taiwanese participants, and Taiwanese participants scored higher on identity Diffusion and Moratorium than did American participants. Yet, there was no difference in identity Foreclosure between the two nations.
With respect to gender main effects, none of the four statuses had proved to be significant. Yet, there was a nation by gender interaction effect on identity Achievement.

As is clear in Figure 1-1, gender differences were in the opposite direction in each culture. Post hoc pairwise comparisons of the mean scores among Taiwanese males, Taiwanese females, American males, and American females indicated that American females did not score significantly higher than did American males ($p = .211$), but scored significantly higher than did Taiwanese males and females ($p = .001$, $p < .001$, respectively). American males scored significantly higher than Taiwanese males and females ($p = .001$, $p < .001$, respectively). American males scored significantly higher than Taiwanese females only ($p < .000$). Taiwanese males scored significantly higher than Taiwanese females ($p < .001$). In other words,
there was no gender difference in the U.S.; while males scored higher than did females in Taiwan. There was no cross-national difference among males, while American females scored significantly higher than Taiwanese females. American females also scored higher than Taiwanese males.

B) Interpersonal domain.

A 2 (Nation) × 2 (Gender) MANCOVA of identity statuses in the interpersonal domain was performed to test for the overall significance. Results were presented in Table 1-1 column 4-5 (see page 82). One significant effect emerged: the nation main effect. It means that there was at least one cross-national difference among the means of the four identity status scores. There was not a gender main effect nor a nation by gender interaction effect. The adjusted means and standard errors of identity status scores among males and females in the two nations are presented in *Table 1-4* and *Figure 1-2*. A review of the adjusted means in Table 1-4 indicates that among the four identity statuses, Achievement obtained the highest scores and Foreclosure the lowest in both nations.

**Table 1-4.**

*Means and Standard Errors of Identity Statuses in the Interpersonal Domain (Adjusted for Age and Parental Education).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taiwan</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>The U.S.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>4.04 (.06)</td>
<td>3.90 (.06)</td>
<td>3.97 (.04)</td>
<td>3.99 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>3.82 (.06)</td>
<td>3.69 (.06)</td>
<td>3.76 (.05)</td>
<td>3.26 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td>2.27 (.07)</td>
<td>2.26 (.07)</td>
<td>2.26 (.05)</td>
<td>2.42 (.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>3.25 (.06)</td>
<td>3.13 (.06)</td>
<td>3.19 (.05)</td>
<td>2.74 (.09)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because the MANCOVA was significant, four univariate ANCOVAs were conducted to identity where the effects occurred. The results are presented in Table 1-5.

Table 1-5 indicated that two nation main effects were significant: identity Moratorium and identity Diffusion. Taiwanese participants scored higher on identity Moratorium and Diffusion than did American participants. There was no nation main effect on identity Achievement and Foreclosure.

With respect to gender main effects, although the omnibus MANCOVA result did not indicate a gender difference, the univariate ANCOVA showed that there was a gender main effect on identity Diffusion at alpha = .05 level ($F = 5.52, p = .019$). The reason for the contradiction is because the MANCOVA considers all dependent variables simultaneously, and thus weakens the statistical power (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). However, in order to control for inflated Type-I error due to repeating testing in the univariate
ANCOVA procedures, Bonferroni adjustment set alpha-level as equal to .0125, instead of .05 in the present testing (.05 ÷ 4 = .0125). Thus, for this gender main effect, it was marginally significant, meaning that across nations, males tended to score higher on identity Diffusion than did females.

Table 1-5
Summary of 2 (nation) × 2 (gender) ANCOVA of Identity Statuses in Interpersonal Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity Achievement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.162</td>
<td>.024*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Moratorium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35.037</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.624</td>
<td>.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>.585</td>
<td>.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Foreclosure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.454</td>
<td>.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.765</td>
<td>.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.275</td>
<td>.260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Diffusion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35.257</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.521</td>
<td>.019*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>.293</td>
<td>.588</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Covariate: age, father’s education, & mother’s education)*

* p<.05. ***p<.001.

There was also an interaction effect on identity Achievement at alpha = .05 level (F = 5.162, p = .024). After the Bonferroni adjustment, this interaction effect was marginally significant at α = .0125 level. As is clear in Figure 1-2, gender differences were in the opposite direction in each culture. Post hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted to identify potential differences among groups. The result indicated that none
of the pairs was significant with one exception: the difference between American females and Taiwanese females was marginally significant, $p = .023$, with American females scoring higher.

Summary for hypothesis 1:

Ideological Domain-

- As expected, Americans scored higher on identity Achievement than did the Taiwanese. Yet, there was also a nation by gender interaction effect indicating that American females scored higher than Taiwanese males and females. American males scored higher than Taiwanese females. Taiwanese males scored higher than Taiwanese females.

- Taiwanese scored higher on identity Moratorium than did Americans (no hypotheses concerning differences in Moratorium scores had been advanced).

- Contrary to hypotheses, there was no difference in identity Foreclosure detected.

- As expected, Taiwanese scored higher in identity Diffusion than did Americans.

Interpersonal Domain-

- Contrary to hypotheses, there was no difference in identity Achievement in the two nations. However, there was a marginally significant nation by gender interaction: American females scored higher than Taiwanese women.

- As was found in the ideological domain, Taiwanese scored higher in identity Moratorium than did Americans.
Contrary to expectations, there was no difference in identity Foreclosure between the two nations.

As expected, Taiwanese scored higher in identity Diffusion than did Americans. Males also scored marginally higher than females more generally.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between identity status and psychological well-being among students in Taiwan and the U.S.?

Hypothesis 2. For both countries, identity Achievement will positively correlate with psychosocial well-being. Two uncommitted statuses, identity Moratorium and Diffusion, will negatively correlate with psychosocial well-being. In terms of identity Foreclosure, the two countries will differ in correlation with Taiwan showing better adaptive features than does the U.S.

The three psychosocial well-being measures, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and anxiety were very highly correlated with each other (from .44 to .73 in magnitude, refer to Table A-1 & A-2, page 76-77) and were in the same direction for the two nations. A psychosocial health variable was thus computed by summing up the means of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and anxiety (reversed code) for each person. Higher scores indicate better psychosocial health. Because the three psychosocial well-being measurements differ in their responding scales, z-scores, instead of raw scores, were used to calculate the means, in order to eliminate the unequal weights of the three variables in the composite variable. The composite variable has mean equals 0 and SD equals 2.48 in the
Taiwanese sample, 2.58 in the American sample.

Analyses involved not only testing for main effects of identity status on psychological health, but also needed to account for potential moderator effects. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a moderator is “a qualitative (e.g., sex, race, class) or quantitative...variable that affects the direction and/or strength of a relation between an independent/or predictor variable and a dependent/or criterion variable...a basic moderator effect can be represented as an interaction between a focal independent variable and a factor (the moderator) that specifies the appropriate condition for its operation” (p.1174).

A general strategy to investigate the moderator effects is to utilize multiple regression to test for the significance of the interaction between the predictor variable and the moderator in their relation to the criterion variable (Holmbeck, 1997). Criterion variable is regressed unto predictor, moderator, and the interaction term between predictor and moderator. The predictor and moderator main effects are entered into the regression first, followed by the interaction term. An interaction term is represented by the product of main effects from which it is constituted. Cohen and Cohen (1983) pointed out that an interaction “only becomes the interaction when its constituent elements are partialled” (p. 305; also see Aiken & West, 1991). Thus, it should be entered into the equation after the main effects or lower order terms are entered. In addition, if there are covariates in the equation, they should be entered before the main effects are entered, in order to control for their influence.
Given the manner in which the interaction is computed, it is expected that the main effect term/or the lower order term will be highly correlated with the interaction term/or the higher order term. This creates a problem of multicollinearity in multiple regressions. To eliminate the problematic multicollinearity, Aiken and West (1991) have suggested that the independent variables be “centered” before entering into the equation. To center a variable, scores are put into deviation form by simply subtracting the sample mean from all individuals of that variable, which produced a revised sample mean of zero (Holmbeck, 1997). Such transformation has no effect on the estimates of the interactions in the regression equation, but yield straightforward and meaningful interpretations of each main effect. It also eliminated multicollinearity between predictors and the interaction terms (Cohen et al., 2003).

For independent variables that are not part of the interaction, such as covariates, although they are necessarily to be centered, Cohen et al. (2003) has suggested that they be centered for the sake of simplicity. Doing so will not affect the estimates of main effects nor the interaction effects (p.267). In terms of categorical variable, traditionally, they are not centered (Aiken & West, 1991; Cohen, et al., 2003). Several coding methods are available for categorical variables in regression analyses. In the present study, except for dependent variables, all continuous variables were centered by subtracting their sample means. Categorical variables (nation and gender) were dummy coded.

In consideration that the present study is exploratory in nature and to simply the regression equations, the present study followed Aiken and West’s (1991) suggestion
utilizing a step-down procedure to eliminate nonsignificant interaction terms. Advantages of dropping negligible interaction terms from the equation are that it increases the statistic power, and that the findings may assist in understanding of the particular question in the context. The procedure was done through rerunning the equations omitting any nonsignificant interaction unless the term was necessary to correctly estimate significant higher order interactions. The procedure stops when all nonsignificant higher order terms are eliminated from the equation. If the final reduced equation still contains higher order terms, then these terms should be probed using the following method.

When the joint test of the interaction is significant (it indicates that there is an overall difference in the slopes of the regression lines), a probing procedure is then applied to assist the interpretation of the interactions (Aiken & West, 1991). The probing of the interaction is done by plotting simple regression lines for each level of the moderator (nation and/or gender) and post hoc testing for the significance of the simple slopes of the regression lines. In the case of a significant 3-way interaction, the simple regression lines are drawn through complete combinations of each level of the two moderator variables (e.g., Taiwanese males, Taiwan females, American males, and American females).

Holmbeck (1997) described that to plot regression lines, an equation is used that included terms for the covariates, the main effect terms, and the interaction term, along with the corresponding unstandardized regression coefficients and the $y$ intercept. By substitute into this equation all possible combinations of high and low values of the
predictor and the moderator(s), simple regression line can be generated. The high value of
the continuous predictor is the value one SD above the mean; the low value is the value
one SD below the mean. Because the moderator in the present study is categorical, the
low and high values of the moderator were represented by the two dichotomous dummy
values. With respect to covariates, the means can be substituted for these terms.

For the present study, age and parental education were put into regression
equations as covariates. Because father’s and mother’s education levels were highly
correlated with each other ($r = .804$ for the entire sample), in order to avoid
multicollinearity in multiple regression, only father’s education was put into analysis. The
reason for using father’s education instead of mother’s education is that father’s
education appeared to have more significant correlation with the variables of interests
than did mother’s education (refer to Table A-1 & A-2).

Utilizing the multiple regression technique, psychosocial health variable was
regressed onto covariates, identity statuses, nation, gender, and the combinations of 2-
way and 3-way interactions among the predictor and moderators. Separate regressions
were run for the four identity statuses. Variables were forced into each equation in the
following order: (a) covariates: age and father’s education; (b) main effects of an identity
status, nation, and gender; (c) 2-way interactions of nation×identity status,
gender×identity status, and nation×gender; and (d) 3-way interaction of
nation×gender×identity status.

Also note that only findings indicating main effects and moderating effects of
status on psychosocial health will be discussed. Those effects involving nation and
gender, directly (e.g., nation-by-gender interactions in identity Achievement levels)
overlap with analyses conducted for Hypotheses 1, so will not be discussed again in this
section.

A) Ideological domain.

The zero-order correlations between the psychosocial health variable and
identity Achievement, Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion in the ideological domain
were .24 \((p = .000)\), -.07 \((p = .281)\), .03 \((p = .667)\), and -.20 \((p = .001)\) in Taiwan, and .26
\((p = .001)\), -.25 \((p = .001)\), -.06 \((p = .422)\), and -.18 \((p = .022)\) in the U.S. In both nations,
psychosocial health was significantly and positively associated with identity
Achievement, but was negatively associated with identity Diffusion, while had no
significant association with identity Foreclosure. Identity Moratorium was significantly
and negatively associated with psychosocial health in the U.S., but had no significant
association in Taiwan.

The multiple regression results are presented in Table 2-1. It shows that there
were a significant main effect of identity Achievement, a significant interaction effect of
nation by identity Moratorium, and a significant interaction effect of gender by identity
Diffusion. There was no significant main effect nor interaction effect of identity
Foreclosure.

The interaction effect of nation by identity Moratorium was plotted in Figure 2-1.
Follow-up regressions testing for the significance of the slopes of identity Moratorium showed that the slope value (B, the unstandardized regression coefficient) was not significantly different from zero in Taiwan, B = -.227, \( p = .327 \), but was significantly different from zero in the U.S., B = -.870, \( p = .001 \).

The interaction effect of gender by identity Diffusion was plotted in Figure 2-2. Follow-up regressions testing for the significance of the slopes of identity Diffusion showed that the slope value (B, the unstandardized regression coefficient) was significantly different from zero for males, B = -.825, \( p = .000 \), but was not significantly different from zero for females, B = -.331, \( p = .122 \).
Table 2-1. Multiple Regression Results of Psychosocial Health with Nation and Gender as Moderators – Ideological Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting psychosocial health</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-2.12</td>
<td>.035*</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s Edu</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>Father’s Edu</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ach</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>Mor</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.945</td>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>-.68</td>
<td>-1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat* Ach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nat* Mor</td>
<td>-.64</td>
<td>-1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gend*Ach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gend*Mor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat*Gend</td>
<td>-1.24</td>
<td>-2.60</td>
<td>.010*</td>
<td>Nat*Gend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat<em>Gend</em>Ach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nat<em>Gend</em>Mor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>.292</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s Edu</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>Father’s Edu</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fore</td>
<td>-1.50</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>.919</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-.83</td>
<td>-4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.62</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>-.67</td>
<td>-1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.64</td>
<td>.522</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat* Fore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nat*Diff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gend*Fore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gend*Diff</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat*Gend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nat*Gend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat<em>Gend</em>Fore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nat<em>Gend</em>Diff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ach: Achievement  Mor: Moratorium  Fore: Foreclosure  Diff: Diffusion  Nat: Nation  Gend: Gender  Covariates: Age & Father’s Education
* P < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001
B) Interpersonal domain.

The zero-order correlations between psychosocial health and identity Achievement, Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion in the interpersonal domain were .21 \((p = .000)\), -.19 \((p = .002)\), .05 \((p = .418)\), and -.21 \((p = .001)\) in Taiwan, and .22
(p = .002), -.18 (p = .019), -.02 (p = .810), and -.17 (p = .029) in the U.S. In both nations, psychosocial health was significantly and positively associated with identity Achievement, but negatively associated with Moratorium and Diffusion, while had no significant association with Foreclosure.

Utilization the same techniques to test for the moderating effects of nation and gender, the multiple regression results were presented in Table 2-2. It shows that the main effect of identity Achievement and Moratorium were significant. Higher identity Achievement predicted higher psychosocial health, while higher identity Moratorium predicted lower psychosocial health. The 3-way interaction was significant in identity Foreclosure and Diffusion.

Although the 3-way interaction in identity Foreclosure was significant, the follow-up regressions testing for the significant of the slope values in each group (Taiwanese men, Taiwanese women, American men, and American women), however, revealed that none of the slopes was significantly different from zero (B = .37, p = .169; B = -.08, p = .782; B = -.64, p = .105; B = .25, p = .508, respectively).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2-2. Multiple Regression Results of Psychosocial Health on Identity Statuses with Nation and Gender as Moderators - Interpersonal Domain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Predicting psychosocial health</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ach</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s Edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat* Ach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gend*Ach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat*Gend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat<em>Gend</em>Ach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fore</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s Edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat* Fore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gend*Fore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat*Gend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat<em>Gend</em>Fore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ach: Achievement  Mor: Moratorium  Fore: Foreclosure  Diff: Diffusion  Nat: Nation  Gend: Gender  
(Covariates: Age and Father’s Education)  * p < .05  ** p < .02  *** p < .001
The 3-way interaction of nation by gender by identity Diffusion was plotted in Figure 2-3. Follow-up regressions examining the slope values of identity Diffusion in males and females in Taiwanese and the U.S revealed that American males and Taiwanese females ($B = -1.68, p = .000; B = -.97, p = .003$, respectively) had slopes significantly different from zero, but Taiwanese males and American females had not ($B = -.44, p = .102; B = -.11, p = .801$, respectively).

![Figure 2-3. Nation by Gender by Identity Diffusion on Psychosocial Health - Interpersonal](image)

Summary for hypothesis 2:

- As expected, identity Achievement predicted higher psychosocial health.
- As expected, identity Moratorium predicted lower psychosocial health. However, there was also a moderating effect of culture in the ideological domain: the association was not significant in Taiwan concerning the ideological domain.
Not as expected, identity Foreclosure had no significant impact on psychosocial health.

As expected, identity Diffusion predicted lower psychosocial health. However, there were also moderating effects of culture and gender: the association in the ideological domain was not significant for Taiwanese females; the association in the interpersonal domain was not significant for Taiwanese males; the associations in both domains were not significant for American females.

Research Question 3: What are the differences in identity authenticity among college students in Taiwan and the U.S.?

Hypothesis 3: Taiwanese students will score lower in identity authenticity than American students.

To test this hypothesis, a two-way 2 (Nation) × 2 (Gender) ANCOVA was performed for identity authenticity, controlling for age and parental education. Analyses were performed separately for the ideological and interpersonal domains. The Bonferroni method was applied to adjust the inflated Type-I error rate to be alpha = .025 (.05 ÷ 2 = .025). The adjusted means for males and females in the two nations are presented in Table 3-1 and figure 3-1.
Table 3-1
Means and Standard Errors of Identity Authenticity (Adjusted for Age and Parental Education).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taiwan</th>
<th></th>
<th>The U.S.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological</td>
<td>.90 (.10)</td>
<td>.64 (.09)</td>
<td>.77 (.07)</td>
<td>1.81 (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>1.38 (.09)</td>
<td>1.23 (.08)</td>
<td>1.31 (.06)</td>
<td>1.88 (.12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-1. Identity Authenticity Scores by Groups

Domains
The ANCOVA results are summarized in Tables 3-2.

Table 3-2
Summary of 2 (nation) * 2 (gender) ANCOVA of Identity Authenticity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideological</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75.415</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.156</td>
<td>.008**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.262</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation × Gender 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.298</td>
<td>.039*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Covariates, Age, Father’s education, & Mother’s education, omitted in the table.
* p < .05   ** p< .01    ***p< .001

Table 3-2 indicates that there were significant nation main effects in identity authenticity in both ideological and interpersonal domains with Americans scoring higher than Taiwanese (also see Table 3-1). There was no gender main effect. Yet, the nation by gender interaction effect in the ideological domain was significant, and the nation by gender interaction effect in the interpersonal domain was marginally significant at $\alpha = .025$ level after Bonferroni adjustment.

Post hoc pairwise comparisons of mean scores among Taiwanese males, Taiwanese females, American males, and Taiwanese females in the ideological domain indicated that American males and females scored higher than Taiwanese males and females (all $p < .000$). Taiwanese males scored marginally higher than did Taiwanese females ($p = .035$). There was no gender difference in the U.S. ($p = .084$).

Post hoc comparisons in the interpersonal domain indicated that American females scored higher than Taiwanese males and females (both $p < .000$). American males
scored higher than Taiwanese males \((p = .001)\) and females \((p < .000)\). There was no gender difference in both Taiwan \((p = .190)\) and the U.S. \((p = .111)\).

Summary for hypothesis 3:

- As expected, Americans males and females scored significantly higher than did Taiwanese males and females in identity authenticity in both domains.
- There was also a gender-by-nation interaction in the ideological domain: Taiwanese males scored marginally higher than did Taiwanese females in ideological domain.

**Research Question 4:** What is the relationship between identity status and identity authenticity among college students in Taiwan and the U.S.?

**Hypothesis 4.** For both countries, identity status will predict identity authenticity. In particular, those who are identity achieved will be more likely to experience their identity as authentic, while those who are in the Foreclosed or Diffused statuses are less likely to experience authenticity. However, the links between identity status and authenticity might also be moderated by gender and/or culture.

The multiple regression techniques testing for moderating effects of nation and gender used for testing Hypothesis 2 were also applied to test for this hypothesis (please refer to Research Question 2 for details). The zero-order correlation between identity statuses and identity authenticity was provided in Table A-1 and A-2 (in page 76, 77). For both nations, identity authenticity was significantly and positively correlated with identity
Achievement, and significantly and negatively correlated with each of the other three identity statuses.

The multiple regression results were presented in Table 4-1. Only findings indicating main effects and moderating effects of status on authenticity will be discussed. Those effects involving nation, gender, and authenticity directly (e.g., nation main effect on authenticity levels) overlap with analyses conducted for Hypotheses 3, so will not be discussed again in this section.

Table 4-1 shows that three main effects of the four identity statuses were significant: Identity Moratorium, identity Foreclosure, and identity Diffusion were all negatively and significantly associated with identity Authenticity. In terms of identity Achievement, both 2-way interactions of Nation×Identity Achievement and Gender×Identity Achievement were significant and the 3-way interaction of Nation×Gender×Identity Achievement was also significant. Because the 3-way interaction was significant, effects were interpreted at the 3-way interaction level.
## Table 4-1.
Multiple Regression Results of Identity Authenticity on Identity Statuses with Nation and Gender as Moderators

Predicting identity authenticity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
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<th>p</th>
<th>predictor</th>
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<td>.009**</td>
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<td>.016*</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Diffusion</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Nat×Gend×Fore</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nat×Gend×Fore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ach: Achievement  Mor: Moratorium  Fore: Foreclosure  Diff: Diffusion  Nat: Nation  Gend: Gender  Covariates: Age & Father’s Education

* p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001
The 3-way interaction found for Achievement was plotted in Figure 4-1. Follow-up regressions examining the slopes of identity Achievement among males and females in the two nations indicated that all slopes were significantly different from zero except for Taiwanese males. The slope values (B, the unstandardized regression coefficient) for Taiwanese males, Taiwanese females, American males, and American females were .131 ($p = .206$), .453 ($p = .000$), .918 ($p = .000$), and .367 ($p = .012$), respectively. It is also shown that there was gender difference in both nation ($t = 2.250, p = .025$ for Taiwan; $t = 2.409, p = .016$ for the U.S.). In Taiwan, identity Achievement predicted higher authenticity for females, but not for males. In the U.S., however, identity Achievement predicted higher authenticity for males than that for females. In terms of cross-national differences, the difference appeared in males ($t = 3.862, p = .000$). Identity Achievement predicted higher authenticity in American males, but not in Taiwanese males. There was no cross-national difference among females.

Figure 4-1. Nation by gender by identity achievement on identity authenticity
Summary for hypothesis 4:

- As expected, identity authenticity was negatively correlated with identity Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion.
- Also as expected, identity authenticity was positively correlated with identity Achievement, but in this case, the link between Achievement and authenticity was moderated by culture and gender. Although Achievement predicted authenticity for both males and females in the U.S., the association was stronger for males than for females. In Taiwan, identity Achievement predicted higher authenticity for females only, but not for males.
VI. DISCUSSION

Adolescence is a critical time for individuals to construct their unique sense of self, in order to participate in the society and join with others in a meaningful way. Psychologists have been curious how youths of different genders and in different cultures arrive at their identity solutions, given that cultures differ in norms, values, beliefs, and the particular ways that they use to give validation to adolescents. In particular, cultures and genders have been said to differ in the salience of the participation of others in their own self-definitions. The goals of the present study were to compare the identity development of youth in Taiwan, a collectivist culture, and youth in the United States, an individualistic culture, to further understand this process. Given that there have not been many studies focusing on the influence of culture and gender on identity formation, the present study was exploratory in nature.

This chapter discusses first the findings on identity status scores, then the findings on association between identity statuses, authenticity, and psychosocial well-being. The cultural meaning of identity statuses and their adaptive functions in different cultural contexts will be discussed, and further research directions will also be recommended.

Identity Status Scores

Identity development can be described as the process of adaptation to one’s socio-cultural environment (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). The identity formation takes
place in the realm of society. Society holds different beliefs, goals, expectations, as well as standards for its members. Youth may have their personal wants and desires; however, these wants and desires must be validated and made possible within societal contexts. Thus, youth’s adaptation in the process of identity formation involves interactions between individuals and the environment, which is reflected in the degree to which particular identity statuses are adopted.

A) Culture and gender interaction in identity Achievement.

Identity Achievement represents the successful resolution of one’s identity crises. It means that individuals have consolidated their identity and have decided what they want to be and/or to believe after a period of exploration and trying out options. The findings of the present study revealed that culture and gender both had significant impacts on identity achievement.

American participants scored significantly higher than did Taiwanese participants in identity Achievement in the ideological domain only. The two cultures demonstrated comparability in identity Achievement in the interpersonal domain. This seems to suggest that in an individualistic context like the United States, where personal development is stressed, identity exploration and commitment were promoted for both ideological issues and interpersonal issues, while in a collectivist context like Taiwan, which values interpersonal relations more than personal development, identity processes were promoted in interpersonal issues more than for ideological issues. In fact, very
similar results were reported by Abraham (1986) and Markstrom-Adams & Adams (1995) among high school students. They also found that American-Whites scored higher on identity Achievement in the ideological domain, but not the interpersonal domain, than did Mexican-Americans and non-White youth.

Differences between individualism and collectivism can also help to explain the gender by culture interactions in identity Achievement scores. In the American sample, women scored higher than did men in both domains, though no statistically significant differences between the sexes were found. In the Taiwanese sample, in contrast, men scored higher than women in both domains, with the ideological domain showing statistical significance. The lowered identity Achievement among Taiwanese women can be explained in light of societal expectations concerning proper gender roles. In the Chinese tradition, women are expected to not have a strong “self”. Ideal female images are of those who do not have their own preference, opinions, or even talents (Lee and Jong, 1996). A woman’s self is expected to keep itself empty, so that it can be easily defined by male figures in her life, first as a daughter to her father, then as a wife to her husband, and lastly as a mother to her son. There is little need for women to think for themselves, since their will is subject to men’s will and their role duties as a daughter, a wife, and a mother will outweigh their personal views in their life. Influenced deeply by Chinese culture, Taiwan society traditionally does not expect women to develop a strong sense of self, and even discourages them from doing so. Women who have strong personalities tend to be stereotyped and suppressed. As a result, Taiwanese women seem
to be less active in developing and achieving unique identities. However, while
Taiwanese women had the lowest identity achievement scores in both domains, they had
relatively higher levels of identity achievement for interpersonal issues than for
ideological issues, which is more central to their sense of self.

As a contrast to Taiwanese women’s situation, American women demonstrated
the highest levels of identity achievement for both ideological and interpersonal issues. It
may be somewhat surprising that American women actually had a slightly higher identity
achievement score in the ideological domain than American men, given that ideological
issues such as politics have traditionally been more of a men’s issue. In fact, a similar
result was reported by Schwartz and associates (2000). They found that American college
women scored significantly higher on identity Achievement in both domains than did
men. These findings suggest that the previous tendency for women to be less involved in
ideological issues as they consider their possible future roles may no longer hold. The
advanced identity Achievement of American women can be explained as an effect of
their increased social involvement and social status. For instance, in the U.S., women’s
participation in the labor force has increased steadily over the course of the 20th century.
Women are asked to share more financial responsibilities nowadays than before. The
unemployment rates of White men and women were the same in 1996. More and more
women are also entering a wide range of fields that were formerly male dominant
(Helgeson, 2002). However, though American women have considerable freedom to
pursue a variety of roles, society still expects women to be the primary keepers of the
home and the family. As a result, women often feel conflict among their competing roles. In addition, women still face great barriers in their work. They are paid less and are less often promoted compared to men (Helgeson, 2002). As a result, women need to work harder in order to keep up with their jobs or to compete with others. Accordingly, while these American college women chose to pursue higher education and enter the work force, there were many conflicts for them to resolve as they were trying to achieve a meaningful sense of self. To resolve these conflicts requires more in-depth thinking and high ego functioning, which appears to result in more advanced identity Achievement in both the ideological and interpersonal domains.

Of course, it should be remembered that there were not significant gender differences in identity achievement within the American sample, though the trend for women to outscore men was stable. The lack of significant gender differences does not necessarily mean that interpersonal and ideological concerns operate the same way in women as in men, however. In fact, findings on identity Diffusion (discussed below) indicated that men scored significantly higher in diffusion than did women in the interpersonal domain, implying that interpersonal issues were less important in men’s identities than in women’s. Thus, it may be that men and women negotiate these two domains differently to achieve identity achievement. For instance, Thorbecke and Grotevant (1982) found that among high school students, men tended to develop identities in occupation and interpersonal issues separately, while women tended to negotiate interpersonal issues in order to be engaged in occupational identity formation.
The needs for women to integrate these two domains might also contribute to the more advanced identity achievement scores in the present study. Thus, the central issue in men and women’s identity development, at least in the U.S., may not be on the domain significance, but on the ways men and women negotiate between domains. This line of investigation warrants more research attention.

Note that in the ideological domain, Taiwanese men’s achievement score, although slightly lower, did not significantly differ from that of American men. This may be viewed as a result of the social changes happening in Taiwan. The rapid economic growth and social development over the past 50 years have changed many social systems in Taiwan, such as those in politics, economics, career structure, and education. Extended exploring for alternatives in these areas is also quite encouraged nowadays, but more so for Taiwanese men than for Taiwanese women. These results thus suggest that cross-cultural comparison in identity formation must take gender into account, since it is the lack of emphasis on identity development for women in Taiwanese culture that primarily accounts for cross-cultural differences in identity formation.

B) Identity Foreclosure and individuation.

Somewhat surprisingly, there were no significant differences in identity Foreclosure scores between Taiwan and the U.S. It had been originally expected that the high level of familism stressed in Confucianism and the importance of interpersonal connection in collectivists’ self-definition might lead to greater adoption of parental
views, and thus of foreclosed identity statuses, in Taiwan. A glance at the foreclosure score values indicated that both Taiwanese and Americans had scores ranging between “disagree” and “somewhat disagree”, and that foreclosure scores were lower than those of other identity statuses. In other words, Foreclosure was the least likely identity mode among youth in either cultural context.

The result is perhaps not so surprising, as Taiwan society has been increasingly influenced by Western thoughts and values recently. Youth have more opportunities and are also required to engage in more extensive exploration than in the past. This was evidenced in the heightened levels of identity Moratorium among Taiwanese (see below). Findings suggest that parenting in Taiwan may also be in the process of change. The traditional value of parental control may not be as pervasive as it was before, as evidenced in Lin’s study (1998) reviewed in Chapter 3. In Lin’s study, she revealed that part the Taiwanese mothers’ parenting beliefs have been influenced by Western values, such as encouraging autonomy. Another study conducted in Taiwan by Liu (1997) also found that middle school students rated their parents as more “responsive” than “demanding,” suggesting that traditional Chinese parenting styles, which stress the authority and control of parents, are in decline.

Erikson believed that identity formation requires some rejection of past infantile identifications and also some integration with new experiences. A low level of identity Foreclosure implies a departure from one’s old identifications with parents on the path of individuation. However, Erikson’s ideas were developed with Western developmental
trajectories in mind. Although Taiwanese did not differ in identity Foreclosure level from Americans, this does not necessarily mean that identity Foreclosure operates the same way in Taiwan as in the U.S.. Given that historically, Chinese culture has been particularly firm and intense in its family ties, it is possible that Foreclosure manifest somewhat differently in the two cultural contexts. Results from the validity test of the EOM-EIS measurement give some hints about the ways Foreclosure is differentially operating. In the Taiwanese sample, identity Foreclosure and identity Achievement were positively and significantly correlated with each other; while in the American sample, the correlations between the two constructs were negative and/or insignificant. In other words, there was a tendency for identity achievers in Taiwan to more or less agree with and/or adopt their parents’ views, as they made their final commitments. In contrast, in the U.S. there was a clearer departure from parental values and a clearer distinction between parental and personal views. Thus, it is possible that Taiwanese youth distinguish themselves from their parents in a different way than do Americans during the process of individuation.

The parent-child relation is the most central and basic one in Chinese culture. Wang and Hsieh (2000) have argued that the adaptation of Chinese families to modern society preserves the essence of Confucian doctrines of filial piety and interpersonal connection. Filial piety is manifested mainly by following and respecting one’s parents as well as bringing glory to the family through educational and career success. This has important implication for Chinese youth’s identity achievement. It is likely that on the way to individuation, some Taiwanese youth adopt parental views out of respect for their
parents and/or in order to honor the family. Note that what is different from identity foreclosure and identity achievement for these youth is that the identity achieved youth do explore for different identity alternatives before settling on their final identity, yet they come to the same conclusions as their parents partly as a result of filial piety.

In sum, Taiwanese youth’s individuation may be more tied to their relationships with their parents than Americans’. The need to respect parents and to honor one’s family in identity process is a cultural-specific aspect of identity formation, which is less likely to occur in American culture and thus constitutes the *emic* aspect of the identity construct regarding Chinese culture. How this cultural-specific value operates in youth’s identity formation warrants more investigation, as it could be an important potential source of cultural variation in identity formation.

*C) Identity Moratorium, identity Diffusion, and self-environment interactions*

One particularly interesting finding in this study was that Taiwanese youth scored significantly higher than did American youth in terms of Moratorium and Diffusion scores in both ideological and interpersonal domains. These results might seem to be contradictory, given that one identity status represents active self-exploration and the other an inhibition of active self-construction. However, the findings can be understood in light of Taiwan’s recent social change and the interactions between one’s inner psychosocial environment and her/his outer sociocultural environment.

*Identity Moratorium.* Recall that Moratorium represents a state in which youth
are actively exploring their self and the environment in an attempt to resolve their identity issues. It is more of a process than a identity solution. Findings suggested that there was a higher proportion of Taiwanese still in the process of identity exploration during the college years, while more Americans had already consolidated their identities by this point. The prolonged moratorium among Taiwanese as contrast to Americans might have resulted from the differing training and discipline Taiwanese and Americans receive during their high school years preceding college. One of the educational objects of high school is to prepare students to enter college. In Taiwan, the most important task of high school education is to prepare students to take a national examination, which is designed for entering colleges. The emphasis is predominately academic. Most high school students need to study very hard to obtain good scores in the examination, which largely determine which college they can attend. Students have very little experience in other life domains such as career exploration or dating. Thus, college years may be the years when Taiwanese students just begin to explore their identities in these areas.

In contrast, high school education in the U.S. entails much more variety. Studying is not the predominate task of adolescence. Extra-curricular activities, such as student clubs, are also very important. The schools also leave their students more room to spend time engaged in the various activities they want to be engaged in. As a result, before they enter college, American adolescents may have already experienced some identity exploration, such as dating or considering their future career paths. Thus, the college years allow them to achieve and consolidate their identities. As a result of
differing levels of prior experience, Taiwanese college students might have more identity issues still undecided. In other words, identity exploration might occur later among Taiwanese youth than among American youth.

Another feature of identity Moratorium is that it is a period when one is encountering new ideas and is actively questioning his/her old experiences. Thus, a state of “disequilibrium” is occurring within the individual. Adams and Marshall (1996) pointed out that “the process of identity formation is influenced by dialect-like processes that involve distress, incompatibility, incompetence, inconsistency, or confrontation, followed by synthesis and/or resolution” (p.435). Thus, as youth are constructing their identities, a previous state of equilibrium must be broken down in order to move to a new one. It is thus argued that the high Moratorium among Taiwanese in the present study could be described as a result of a dissonance between Taiwanese’s old sense of self that featured collectivist values and the new environmental demands that are increasingly individualistic. In traditional Taiwanese society, there were not many identity choices. Most of one’s identities were assigned based on one’s social status, such as gender, age, or social class. However, rapid industrialization and increasing Westernization have created a variety of opportunities and alternatives in different life domains, and youth are also expected to be independent enough to make decisions for themselves in order to effectively participate in society. Taiwanese youth may be raised in family environment where following parental expectations is expected, however, and also educated in a school environment that asks them to follow teachers’ instructions and focus primarily on
studying. When they enter college, which suddenly exposes them to an elevated level of diversity and also demands for them to be independent, they might find the new environment particularly threatening to their ego. The sharp contrast and discontinuity between their old context and the new context may create a great internal disequilibrium. As a result, youth might find themselves ill-prepared to take on adult roles and thus tended to postpone the commitments that otherwise should be made, in order to continue to explore and search for a niche in the society that suits them.

Two prior studies conducted in settings in which the dissonance between the individuals’ sense of self and their sociocultural environment was also likely to occur, reported similar results. Lewis (2003) found that Asian-American college students scored significantly higher on identity Moratorium in both ideological and interpersonal domains than did American Whites. The family environment of Asian-Americans is believed to be quite collectivist in nature, given that most of their parents are foreign-born (Uba, 1994). When they entered college, which represents mainstream individualistic culture, they might find their interdependent sense of self unsuited to meet the environmental demands, which in turn results in a prolonged moratorium for them to reconstruct and integrate a new meaningful sense of self. Briones (1998) also found that there were more Chinese than Americans in Moratorium status in the identity domains representing ideological and interpersonal issues. Chinese college students the author recruited were from two cities in China that have been subject to Western influences and which have experienced economic growth in recent years. Thus, the incompatibility between a communist context
where people do not have much freedom and a democratic context where people are free to vote understandably would create a great dissonance in Chinese people.

The process of constructing a new sense of self while simultaneously integrating an old sense of self warrants more investigation. Literature in the field of acculturation has produced rich findings on this multilevel, multidimensional, and multifaceted process, meaning that some parts of the old cultural identities are retained; while other parts are discarded or transformed (Berry & Sam, 1997; Trimble, 2003). Thus, a similar process may also happen in collectivist contexts such as Taiwan’s in which there has been a blending of collectivistic and individualistic values. It has been argued that the core cultural values are usually retained or transformed, but not discarded in the process of acculturation. Finding discussed in the previous section revealed that filial piety might be one of the core cultural values that are preserved. Thus, for Chinese youth to consolidate their identities, especially for youth who are in the prolonged moratorium, validation from their parents and recognition of familial duties might be of particular importance.

*Identity Diffusion.* If a prolonged moratorium often occurs for youth in order to resolve the incompatibility between their old and new experiences, there might be a good deal of youth who become overwhelmed with the difficulty of the task and thus take a regressive stance towards it. This would help explain the high levels of identity Diffusion found among Taiwanese youth in the current study. As a matter of fact, the two studies mentioned above (Briones, 1998 and Lewis, 2003) also found that Asian participants scored significantly higher on identity Diffusion in both ideological and interpersonal
issues than did American Whites.

Identity Diffusion denotes a lack of commitment, and may take several forms. One form of identity Diffusion entails a lack of assurance about what one should be doing and a state of uncertainty and confusion about one’s inner self. Using Erikson’s term, their ego regresses to a state of paralysis and loses the capacity to derive a sense of sameness and continuity through meaningful integration. In other words, identity diffused individuals have experienced some difficulty in pulling together identity elements into a meaningful whole. Accordingly, it is likely that at least for some of the diffused Taiwanese youth, environmental demands have exceeded their ego capacities and their outer environment did not provide sufficient assistance for them. The working ego is short of adequate resources to effectively test, reconstruct, or integrate old and new experiences. This situation may be especially likely to occur among youth who come from communities that are lower in social economic status, in which youth have fewer opportunities to receive assistance, or among youth from families that do not show support for their children’s individuation. Because identity Diffusion has been associated with many negative outcomes, such as low self-esteem, high depression, high anxiety, more deviant behavior, and so on (e.g., Cramer, 2000; Huang, 1998; Meeus, 1996; Taylor & Oskay, 1995; Wautier, 2000), special educational and/or counseling plans should be directed to these people, in order to assist them.

There was also a main effect of gender on identity Diffusion in the interpersonal domain: men scored significantly higher than did women. This means that men in general
showed less concern for interpersonal issues in their process of self-construction than did women. In fact, many previous studies have reported similar results (e.g., Abraham, 1986; Cramer, 2000; Benson, et al., 1992; Jensen, et al., 1998; Lewis, 2003; Markstrom-Adams & Adams, 1995; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002). Hence, while identity researchers have wondered if interpersonal issues still hold the same premium in contemporary women’s identity (e.g., Kroger, 1997), the present study revealed that interpersonal issues were still more salient in women’s identity than in men’s. It appears that in contemporary societies, both individualistic and collectivistic, young women are still more socialized to be connected and caring than are young men. As revealed in the identity Achievement scores discussed above, however, American women are not only socialized to be connected, they are also socialized to be independent. They outscored men in identity Achievement in both ideological and interpersonal domains. Rather, it appears that it is only Taiwanese women who follow the more traditional pattern of emphasizing connection at the expense of independence.

**Identity Formation and Psychosocial Health**

Identity resolution is important in that it is related to one’s psychosocial well-being. As adolescents are preparing to participate in the society, whether or not their identities make sense to themselves as well as to others has a profound influence on their psychological well-being. Adolescents in different cultures may address their identity crises differently, thus the four identity statuses may function differently depending on
culture and gender. However, as expected, identity Achievement was positively and
significantly associated with one’s general sense of psychosocial health across cultures
and genders, within both the ideological and interpersonal domains. Namely, identity
achievement was significantly associated with less anxiety, higher self-esteem, and
greater life satisfaction. Hence, constructing one’s self in his/her own terms through
exploration and firm commitment appears to be beneficial to youth universally. In other
words, despite the fact that individualistic culture is said to support self-exploration and
firm commitment more than does collectivistic culture, and despite the fact that women
are said to value interdependence more than do men, the present research revealed that
the effect of identity Achievement did not differ across cultures, gender, or domains.

According to Erikson, for identity to be achieved, youth need to investigate their
inner self, test it against the social reality, and of particular importance, to have their
identity recognized, accepted, and validated by significant others and the society. In other
words, identity is constructed through a dialectal process that involves a sense of being
independent and a sense of being interdependent. Both independence and connectedness
have been said to be two basic human needs (Kagitcibasi, 2000). Thus, it is likely that
identity achievers had both needs adequately met in their identity process, which thus
resulted in better psychosocial functioning.

More differential effects were revealed for the other three identity statuses,
suggesting that the three identity processes function differently depending on culture and
gender. As expected, identity Moratorium in the interpersonal domain predicted lower
psychosocial health. However, Moratorium in the ideological domain predicted lower psychosocial health in the American sample, but not in the Taiwanese sample.

Moratorium’s detrimental effects have been said to lie in the temporary loss of personal identity (Adams & Marshall, 1996). However, this lowered level of psychological health is transitional. Once the individual finally consolidates his/her identities and advances into identity Achievement, an elevated sense of well-being tends to ensue. The lack of a negative association between moratorium scores and psychological health in the ideological domain for Taiwanese youth might be explained in light of the social climate of Taiwan today. As mentioned previously, Taiwan’s current social climate is a unique and interesting one. Many of its social systems are going through rapid changes and reformations. For instance, the pending political issues concerning Taiwan’s national identity have aroused numerous debates and arguments that have become part of daily life. Taiwan itself could be said to be in the process of searching for its identity in a macro sense. While youth are looking for their sense of direction, they may be increasingly tolerant of these fluctuating and unstable social systems. Given that confusion, change, and ambiguity are the social norm, being in a state of moratorium may not cause undue concern or self-doubt, and thus may not harm youth’s psychosocial well-being.

This tolerance of ambiguity is an interesting one, but one should not be too quick to assume that moratorium has no ill effects on Taiwanese youths. The negative effects of moratorium might manifest in another form, such as externalization in the form of
delinquency. Many child development studies have found that children and adolescents may attack others or the society at large as a way to release their inner anger (Steinberg, 1999). Social control theory also argues that some adolescent problem behavior stems from weak bonds between adolescents and society (Sigleman, 1999). As a matter of fact, the delinquent rates among adolescents in Taiwan have been rising sharply in recent years (Huang, 1998). Thus, future research should examine externalized behavior as a variable to further understand the impact of identity moratorium on well-being in Taiwan.

This study also found that identity Foreclosure had no negative impact on psychosocial well-being for either American or Taiwanese youth. This finding was not expected, as identity foreclosure has typically been viewed as less advanced in the literature (Pattern, et al., 1992). Although the formation of personal identity requires one to depart from childish identifications with parents, it may be that selecting aspects of parental values to be incorporated into one’s identity protect youths from the detrimental effects of aimlessness or resentment. However, the lack of significance might also result in part from the low identity Foreclosure scores obtained in the sample. Foreclosure was the least commonly endorsed identity status in both Taiwanese and American samples, and this “floor” effect meant that there was perhaps not enough variation in scores for statistical significance to be achieved. Nonetheless, a glance at coefficient values indicates that the association between Foreclosure and well-being among Taiwanese men and American men in the interpersonal domain might not be the same. The association was negative and marginally significant among American men; while it was positive,
though not significant among Taiwanese men. Thus, identity Foreclosure might
demonstrate differential effects for men in the two cultures in samples that exhibited a
wider range of Foreclosure scores. Before making a tenable conclusion, this possibility
needs investigation in future studies.

With regard to identity Diffusion, its effects on psychosocial well-being
appeared to vary as a function of gender and culture. It was found that in the ideological
domain, the negative association between identity Diffusion and psychosocial health was
significant for men, but insignificant for women. This again suggests that ideological
issues were more important for men’s identities than for women’s. Thus, women in
general were relatively freer from the stress of being diffused in ideological issues in their
identity formation. Moreover, the detrimental effect of identity Diffusion proved to be the
worst for American men: the negative effects of Diffusion were significant in both the
ideological and interpersonal domains. Recall that Diffusion represents low exploration
and low commitment. American men are assumed to have the most independent sense of
self compared to others, thus, having a diffused sense of self is a violation of cultural
norms, which appeared to produce negative effects on them. On the contrary, identity
Diffusion proved to have no effect on American women. This finding was unexpected,
but can be possibly explained in light of the differing gender-role socialization process
for girls and boys.

Some psychologists have pointed out that in the American society, boys are
encouraged to model themselves after fathers and other males. There is very little
encouragement for boys to model their identities on that of their mothers and other females. Masculinity is boosted in men’s identities. Girls are, however, encouraged to consider both the male’s and female’s pathways. Thus, femininity and masculinity are both well accepted in girls’ identities (Josselson, 1990; Cramer, 2000). Accordingly, women are relatively free from social pressure on establishing certain self-images compared to men. This relative freedom might facilitate some women to freely explore and commit in both identity domains, as evidenced in the high identity Achievement scores, but it also might mean that those who do not explore or commit feel little pressure to do so, and therefore don’t experience psychological harm as a consequence. Men, on other hand, might feel that they needed to establish self-images that are active and masculine, thus they are particular vulnerable to identity Diffusion. However, these differential effects of identity Diffusion warrant more investigation.

In the Taiwanese sample, women were affected when their identity was diffused in the interpersonal domain only. It again means that interpersonal issues were more important for Taiwanese women’s identity formation, but ideological issues were of less importance. So, when they were in a state of diffusion concerning their roles in interpersonal relationships, Taiwanese women felt unsatisfied. By contrast, the negative effect of diffusion for Taiwanese men appeared in the ideological domain only. This suggests that ideological issues were more important in their identity compared to interpersonal issues in terms of effects on their psychosocial health. Compared to women, Taiwanese men are expected to be more active in ideological domains, such as career or
politics. Under this social expectation, being passive and uncommitted in these areas appears to create stress for them.

Identity Formation and the Sense of Authenticity

The investigation of the relationship between identity formation and a sense of the self being true is an exploratory one. Identity formation relies on ego’s functioning to integrate past concepts of the self with present aspirations. During childhood, one’s self-concepts or aspiration are established mainly through the mechanism of identification with some sort of role models, such as parents. Erikson argued that the old identifications do not result in a functioning personality in that they only capture more superficial or outward features of the models. The images are more a fantasy than a reality. The mechanism of identity formation, on the contrary, requires that old identifications be reexamined in light of the present reality, and that new experiences and the old ones be tested and be validated by youth and his/her society. The processes of syntheses and re-syntheses yield a sense of self that is not quantitatively, but qualitatively different from the old one, and is thus fully one’s own.

Hence, it is argued that identities, when formed mainly through identification, might not feel authentic, as they are just a set of untested images. However, if the identities are formed thru the mechanism of identity formation, they might feel more authentic, as they are tested out against reality. In other words, among the four identity statuses, identity Achievement best represents the most authentic identity resolution.
through the mechanism of identity exploration and commitment; while identity Foreclosure represents commitment without exploration, and therefore does not correspond to one’s internal authentic self.

As for the findings on identity authenticity scores in general (i.e., without reference to the authenticity of particular identity statuses), the score pattern in the two domains mostly resembled what was found for identity Achievement itself: in the U.S., women scored higher in authenticity than did men, though this finding did not reach statistical significance. In Taiwan, men scored higher than did women in authenticity, with a trend towards statistical significance in the ideological domain. This suggests that identity Achievement, compared to other identity statuses, is closest to one’s true self.

The findings on the associations between identity statuses and identity authenticity supported this interpretation. It was found that only identity Achievement was positively (and significantly) associated with identity authenticity. The other three statuses all had a significant negative association with identity authenticity. Recall that identity Achievement was also the identity status that resulted in positive psychosocial well-being as discussed in the previous section. It thus might be that the process of identity exploration and commitment uncovers one’s internal authentic self and brings one closer to the knowledge of his/her true-self. And, it is this sense of finding one’s true self or owing one’s self that in turn results in positive effects in other aspects of psychosocial functioning.

Interestingly, however, the association between Achievement and authenticity
was insignificant among Taiwanese men. This finding was not expected. Perhaps the competitive economic nature of current Taiwanese society means that male identity achievers literally chose identities that reflect instrumental purposes, rather than their intrinsic interests as described by Waterman (1990). Another explanation is that Taiwanese men are frustrated by the chaos of their society, which does not do a good job of offering sufficient guidance and plans for them. They thus felt inauthentic in their identities, since they had restricted role choices. Future studies will be needed to disentangle this finding.

The negative association between identity Foreclosure and authenticity also supported the idea that identities formed through the mechanism of identification were less likely to feel authentic. Note that this finding did not vary as a function of culture and gender. In other words, despite the fact that collectivist cultures may prefer identity Foreclosure more than individualistic cultures, for one’s true self to emerge and to be manifested in his/her identities, a period of exploring and questioning can not be omitted. However, this finding needs to be viewed with caution, given that Taiwan society did not prove to differ in identity Foreclosure significantly from that of the American society in the present study.

In general, Americans scored higher on identity authenticity than did Taiwanese, as expected. The low score among Taiwanese can be explained in part by its collectivist nature. That is, the need to connect to others and to fulfill one’s role duties and other’s expectations places pressure and constraints on youth’s freely expressing their true self.
As a result, a sense of being false ensues. In addition, the high identity Moratorium and Diffusion prevailing in Taiwan also contributed to the lowered scores.

Note that in Taiwan, women scored significantly lower in authenticity in the ideological domain than did men. This suggests that the pressure and constraints were especially true for women during the pursuit of the ideological issues. Women might feel that they are especially discouraged from participating in areas such as career and politics, which thus resulted in identities that felt more false. The low authenticity scores among Taiwanese women also disclosed their dissatisfaction about their current status. As discussed above, Taiwanese women’s identity development has been much de-emphasized by the society, and great constraints have also been put on them. As these Taiwanese college women were receiving higher education and Western thoughts that stress equal status, they became quite aware of their suppressed social status, which thus resulted in a sense of self being false. The increased self-awareness coupled with lack of societal support might nevertheless trap them into a double-bind situation. Some women might start to feel that their roles should on longer be limited to interpersonal realm, but at the same time find roles in ideological domain very unpromising. Consequently, the process of exploration and commitment in both domains decreased, which might also accounted for the low identity Achievement scores they showed.
VII. CONCLUSIONS

The aims of cross-cultural research are to investigate the relationships between behavioral variables and cultural variables and also to discover the generalizability of psychological principles (Ho, 1994). While cross-cultural psychologists have recognized many variations in human development as a function of one’s culture or ethnicity, the analytic concepts employed have been criticized as being oversimplified and thus not being able to fully account for the complexity of cultural effects (Ho, 1994; Neff, 2003; Wainryb, 1997). Two important points have been made recently. First, many researchers have treated culture as a monolithic construct or a homogeneous entity, assuming that members within the culture share the same goals and experience. However, as a matter of fact and also common sense, people within a culture do not share exactly the same experience nor develop identical perspectives. There is much within-culture variation, often more so than between-culture differences (Oyserman, Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Secondly, the two commonly used cultural templates, individualism v.s. collectivism, or independent self v.s. interdependent self have sometimes been regarded as mutually exclusive constructs, thus, the interpretation of research findings usually focus on the prioritization of one construct over another. However, independence and connectedness are both basic human needs. One famous example of this can be found in Bowlby’s attachment theory (1969), which illustrates how maintaining a healthy social bond facilitates individuation, and thus results in a functional personality. Hence, it is unlikely that people of one culture experience only one need at the expense of the other.
Instead, the two needs (or goals) coexist in the culture, while one goal may be emphasized more than the other depending on particular circumstances and situations.

In accordance with these views, the present study found that being both independent and connected to others had an important influence on youth’s identity formation, but that gender and culture impacted the process of identity development. In general, the United States rated higher than did Taiwan on identity achievement in both ideological and interpersonal domains; however, the statistical significance only appeared in the ideological domain, suggesting that the collectivist nature of the Taiwan society led to an increased value being placed on identity exploration and commitment with regard to interpersonal issues, which are accentuated in that society.

However, the cross-cultural variance of identity achievement in the ideological domain was primarily accounted for by the low scores of Taiwanese women. There was actually no statistical difference between men in Taiwan and the U.S. This finding implies that individuals in a particular culture do not necessarily share the same experience. There is much within-culture variance that could substantially explain cross-cultural differences. Gender is one of the significant within-culture variables that seemed to be accounting for cross-cultural differences in this study.

In fact, there were considerable gender by culture interactions found in the present study. The differing gender difference patterns manifested across cultures reflect different gender experiences that are tied to different cultural beliefs, goals, and expectations placed on men and women. In general, it was found that interpersonal issues
were more important for women than for men in both American and Taiwanese society; while ideological issues were more important for men than for women. That is probably because traditionally, women in most cultures have been socialized to be connected and caring; while men are more often socialized to be independent and separate. However, evidence also suggested that American women were socialized to be independent as well as interdependent. There was a trend for American women to outscore American men on identity Achievement in both ideological and interpersonal domains. The flexibility of being independent and connected may provide more room and freedom for American women to explore and commit in either domain and also to be free from the harmful effect of not achieving a certain self-image, as suggested by the finding that diffusion was not significantly associated with poor mental health for women while it was for men.

However, it should not be naively assumed that American women have enjoyed a full range of freedom and autonomy and are completely freed from traditional gender roles. American society actually expects women to be caring and to be the primary family care-takers (Helgeson, 2002). Thus, the complexity of their identity issues may require them to integrate the two domains despite possible competing roles and role conflicts, which may in part result in advanced identity achievement among American women. On the contrary, American men seemed to be more socialized to be independent and masculine. Interdependence is still a less acceptable masculine ideal, which may result in heightened stress when self-images are passive, as occurs with identity diffusion.

Taiwanese women’s identity development was the least likely to be achieved.
This finding probably stems from Chinese traditions and societal expectations, which discourage women from developing their personal identity. Women are mainly socialized to take family roles and to depend on male figures in their lives. However, this does not necessarily mean that Taiwanese women did not suffer from the lack of independence. Evidence showed that Taiwanese women felt the least authentic about their identities compared to others. The increasing awareness of being suppressed and of the unpromising paths toward success in ideological domain might have trapped them in a double-bind situation, contributing to the lowered identity achievement in both domains among Taiwanese women.

Taiwanese men presented a more complicated picture in their identity development. In general, they had high identity achievement in both domains as a result of social changes. However, being passive in interpersonal issues did not influence their psychosocial health; while being diffused in ideological issues did. In Taiwan, the goal of being independent is heavily emphasized for men compared to women. Men are also expected to be social, active, and knowledgeable in ideological issues. Thus, being passive in the ideological issues might cause stress for them. However, their identity achievement was not associated with authentic-self, indicating that more factors are coming into play in their identity development.

Based on the findings regarding gender in the two cultures, it is clear that both independent and interdependent goals coexist within culture. Focusing on one goal to the exclusion of the other could not fully account for the cultural and gender differences
obtained. However, a balance of the two goals is likely to be beneficial, as revealed by the association between identity Achievement and the psychosocial health. And importantly, this positive effect also proved to be universal. Identity Achievement was also positively associated with increased authenticity, which has itself been associated with psychological well-being (Harter, 1997).

The present study also revealed a possible cultural-specific mechanism that might mediate Taiwanese youth’s identity development: filial piety. It was found that identity Achievement and Foreclosure were significantly associated with each other among Taiwanese youth, but not American youth. In other words, parental approval and a proper resolution of family duties may be of particular importance for Taiwanese youth’s identities to be consolidated, especially when societal demands and family obligations are in conflict. It also implies that traditional parenting practices need to be modified in order to accommodate youth’s individuation.

It is interesting that the transitional nature of current Taiwan society also had significant impact on youth’s identity. It was shown that there were large numbers of Taiwanese youth who were in moratorium or who were diffused, and identity moratorium in the ideological domain did not produce harmful effect. It may be that the fluctuating social ideologies and the ambiguity that currently prevails in Taiwanese society and the discontinuity between youth’s old environment and new environment results in prolonged self-exploration and also self-doubt. However, youth’s frequently changing identities among ideological issues produced little harm as ambiguity was a social norm. Still, the
tolerance of ambiguity may cause other detrimental effects, such as delinquency.

Identity Foreclosure was the least endorsed identity mode among youth in either culture, and was also found to be experienced as inauthentic in both cultures. Thus, a process of exploration appears to be critical in finding one’s true self in identity formation, even in collectivistic cultural contexts. However, the finding that there was not a significant association with psychosocial well-being needs further investigation with samples exhibiting wider ranges of identity foreclosure scores.

In conclusion, cultural differences in youth’s identity development can be explained by the different effects of being independent and being connected to others. However, the two goals coexist within cultures. Moreover, the complexity of culture is more adequately accounted for when gender is included as an explanatory variable. In general, it could be said that interpersonal issues were more important than ideological issues for women as compared to men, and for Taiwanese youth as compared to American youth. However, men and women also appeared to experience these two issues differently as a result of differing cultural expectations. American women proved to be more advanced in identity development, while Taiwanese women were the least advanced. They also felt the least authentic in their identities, suggesting a major compromise of their autonomy. On the other hand, American men seemed to particularly vulnerable to passive self-images in both the interpersonal and ideological domains, while Taiwanese men, although having high identity achievement in both domains, only experienced the
negative effects of diffusion in the ideological domain. Moreover, their identity achievement proved to have no significant association with their true-self. These findings highlight the fact that culture and gender always interact, and that to make generalizations about gender without taking culture into account (or visa versa) would be a mistake.

**Limitations**

The present study focused on 18-24 year-old undergraduate college youth, who were relatively well educated. Thus, the results cannot be generalized to youth who do not attend college or who are in graduate school. For instance, one might expect women graduate students to be even more advanced in identity Achievement, as they probably need to solve more complicated tasks concerning their personal development and relationship connections.

It should also be remembered that the present study controlled for demographic variables of social economic status and age when conducting analyses. Thus, the results do not tell us if age or SES may interact with culture in interesting or important ways. Future studies should include those variables in their explicit study design, such as focusing on differences in identity formation for youth who do not attend college or who live in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Similarly, research could determine if there are different developmental trends for the four identity statuses in different cultures by including a broader age range of participants.

In addition, the cultural comparison was based on eight content areas in EOM-
EIS, which was developed in the United States. It is not clear if the eight content areas are as appropriate in capturing critical identity issues for youth in Taiwan as they are in the United States. Some critical identity issues among Taiwanese, such as family role and school life, are not included. This suggests future research should be conducted to create these content area measurements in diverse cultural contexts.

Another limitation is that participants in both nations were aware that the present study was cross-cultural research, as indicated in the consent form. Although the instruction, when implementing the research, had stressed that there was no right and wrong answer and participants should endorse an answer that was best descriptive of himself/herself, there might still be some effect of social comparison coming into play. It is suggested that future studies may not need to inform participants about this, or to use a “social desirable” scale to control for its effect.

**Implications for future research**

One aspect of study hypotheses that was not supported in the present study concerned identity Foreclosure. It was expected that Taiwanese would score higher in identity Foreclosure, given that Taiwanese cultural values heavily emphasize family ties and filial piety. Although the low scores among Taiwanese might be a result of social changes, replication will be still needed to validate this finding. One important consideration would be to not let participants know it is a cross-cultural study. It is speculated that both Taiwanese and Americans may give more socially desirable response
regarding identity foreclosure, especially among youth who are actually identity foreclosed (Marcia, 1993). This might be especially true for Taiwanese, as they are in fact quite aware that the Chinese family is known for parental control and that American families give more freedom to their children. Taiwanese youths who are aware of the cross-cultural nature of the research in which they are participating may thus tend to avoid endorsing foreclosure items out of fear of negative social comparisons.

In addition, the insignificant association between identity Foreclosure and psychosocial well-being needs further investigation. Although identity Foreclosure may be a starting point for identity exploration and thus have few harmful effects for youth, however, a potential differential association pattern among men in the two cultures suggests further examination would be needed with samples that will exhibit wider range of identity foreclosure scores. The above mentioned technique will also help enlarge the range.

The possible cultural-specific mechanism operating in identity formation in Taiwanese youth, the filial piety, is also an interesting topic for future research, as cross-cultural psychologist are interested in discovering potential cultural values that alter human development. As discussed in the previous section, there is a need for Taiwanese youth to respect their parents and honor their family name. This need is unlikely to disappear even though the society is changing. Taiwanese youth may particularly feel conflict when there is a conflict between this traditional collectivist value and the increasingly individualistic values emerging in the society. They might feel that they are
inadequate as a son or a daughter. In other words, their identity as a son or a daughter is crucial and also might influence other aspects of their identities. Researchers could create a “family role” identity scale to see how it is related to other identity issues and also its relative significance. Researchers could also investigate how parental validation is associated with youth’s identity formation. Another interesting area of research would be to examine how contemporary Taiwanese parents alter their parenting as an adaptation to their children’s individuation. For instance, it is possible that a democratic style of parenting which makes youth feel respected may actually lead to closer adoption of parental views as youth feel grateful for this freedom.

Another interesting topic for cross-cultural comparison would be to investigate further the psychological effects of the four identity statuses in different cultures. The differing effects of identity Diffusion among men and women in the two cultures also needs replication to see if the patterns still hold with another similar sample. Also, the insignificant effect of identity Moratorium on well-being in the ideological domain among Taiwanese youth needs replication. Besides the speculation that the detrimental effects of being in moratorium due to social chaos may manifest in the form of externalized behavior, another speculation is that the tolerance of ambiguity is actually part of the Chinese personality (Yang, 1992).

Lastly, another worthy research topic would be to see how the goal of being independent and the goal of being connected are negotiated, achieved, or compromised in youth’s identity development. Theoretically, identity achievement is secured through
youth’s searching for the self autonomously and through a connection to their significant others and the society. Thus, both being independent and being connected are likely to be elements in identity achievers’ sense of self. Findings in the present study also revealed that the two goals can explain identity formation. Thus, it would be interesting to see how identity statuses are associated with one’s independent sense of self and interdependent sense of self simultaneously.

**Implications for social policies**

The present study found that Taiwanese women’s identity development appeared to be the poorest compared to others. Especially, the increasing awareness of gender equity and their poor social status and lack of opportunities in Taiwanese society might put Taiwanese women in a double-bind situation. That is, they might start to feel that they need not to commit only to the interpersonal issues as their sole identity, which in turn results in decreased identity exploration and commitment in this domain. However, the society continues to discourage and stereotype women who exert themselves in the ideological realm, thus discouraging women from identity exploration and commitment in the ideological domain.

Solving this dilemma will involve many social systems, such as policies, education, and so on. It might take a long time for Taiwan society to accept women’s independence as it is in the U.S. However, what is feasible now is to educate students in the school system. What needs to be taught is: first, stop stereotyping women who are
successful in the ideological life domain. This should be done not only in educational materials, but also as a school and classroom climate. Secondly, introduce female role models who successfully participate in the ideological life domain. Successful and positive role models are particularly important for youth’s identity development, as they help bring hope to youth as they are visualizing their possible selves.

The present study also found that the fluctuating social ideologies and the discontinuity between one’s family and mandatory education environments and the societal environment could lead to prolonged identity moratorium and heightened diffusion among Taiwanese youth. Because the status of moratorium and diffusion are associated with negative outcomes, special attention should be directed to assisting Taiwanese youth in establishing and consolidating their identities. For instance, school should function as a bridge to connect children or adolescents to the society. More educational and counseling plans concerning their identity issues, such as career guidance or counseling for conflict resolution in relationships should be launched to help them adapt to societal changes.

One special concern is raised concerning the educational system in Taiwan. It has been argued that the educational system in Taiwan has developed at a slow pace in the past and could not meet the demands in the society. However, educational reforms happening in recent years have been criticized as changing too quickly and also for not being well designed, tested, or implemented. What is worse is that educational reform has served as a tool for political candidates to win the elections, but not for the sake of
improving educational quality. Thus, educational policies have been changing constantly. The consequence is: youth are ill-prepared to participate in the society and also may be losing their direction in life, as revealed in the present study. The recommendation for this situation is to design better educational policies, and of particular importance, to empirically examine the effects of one policy through experimental studies, before it is expanded to the whole educational system. It will also be important to consider possible differences in outcomes for Taiwanese males and females, because as the findings of this study indicate, the experience of the two genders in Taiwanese society is not the same.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES - ENGLISH

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Age: ______ years old
2. Gender: ____ male    ____ female
3. Grade: ___ freshman   ___ sophomore   ___ junior   ___ senior   ___ other: ____________-
4. Major: _________________________________________ (please indicate)
5. Ethnicity (please check one):
   ___ American Indian, Native-American
   ___ Asian, Asian-American
   ___ Black, African-American
   ___ Latino, Hispanic-American
   ___ White, Caucasian-American
   ___ Other: please indicate: ________________________________________
6. Generation (please check one):
   ___ Both my parents and I were born in the U.S.
   ___ I was born in the U.S., but my parents were not (or at least one parent was not).
   ___ Both my parents and I were not born in the U.S. At what age did you move to the U.S.?
     __________ years old
7. Marital status: ___ Single   ___ Married   ___ Divorced   ___ Widowed   ___ Other: ___________
8. Parental education: Please check one box to indicate the years of schooling of your parents. If one is deceased, please check N/A.

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>7 years or less</th>
<th>8-9 years or Middle</th>
<th>Some High School</th>
<th>High School diploma</th>
<th>Some College</th>
<th>Bachelor’s degree</th>
<th>Master’s degree</th>
<th>Postgraduate degree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
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<td>Mother</td>
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8. Parental occupation: Please use the following categories to indicate your parents’ occupation:

(1) Laborer
(2) Semiskilled worker
(3) Farmer, Forestry, Fishing
(4) Mechanic, Tradesman, Crafts
(5) Police, Firefighter
(6) Clerical, Sales
(7) Nurse, Teacher, Technician
(8) Executive, Administrator
(9) Doctor, Lawyer, Professional
(10) Homemaker
(11) Unemployed
(12) Deceased
(13) Other: _______

8-1. Father: _____ (please write the number from the list)
8-2. Mother: ____ (please write the number from the list)
9. How many people are there living in your home (including you)? ______
10. Household income: Please estimate the annual income of your home:
    ___________________________ dollars.
EOM-EIS-2

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

6- Strongly agree  5- Moderately agree  4- Agree
3- Disagree  2- Moderately  1- Strongly Disagree

1. I haven’t chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I’m just working at whatever is available until something better comes along.
2. When it comes to religion, I just haven’t found anything that appeals and I don’t really feel the need to look.
3. My ideas about men’s and women’s roles are identical to my parents’. What has worked for them will obviously work for me.
4. There’s no single “life style” which appeals to me more than another.
5. There are a lot of different kinds of people. I’m still exploring the many possibilities to find the right kind of friends for me.
6. I sometimes join in recreational activities when asked, but I rarely try anything on my own.
7. I haven’t really thought about a “dating style.” I’m not too concerned whether I date or not.
8. Politics is something that I can never be too sure about because things change so fast. But, I do think it’s important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.
9. I’m still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what jobs will be right for me.
10. I don’t give religion much thought and it doesn’t bother me one way or the other.
11. There’s so many ways to divide responsibilities in marriage; I’m trying to decide what will work for me.
12. I’m looking for an acceptable perspective for my own “life style” view, but I haven’t really found it yet.
13. There are many reasons for friendship, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I’ve personally decided on.
14. While I don’t have one recreational activity I’m really committed to, I’m experiencing numerous leisure outlets to identify one I can really get involved in.
15. Based on past experiences, I’ve chosen the type of dating relationship I want now.
16. I haven’t really considered politics. It just doesn’t excite me much.
17. I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there’s never really any question since my parents said what they wanted.
18. A person’s faith is unique to each individual. I’ve considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I can believe.
19. I’ve never really seriously considered men’s and women’s roles in marriage. It just doesn’t seem to concern me.
20. After considerable thought I’ve developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an ideal “lifestyle” and don’t believe anyone will be likely to change my perspectives.
21. My parents know what’s best for me in terms of how to choose my friends.
I’ve chosen one or more recreational activities to engage in regularly from lots of things and I’m satisfied with those choices.

I don’t think about dating much. I just kind of take it as it comes.

I guess I’m pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.

I’m really not interested in finding the right job, any job will do. I just seem to flow with what is available.

I’m not sure what religious means to me. I’d like to make up my mind but I’m not done looking yet.

My ideas about men’s and women’s roles come right from my parents and family. I haven’t seen any need to look further.

My own views on a desirable life style were taught to me by my parents and I don’t see any need to question what they taught me.

I don’t have any real close friends, and I don’t think I’m looking for one right now.

Sometimes I join in leisure activities, but I really don’t see a need to look for a particular activity to do regularly.

I’m trying out different types of dating relationships. I just haven’t decided what is best for me.

There are so many different political parties and ideals. I can’t decide which to follow until I figure it all out.

It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.

Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.

I’ve spent some time thinking about men’s and women’s roles in marriage and I’ve decided what will work best for me.

In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration.

I only pick friends my parents would approve of.

I’ve always liked doing the same recreational activities my parents do and haven’t ever seriously considered anything else.

I only go out with the type of people my parents expect me to date.

I’ve thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

My parents decided a long time ago what I should go into for employment and I’m following through their plans.

I’ve gone through a period of serious questions about faith and can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.

I’ve been thinking about the roles that husbands and wives play a lot these days, and I’m trying to make a final decision.

My parent’s views on life are good enough for me; I don’t need anything else.

I’ve tried many different friendships and now I have a clear idea of what I look for in a friend.
46. After trying a lot of recreational activities, I’ve found one or more I really enjoy doing by myself or with friends.

47. My preferences about dating are still in the process of developing. I haven’t fully decided yet.

48. I’m not sure about my political beliefs, but I’m trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.

49. It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.

50. I attend the same church my family has always attended. I’ve never really questioned why.

51. There are many ways that married couples can divide up family responsibilities. I’ve thought about lots of ways and now I know exactly how I want it to happen for me.

52. I guess I just kind of enjoy life in general, and I don’t see myself living by any particular viewpoint to life.

53. I don’t have any close friends. I just like to hang around with the crowd.

54. I’ve been experienced a variety of recreational activities in hopes of finding one or more I can enjoy for some time to come.

55. I’ve dated different types of people and now know exactly what my own “unwritten rules” for dating are and whom I will date.

56. I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way of the other.

57. I just can’t decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many that have possibilities.

58. I’ve never really questioned my religion. If it’s right for my parents it must be right for me.

59. Opinions on men’s and women’s roles seem so varied that I don’t think much about it.

60. After a lot of self-examination, I have established a very definite view on what my own lifestyle will be.

61. I really don’t know what kind of friend is best for me. I’m trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me.

62. All of my recreational preferences I got from my parents and I haven’t really tried anything else.

63. I date only people my parents would approve of.

64. My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I’ve always gone along accepting what they have.

MY TRUE SELF: The following questions ask you to consider the extent to which your current beliefs or behaviors are reflective of your **authentic self**. In other words, do these beliefs and behaviors feel like they reflect the **“real you”**, the inner person you truly are inside, or do they feel false or phony?

-3- very false  -2- somewhat false  -1- a little false
1- a little true  2- somewhat true  3- very true
65. To what extent do you think that your occupational plans reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?
66. To what extent do you think that your political beliefs or activities reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?
67. To what extent do you think that your religious beliefs or activities reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?
68. To what extent do you think that the life goals you hold reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?
69. To what extent do you think that your choice of friends reflects your true self versus feeling false or phony?
70. To what extent do you think that your decision or behavior related to dating reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?
71. To what extent do you think that your beliefs and behaviors about men and women’s roles in marriage reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?
72. To what extent do you think that your recreational activities reflect your true self versus feeling false or phony?

**SELF-ESTEEM SCALE**

The following items will ask you about your perceptions and feelings concerning your self. Please read each statement and indicate whether you agree or disagree and to what extent.

4- strongly agree 3- agree 2- disagree 1- strongly disagree

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

The following items will ask you about your perceptions and feelings concerning your current life. Please read each item and indicate your agreement level. Please be open and honest in your responding.

7-strongly agree 6-agree  5-slightly agree
4-neither agree nor disagree
3-slightly disagree 2-disagree  1-strongly disagree

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

TRAIT-ANXIETY SCALE

A number of statements which people have used to describe themselves are given below. Read each statement and then circle an appropriate number to the right of the statement to indicate how you generally feel. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement but give the answer that seems to best describe how you generally feel.

1-Almost never  2-Sometimes  3-Often  4-Almost Always

1. I feel pleasant.
2. I feel nervous and restless.
3. I feel satisfied with myself.
4. I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be.
5. I feel like a failure.
6. I feel rested.
7. I am “calm, cool, and collected ”.
8. I feel that difficulties are piling up so that I cannot overcome them.
9. I worry too much over something that really doesn’t matter.
10. I am happy.
11. I have disturbing thoughts.
12. I lack self confidence.
13. I feel secure.
15. I feel inadequate.
16. I am content.
17. Some unimportant thoughts runs through my mind and bothers me.
18. I take disappointments so keenly that I can’t put them out of my mind.
19. I am a steady person.
20. I get in a state of tension or turmoil as I think over my recent concerns and interests.
APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

Identity Formation in Taiwanese and American College Students
Informed Consent Statement

Dear Prospective Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study concerning the ways you decide your beliefs and values in different life domains. I am a Ph.D. student from the Department of Educational Psychology in the University of Texas at Austin. I am conducting a study aiming to understand how your ways of deciding your beliefs and values are related to your psychological health and what the influence factors would be. This study requires about 300 participants. Therefore, if you are aged 18-22 or a college student, I am sincerely asking for your help by participating in this study. If you chose to participate, you will complete a set of questionnaires asking about your psychological well-being and ways in which you decide your beliefs and values. It will in total take about 35 minutes to complete the questionnaires.

Please note that your responses will be kept strictly confidential. The questionnaires are anonymous. All questionnaires will be stored in a locked place. Only my dissertation supervisor and I have access to the information you provide. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time. Your decision of whether or not to participate will not affect your current and future relationships with the University of Texas at Austin.

Participation in this study, however, may offer several benefits for you. You will have the opportunities to reflect on your ways of constructing your life and gain better understanding of your self. Thus, it has a potential to improve your psychological well-being.

I am grateful for your help. If you have any questions concerning this study, please feel free to contact me. My address and phone number are provided below.

In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Clarke A. Burnham, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, 512/232-4383. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin and the Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. Your research records will not be released without your consent unless required by law or a court order. If the results of this research are published or presented at scientific meetings, your identity will not be disclosed. You may make and keep a copy of this form.

Sincerely,

Chi-chia J. Cheng, M.A.
Signatures:
By signing this consent form, I am indicating that I have read and understand the consent information provided above, and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to ask questions concerning this study and am free to withdraw at any time.

Please print and sign your name:

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<th>Printed Name of Subject</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chichia Jessica Cheng</td>
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<td>2-26-04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Principal Investigator</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
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APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRES –CHINESE

個人背景變項

1. 年齡: ______ 歲
2. 性別: ___ 男    ___ 女
3. 年級: ___ 一年級  ___ 二年級  ___ 三年級  ___ 四年級  ___ 其他: _________
4. 科系: _________________________________________ (請寫下)
5. 文化族群 (請勾選一項): 
   ___ 台灣原住民    ___ 客家人     ___ 閩南人      ___ 外省人      ___ 僑生
   ___ 其他: ____________________________
6. 婚姻狀態: ___ 單身  ___ 已婚  ___ 離婚  ___ 矜寡  ___ 其他: _____________
7. 父母教育程度: 請在格中打勾。如果已逝世，請勾 N/A

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<th>小學畢業或更少</th>
<th>國中畢業</th>
<th>高中肄業</th>
<th>高中畢業</th>
<th>專科或大學肄業</th>
<th>學士學位</th>
<th>碩士學位</th>
<th>博士學位</th>
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<td>父親</td>
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<td>母親</td>
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8. 父母職業類別: 請利用下表指明您父母的職業類別:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>勞工</th>
<th>半技術工人</th>
<th>農夫、漁夫、森林業</th>
<th>機械工、零售商、藝工</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>警察、消防人員</td>
<td>辦事員、業務員</td>
<td>護士、教師、技術人員</td>
<td>行政主管、行政管理</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>醫師、律師、教授、專家</td>
<td>家管</td>
<td>無業</td>
<td>已逝世</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>其他</td>
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8-1. 父親: ____ (請寫出與上表對應的代號)
8-2. 母親: ____ (請寫出與上表對應的代號)

9. 家庭人口: 包括您自己在內，有少人住在您的家中 (若您來自的家庭) exchange 人

10. 家庭收入: 請估計家庭每月總收入約台幣: ____________________ 元 /月。
自我統合狀態問卷

請在仔細讀過每一題之後，選擇最能反映出您目前的想法或是感覺的答案。如果句中有兩部分，請您以整體的反應來作答。請在右邊答案欄中圈選您的答案。

非常符合 有些符合 稍微符合
稍微不符合 有些不符合 非常不符合

1. 我還沒有確定將來要做什麼工作，在更好的機會出現之前，有什麼就做什麼。
2. 我不覺得需要尋找我自己的宗教信仰。
3. 我對男性與女性角色的看法與我父母的看法相同，對他們行得通的，對我自然也行得通。
4. 我並沒有特別喜歡哪一種生活方式。
5. 世上有百種人，我仍不斷嘗試著找到適合我的朋友。
6. 我很少自行嘗試一些休閒活動，除非有人邀請我。
7. 我沒有真正想過「約會的形式」，而且我也不太在意有沒有約會。
8. 政治雖然多變難料，但是我認為瞭解自己的政治立場及理念很重要。
9. 我還在嘗試著確定自己的能力，以及我適合哪一種工作。
10. 宗教的事不會干擾我，我也不會多想它。
11. 在婚姻中劃分角色職責的方式有許多種，我正試著找出適合我的。
12. 我正在尋找我對「生活方式」的觀點，但還沒找到。
13. 關於友誼，我有自己的一套看法，而我總根據自己的價值觀與彼此的相似性來選擇知心朋友。
14. 由於我沒有特別喜歡某項娛樂活動，目前我正嘗試各種不同的休閒來找出我真正可以投入的。
15. 基於過去的經驗，我已經確定我希望的約會關係。
16. 我對政治不感興趣，也沒有真正去想過它。
17. 我也許想過將來要做什麼工作，但並不曾真正地煩惱過，因為我會照著父母的意願去做。
18. 宗教信仰對個人是獨特的，我已反覆思索過，並且知道我的信仰為何。
19. 我沒有真正認真地思考過男女在婚姻中的角色為何，這問題似乎不影響我。
20. 深思熟慮後，我已確定我理想的生活方式是什麼，也相信沒人可以改變我的觀點。
21. 就如何選擇朋友而論，父母知道什麼對我是最好的。
22. 我已從多種休閒活動中選擇出一種或幾種，且滿意這些選擇。
23. 我不太考慮約會的事，我就是一切順其自然。
24. 我猜我相當贊同家人的政治立場，在投票及其他有關方面我會聽從他們的意見。
25. 我實在沒什麼興趣去找到所謂的「合適的工作」，我覺得什麼工作都可以做，似乎是什麼都做什麼。
26. 我不大確定宗教對我的意義是什麼，我仍在探索中。
我對男女角色的觀點多來自家人及父母，並且覺得無需加以追究。我對理想的生活方式的觀點來自於父母親的教導，我覺得不需要去懷疑。有時我會參加一些休閒活動，但是我不覺得需要找出一項特定的、定時去做的休閒活動。我正嘗試不同型式的約會關係，但還沒有找出最適合我的。有太多不同的政黨和不同的理念，只有完全瞭解，否則我將難以決定我的政治立場。雖花了許多心力，如今我已經知道在我走中我要的是什麼了。我對宗教的觀點還是變來變去，對於宗教適合我或不適合我感到困惑。我只與父母親也認可的朋友交往。我緒與父母從事同樣的娛樂活動，而沒有認真考慮過其他選擇。我只與父母親期望中的人類型的人約會。我已經徹底的想過自己的政治理念，並且了解到，有些我父母的政治觀點我能同意，有些我並不能同意。我父母親早就計劃好有關於我的職業之性質，而我也遵循著他們的計畫在做。我已認真想過許多關於宗教信仰的問題一段時間了，現在我可以說已經瞭解我所相信的了。我近來思考許多有關丈夫與妻子所應扮演的角色，我還在試著做出最後的結論。對我而言，父母所教導我的對生活的看法已足夠了，不需要再想其他觀點。我嘗試過不同的友誼方式，現在對友誼的期望很明確了。經過嘗試不同的休閒活動之後，我已找出可以樂在其中或是與朋友同樂的了。我對於約會的偏愛方式還在發展階段，尚未完全決定。我的政治理念或立場還未確定，但我試著要找出能讓我真正相信的。雖然花了很多時間做決定，但是現在我已確定將來職業的方向了。我參與和我家人相同的宗教活動而從沒有真正懷疑過。家庭中男女分配責任的方式有許多種，我已思考過許多，並且確實知道我未來希望的是哪一種。我猜想我大概就是泛泛地享受生活，並沒有任何特別的生活觀點。我沒有特定的知心朋友，只是在人們中流轉。我嘗試不同的休閒活動，希望找到能讓我樂在其中的。我曾和不同類型的人交往過，如今我已經知道自己期望的約會方式以及想和哪種人約會。我對政治的關心及涉入太少，以至於沒有明確堅定的立場。我還是無法決定要做什麼工作，因為有太多的可能性。我未曾真正地懷疑過我的宗教信仰，如果某信仰適合我父母，那麼自然也適合我。男女角色的觀點似乎太多樣了，所以我不太去想這些問題。經過不斷自我檢核後，我已經在我的生活方式上有了明確的看法。我真的不知道什麼樣的朋友最適合我，我目前仍試著要找出友誼對我的意義是什麼。我的休閒活動嗜好都是來自父母親，我沒有真正試過其他的活動。
我只與父母贊同的對象約會、交往。
我的親人總有他們自己的政治理念或道德觀（例如有關對墮胎或安樂死的看法等），而我總是追隨他們。

我的真實自我：以下各題將請您想一想，您目前的某些理念或行為反映您的真實自我的程度。意即，是否這些理念及行為感覺上反映出“真正的你” - - 個內在的、你真實的自我，或讓您感覺很不真實、很虛假？

非常不真實  有些不真實  一點點不真實  一點點真實  有些真實  非常真實

您認為您目前的職業計劃是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前對政治的理念或活動是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前對宗教的信念或活動是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前的生活目標是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前對朋友的選擇是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前與約會有關的決定與行為是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前對男女性別角色的信念或行為是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
您認為您目前的休閒活動是否反映出您的真我，或讓您感覺不真實、虛假，其程度為何？
自尊量表

以下各題是關於您對自己的看法與感覺，請圈選您對每一題同意或不同意的程度。

- [ ] 非常同意   - [ ] 同意   - [ ] 不同意   - [ ] 非常不同意

1. 我覺得自己是個有價值的人，至少和別人不相上下
2. 我覺得我有許多優點
3. 總體而言，我傾向於覺得自己是一個失敗者
4. 我做事的能力可以和大多數人一樣好
5. 我覺得自己沒有什麼值得自豪的地方
6. 我對自己持肯定的態度
7. 整體而言，我對自己感到滿意
8. 我要是能更看得起自己就好了
9. 有時候，我確實覺得自己很沒用
10. 我有時認為自己一無是處

生活滿意度量表

以下各題是關於您對您目前生活的認知與感覺，請圈選您對每一題同意或不同意的程度。

- [ ] 非常同意   - [ ] 同意   - [ ] 稍微同意
  - [ ] 中立
  - [ ] 稍微不同意   - [ ] 不同意   - [ ] 非常不同意

1. 在大部分的情況中，我的生活與我理想的狀態接近
2. 我的生活狀態是非常完美的
3. 我很滿意自己的生活
4. 到目前為止，我已經在生活中獲得我想要的東西
5. 如果能夠重新活過，我幾乎不想改變任何東西

特質焦慮量表

下面有一些人們用來描述自己的語句，作答時，請先看各題的語句，然後根據您平時的感受，在右方答案欄處圈選一個恰當的數字。答案並沒有對錯之別，只要選出最能代表你平時感受的答案即可，不必在每一題上花太多時間。

- [ ] 幾乎沒有   - [ ] 有時   - [ ] 常常   - [ ] 幾乎總是
1. 我觉得愉快
2. 我觉得紧张，心神不宁
3. 我觉得对自己很满意
4. 我希望我能像别人那么快乐
5. 我觉得我很失败
6. 我觉得安闲
7. 我沉著、冷静而且镇定
8. 我觉得困难重重，以致难於克服
9. 我太担忧一些无关紧要的事
10. 我很快乐
11. 我有一些困扰著我的想法
12. 我缺乏自信
13. 我感到安全
14. 我下决心并不费力
15. 我有不能胜任、不够格的感觉
16. 我很满足
17. 一些无关紧要的念头在我心中出现而困扰著我
18. 我对失望很介意，以致於难以释然
19. 我是個稳定的人
20. 一想到最近与自己有利害關係的事時，我就會緊張或煩亂
APPENDIX D

SAMPLE PERMISSION LETTER

Dear Ms. Cheng

I hereby grant permission to you to conduct your study, “Identity Formation in Taiwanese and American College Students”, in the Department of Health Education, National Taiwan Normal University. I understand that you will recruit approximately 100 participants from this school in your study, and the study period will be from October 1st 2003 to December 31st 2003. You may use this school’s facilities during the study period.

Department Chair
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VITA

Chi-chia Cheng was born in Hsinchu, Taiwan on July 8, 1969, the daughter of Chong-Hsong Cheng and Shun-Mei Chen. After completing her work at Hsinchu Girls’ High School, Hsinchu, in 1987, she entered National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, and received her degree of Bachelor of Education in June 1992. During the following semester, she was employed as a schoolteacher in Da-Cheng Junior High School, Taoyuan. In 1993, she entered National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, and received her degree of Master’s of Art in June 1995. After graduation, she went back to Da-Cheng Junior High School to teach for another two years. In 1997, she was employed as an educational counselor by the Bureau of Education, Taoyuan County Government, Taoyuan. In 1999, she entered The Graduate School at University of Texas at Austin and received her Master of Art in May, 2004.

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