



A comparison of self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females in Bozeman, Montana
by Judy Larson Morrill

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in
Home Economics
Montana State University
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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to explore self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females. The theoretical framework for this research is based on the acknowledgment of many social psychologists that self-esteem is a product of the social interaction process.

Since clothing can be considered an extension of self, a positive interest in clothing may then serve to enhance individual self-esteem and a low interest may have the opposite effect.

The following aspects were studied: 1) differences in self-esteem for confined and nonconfined elderly females; 2) differences in interest in clothing for confined and nonconfined elderly females; 3) a relationship between self-esteem and interest in clothing; 4) a relationship between either self-esteem or interest in clothing and the general variables, age, income, educational level, and health.

A questionnaire consisted of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, an interest in clothing measure and a general information section. This questionnaire was administered to fifty-four elderly females.

A t-Test was used to determine differences between means for the confined and nonconfined on individual items on the self-esteem measure and the interest in clothing measure. Pearson Product-moment Correlation was used to determine relationships between interest in clothing and self-esteem. Spearman Rank Correlation was used to determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing and the general variables age, educational level, and self-rated health.

Results of the research were tested at the .05 level. Findings indicated little difference in self-esteem between confined and nonconfined elderly females. Significant differences were found on five of the nineteen items on the interest in clothing measure. No significant relationship was found to exist between interest in clothing and self-esteem for elderly females. A significant negative relationship was found to exist between educational level and interest in clothing for the nonconfined elderly females. The same relationship was not found for the confined females. No significant relationships were found to exist between general variables age and self-rated health and self-esteem and interest in clothing. Results of income level were not analyzed.

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in

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This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

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ABSTRACT.

The purpose of this study was to explore self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females. The theoretical framework for this research is based on the acknowledgment of many social psychologists that self-esteem is a product of the social interaction process. Since clothing can be considered an extension of self, a positive interest in clothing may then serve to enhance individual self-esteem and a low interest may have the opposite effect.

The following aspects were studied: 1) differences in self-esteem for confined and nonconfined elderly females; 2) differences in interest in clothing for confined and nonconfined elderly females; 3) a relationship between self-esteem and interest in clothing; 4) a relationship between either self-esteem or interest in clothing and the general variables, age, income, educational level, and health.

A questionnaire consisted of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, an interest in clothing measure and a general information section. This questionnaire was administered to fifty-four elderly females.

A t-Test was used to determine differences between means for the confined and nonconfined on individual items on the self-esteem measure and the interest in clothing measure. Pearson Product-moment Correlation was used to determine relationships between interest in clothing and self-esteem. Spearman Rank Correlation was used to determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing and the general variables age, educational level, and self-rated health.

Results of the research were tested at the .05 level. Findings indicated little difference in self-esteem between confined and nonconfined elderly females. Significant differences were found on five of the nineteen items on the interest in clothing measure. No significant relationship was found to exist between interest in clothing and self-esteem for elderly females. A significant negative relationship was found to exist between educational level and interest in clothing for the nonconfined elderly females. The same relationship was not found for the confined females. No significant relationships were found to exist between general variables age and self-rated health and self-esteem and interest in clothing. Results of income level were not analyzed.

CHAPTER I

NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE PROBLEM

There are approximately twenty-five million residents in the United States over the age of sixty-five. Using chronological age to define elderly, this group constitutes approximately 11 percent of the total population (Census Supplementary Report, 1980). Projected figures for the year 2030 estimate that elderly, over the age of sixty-five will make up more than 18 percent of the population (Kalish, 1982). If this projected figure for the year 2030 is realized, the proportion of elderly in the population will be over four times greater than it was in 1900.

Life expectancy has increased significantly since 1900 due to improved nutrition, sanitation, health care, and working conditions. In 1900 the average life expectancy for both men and women was forty-eight years. By 1978 this figure had increased to seventy-seven years for women and sixty-nine years for men (Kalish, 1982). Of the children born in the United States in the 1980's, over 75 percent can expect to reach the age of sixty-five (Kalish, 1982). This increased life expectancy has created a greater proportion of individuals over the age of sixty-five.

Because the elderly do make up such a significant portion of the United States population, it becomes necessary to regroup the population

into smaller segments for further investigation. Bernice Neugarten, a scientist in the field of gerontology, suggests that if society is to understand and adequately meet the needs of elderly today, then the elderly segment must be broken down into three distinct groups. She conceptualizes the first of these three groups as "Young-old," those between the ages of fifty and seventy-five years of age. This group is characterized by those individuals who retire at an early age. Neugarten sees this group of elderly free of the social responsibilities of work or raising a family and basically healthy, active, and financially stable (Tavani, 1979).

The second group of elderly is described as "Middle-old," age seventy-five to eighty-five years of age. Figures for 1979 estimate nine million people in this category equaling one-fourth of the total elderly population; by the year 2000 this group is projected to comprise over one-third of the elderly population (Tavani, 1979). Further investigation shows that this sub-group of the elderly has increased ten times since 1900 (Tavani, 1979), and has increased at a rate three times faster than that of elderly between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-four (Woodruff and Birren, 1975).

The third group of elderly are described by Neugarten as the "Old-old," those over the age of eighty-five. These older individuals are often not financially stable, have more physical impairments, are frail, less educated, and are more dependent on family and community (Tavani, 1979). This "Old-old" age group is also predominantly female, with twice as many females as males living to the age of eighty-five or older (Tavani, 1979).

This greater number of females in the population has come about since the early 1900's. In 1930 there were as many men as women over the age of sixty-five. But by the year 2000 this ratio is expected to decline to sixty-five men for every one hundred women (Kimmel, 1980).

This larger elderly population has become recognized as a separate entity. Along with this recognition, the problems, needs, and interests of an aging population are beginning to be addressed.

Aging is a process that is sometimes favorable and sometimes unfavorable, but it is a natural and inevitable process. Being old, elderly, aged, a "senior citizen," a "golden ager," is a stage in this process, occurring just as naturally and just as inevitably as infancy and childhood. (Kalish, 1982, p. 1)

Even though this aging process takes place naturally throughout the life cycle, it occurs at differing rates for each individual. Adults tend to vary greatly both in biological and behavioral functioning. Curtin (1972) stated that the physical process of aging, even though the individual realizes a change must take place, can be a terrifying experience.

Due to these physical changes that accompany increased age, many elderly individuals develop physical impairments which necessitate extensive care. If this care cannot be provided through an extended family situation, a move to a nursing home facility becomes a reality. In 1963, one percent of the elderly between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-four were living in nursing homes, compared to 14 percent of those over eighty-five years of age (Woodruff and Birren, 1975). In the decade from 1960 to 1970 the number of individuals over the age of sixty-five who were living in institutions increased 105 percent.

(Krause, 1981). According to 1979 figures, 4.7 percent of the population over the age of sixty-five in the United States now reside in institutions (Krause, 1981).

The tremendous increase in institutionalized living for the elderly is a relatively recent phenomenon. In 1900, the elderly segment made up only five percent of the total population (Kimmel, 1980). At that time elderly individuals existed as an integral part of a multi-generation family. As the person aged and was no longer capable of doing strenuous physical labor, homemaking and child care tasks were relegated to them. But the elderly remained a vital part of the family unit, fulfilling an important need as a part of society.

Through the transition into homemaking and child care tasks, the elderly person was still viewed as productive. Since the 1900's there have been several significant changes in our American society:

- 1) the population has become extremely mobile;
- 2) the number of elderly in the United States has increased seven times (Tavani, 1979);
- 3) work and leisure time activities have replaced the close-knit family relationships;
- and 4) the extended family has given way to a rapidly increasing number of elderly who are living independently in homes and apartments. When living independently is no longer possible, care is often provided in public or private nursing homes rather than as an extended family unit.

Numerous studies have been conducted concerning the needs of the elderly including medical care, nutrition, financial planning, and recreational and leisure time activities. Even educational needs of the elderly are beginning to be addressed. Clothing is considered to be one

of the essential basic needs for all people, along with food and shelter. Not only is it essential for comfort and protection, but also as an expression of self-concept. In the past two decades, the psychological value of clothing for the elderly has also been investigated to a limited extent. Robert J. Havinghurst, a social psychologist, stated that ". . . clothing, a need common to all people, is also a rational defense against aging (Havinghurst, 1953, p. 16)." As the elderly female progresses through this inevitable aging process, physical changes result. These changes create a greater need for clothing designed to meet the needs of elderly individuals. "By dressing more carefully than younger people, older people can make better use of their physical attractiveness (Havinghurst, 1953, p. 16)."

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A number of studies have been conducted which have investigated a relationship between self-concept and various aspects of clothing for school-age children, college students, handicapped individuals, and adults. A review of literature indicates a limited amount of research regarding a possible relationship between self-esteem and interest in clothing for women over the age of sixty-five. What is the relationship of clothing and self-esteem for elderly females? Does interest in clothing for women living independently differ from those women who are confined to nursing homes? Is there a significant difference in self-esteem for these two groups? The limited research findings available in this area provide the basis for this research study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was threefold:

1. To determine if differences existed in self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly women confined to nursing homes and those living independently.
2. To determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females.
3. To determine if a relationship existed between the general variables age, educational level, income, and self-rated health and self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females.

OBJECTIVES

Underlying this study were the following objectives:

1. To summarize the general information section of the questionnaire to provide an accurate demographic description of the elderly population used for this study.
2. To determine if there is a difference in self-esteem between elderly females who are confined to nursing homes and those who are living independently.
3. To determine if there is a difference in interest in clothing between elderly females who are confined to nursing homes and those who are living independently.
4. To determine if a relationship exists between self-esteem and interest in clothing for confined elderly females.

5. To determine if a relationship exists between self-esteem and interest in clothing for nonconfined elderly females.
6. To determine if there is a relationship between clothing and/or self-esteem and the general variables age, educational level, income level, and self-rated health for elderly females.

NULL HYPOTHESES

1. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of the confined and nonconfined elderly females on the measure of self-esteem.
2. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of the confined and nonconfined elderly females on the measure of interest in clothing.
3. There will be no significant relationship between the score on the self-esteem measure and the score on the interest in clothing measure for confined elderly females.
4. There will be no significant relationship between the score on the self-esteem measure and the score on the interest in clothing measure for the nonconfined elderly females.
5. There will be no significant relationship between interest in clothing and/or self-esteem and the general variables age, educational level, income level, and general health.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Clothing interest differs among individuals and can be measured using a Likert type scale developed by Ebeling, 1960.
2. Responses to the clothing instrument will represent the participants' realistic assessment of their own interest in clothing.
3. Self-esteem can be measured using the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, Rosenberg, 1965.

PROCEDURES

1. Select a sample of:
 - a. confined elderly females
 - b. nonconfined elderly females
2. Administer selected instruments:
 - a. Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale
 - b. Interest in Clothing
 - c. General Information
3. Score all tests
4. Analyze results descriptively and statistically
5. Interpret findings
6. Draw conclusions and make recommendations for further study

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are defined as they are used in the study:

Elderly: persons over sixty-five years of age.

Confined women: females over sixty-five years of age who are living in nursing homes in Bozeman, Montana.

Nonconfined women: females over sixty-five years of age who are living independently in Bozeman, Montana. Living independently has been defined by Walton, 1978, as "the ability to select and maintain a lifestyle consistent with desires, means, and expectations."

Self-esteem: " . . . a positive or negative attitude toward a particular object, namely, the self (Rosenberg, 1965)." Operationally defined, self-esteem is the total score on the ten items of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale. Self-esteem scores are then broken down into three groups: High (0-1), Medium (2), Low (3-6) (Rosenberg, 1965).

Clothing interest: " . . . a basis for judgment which provides direction for action or behavior toward wearing apparel (Feather, 76)." Operationally defined, interest in clothing is the total score on the nineteen-item interest in clothing measure developed by Ebeling, 1960, and modified by the researcher for this study. Interest in clothing scores are broken down into three categories: High (24-35), Medium (36-47), and Low (48-58), based on Ebeling, 1960.

General information: demographic information on age, educational level, income, and self-rated health for elderly females.

LIMITATIONS

1. The selection of the confined and nonconfined sample of elderly females is not random.
2. The size of the confined elderly sample is limited due to the small number of nursing homes in Bozeman, Montana.

3. No inferences can be made beyond the population of this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Self-Esteem

Harry Stack Sullivan stated that "the deepest human need is for self-esteem, and that each of us has an obligation to help one another achieve and maintain it (Knowles, 1980, p. 87)." Self-esteem has become an accepted term used to define certain aspects of human behavior.

Wells and Marwell (1976) compiled the following related names that have been used in relation to this same behavioral concept: "self-love, self-confidence, self-respect, self-acceptance, self-satisfaction, self-evaluation, self-appraisal, self-worth, sense of adequacy, sense of competence, self-ideal congruence, ego strength (1976, p. 7)." Wylie (1961) used the term self-regard as an all-inclusive term for the self-evaluation of self-concept.

To provide a historical background for self-esteem research, it is necessary to go back to the late 1800's. William James (1842-1910), an early American psychologist, is generally considered to be the first behavioral psychologist. James broke down the self into three component parts: the material me, the social me, and the spiritual me.

In its widest possible sense, however, a man's self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank account. (James, 1981, p. 279)

James conceptualizes the physical body as the basis for the "material me" with clothing being an extension of the body. "The old saying that the human person is composed of three parts--soul, body, and clothes--is more than a joke (James, 1981, p. 280)."

Social self is defined by James as the "recognition which he gets from his mates. . . .we have an innate propensity to get ourselves noticed, and noticed favorably, by our kind (James, 1981, p. 281)." James, therefore, views self-esteem as a product of the social interaction process.

C. H. Cooley (1864-1929) was the next behavioral psychologist to deal with the self. Cooley is probably the best known for his theory of the "looking-glass self."

Each to each a looking-glass
Reflects the other that doth pass
(Cooley, 1964, p. 184)

This theory is dependent on the social interaction process whereby an individual's conception of self is determined by his/her perception of other people's reactions to him or her (Cooley, 1964). Cooley dealt only with self within this social structure.

As we see our face, figure, and dress in the glass, and are interested in them because they are ours, and pleased or otherwise with them according as they do or do not answer to what we should like them to be; so in imagination we perceive in another's mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it. (Cooley, 1964, p. 184)

G. H. Mead (1863-1931) developed the Symbolic Interaction Theory as a means of understanding and explaining human behavior. The self, according to Mead, is not present at birth, but develops and grows as a process through social interaction throughout life (Mead, 1934). Mead

breaks down self into two components which are in continual interaction.

The first component, "I," involves a conscious awareness of self that is subject to continuous change; the second component is "me." Together these two components constitute human personality. According to the symbolic interaction theory, man acts as a response to verbal and non-verbal cues as part of the physical environment. These cues are a product of the social interaction process (Rose, 1962).

From these early psychologists came the beginnings of behavioral research as we know it today. ". . .Symbolic Interaction and its offshoots might represent the most significant current perspectives describing and dealing with self-esteem (Wells and Marwell, 1976, p. 29, 30)." The basic concept of this theory, emphasizing the importance of social interaction as the key to understanding and interpreting human experiences, serves as the framework for more recent empirical research in the area of self-esteem.

Stanley Coopersmith (1959) researched the development of self-esteem with eighty-five white middle-class fifth-grade male students. Coopersmith (1967) defines self-esteem as a "personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in attitudes the individual holds toward himself (p. 5)." From this research, Coopersmith concluded that although there were no distinct family patterns that differentiated high or low self-esteem, there were three contributors which were found strongly influential in the development of higher self-esteem: 1) acceptance of children by the parents; 2) enforcement of clearly defined limits for the children by the parents; and 3) respect for individual initiative and latitude within these limits by the parents (Coopersmith, 1967).

The research findings made by Coopersmith were based largely on one study of adolescents. These findings are generally consistent with those of Rosenberg (1965), who concentrated his early research with the development of a positive self-image during adolescence. Rosenberg began his research with the assumption that "the self image is central to the subjective life of the individual, largely determining his thoughts, feelings, and behavior (p. vii)." The population for this study consisted of 5,024 high-school juniors and seniors from ten high schools in New York State (Rosenberg, 1965).

Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as ". . . a positive or negative attitude toward a particular object, namely, the self (p. 30)." High self-esteem as expressed in the research meant having a feeling that one is "good enough," or, more simply stated, that the individual respects himself. "Low self esteem, on the other hand, implies self rejection, self dissatisfaction, self contempt (Rosenberg, 1965, p. 31)."

Brownfain (1962) expresses agreement with Rosenberg's philosophy through the statement, self-esteem is the "degree to which the individual accepts and values himself (p. 598)." Brownfain developed the Self-Rating Inventory in which an individual rates himself/herself on four aspects of self: private self, positive self, negative self, and social self.

Rosenberg (1965) found that people with low self-esteem exhibit more neurotic tendencies, have greater difficulty in social interaction, and have lower personal aspirations than those individuals with high self-esteem. Rosenberg used a ten-item self-evaluation questionnaire to establish a level of self-esteem. This questionnaire was originally

designed for use with adolescents, but use of the questionnaire has been expanded to include a wide range of age groups.

William Fitts, a clinical psychologist, studied self-esteem in relation to the process of self-actualization. He based his research on concepts developed earlier by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Fitts tried to establish a relationship between self-concept and rehabilitation through the use of the Tennessee Self Concept Scales (Fitts, 1965). Fitts (1965) defined self-concept as "the means of understanding the individual from his own frame of reference and as a resource for the better planning and assistance by those who would help him toward rehabilitation and/or self actualization (p. 5)." The Tennessee Self Concept Scale consists of one hundred items on a self-evaluative questionnaire that has been used with adults of all ages.

Many instruments, in addition to those of Rosenberg and Fitts, have been developed in an attempt to measure self-esteem. Each one has been designed to measure a certain aspect of self-concept. Since researchers, at the present time, are not in agreement as to the definition of self-esteem, it is only natural that many instruments have resulted in an attempt to measure this concept.

Self-Esteem and the Elderly

The study of self-esteem for elderly individuals is a relatively recent phenomenon. Davis (1962) researched the aspect of self-concept and social preferability with a group of thirty-three healthy nursing home residents. The Happiness Adjustment and Leisure Scales of Chicago Attitude Inventory were used. The research findings indicated that:

1) Peers preferred a person with a self-concept that reflected happiness and satisfaction with life. 2) Adjustments of older people to new situations were dependent on favorable social relationships.

Responses to mirrored reflections of self were the instruments used by Pollack, Karp, Kahn, and Goldfarb (1962) with 568 institution residents and 128 nonresidents. Self-derogatory responses to these mirrored reflections were given by 19.8 percent of the institution residents and by only 8.6 percent of the noninstitutionalized participants. Women were more self-derogatory than men. Their findings suggested that self-derogation is related to place of residence and sex.

Grant (1967) administered the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS) to 500 volunteers from church groups in order to compare the self-concepts of individuals of various ages. His participants ranged in age from twenty to sixty-nine. Grant found that self-concept changed with age and that more positive self-concepts were found in the older age groups. Grant suggested that the positive self-concept of the elderly, rather than being an increase in self-esteem, was more likely a result of a denial of personal faults.

Kahana and Coe (1969) used the descriptions made by staff members of nursing home residents to assess self-concept. These descriptions were then compared to self-concept ratings made by the residents. This research found a difference between self-ratings and those made by the staff members. Also, the self-evaluations were consistently more positive than those done by the staff members.

Rosel (1971) interviewed 107 nursing home residents in two large cities and found self-concept to be positively related to good health.

Findings also indicated participation in social activities related significantly to positive self-concept.

Gordon and Vinacke (1971) compared fifty-two nursing home residents to forty-four college students in an advanced psychology class. They found very little difference in self-concept between the two groups. Findings indicated that self-concept was altered more by increased dependency than by advanced age or institutionalized living.

Trimakas and Nicolay (1974) administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) to 162 females over the age of sixty-five. All were tenants of a low-income senior housing project. Their findings suggested that elderly women had higher self-concept scores for the general public than had been previously reported by Fitts, 1965. Also, there was a positive relationship between high self-concept scores and altruism.

Summary of Self-Esteem

The measurement of various aspects of self-concept for the elderly individual has received limited attention in the last two decades. A variety of instruments have been used to obtain these results. This research has indicated the following: 1) very little difference in self-concept scores between individuals ranging in age from twenty to sixty-nine; 2) self-evaluation produced more positive scores than evaluations made by staff personnel; 3) self-evaluation produced greater derogation in females than males and in those who were residents of nursing homes than in those who were living independently; 4) adjustment to nursing home living was more successful if favorable social interaction was possible; 5) self-concept was altered by increased dependency

rather than by age or place of residence.

Clothing

Research has been done in a variety of areas related to clothing. Research reviewed in this section is not a review of all clothing literature, only that which is most relevant to the research topic.

The basic concept of symbolic interaction theory suggests that the self is established, maintained, and altered through the social interaction process. Jersild (1952) describes clothing as an extension of self: a part of the perceptual field that others react to.

Sometimes directly, sometimes more subtly, a person's clothing and grooming are a projection of himself, his real self or his idealized self which he is trying to live up to. . . that an article of clothing. . . may be an important projection of self, a means of self defiance, of self vindication, or it may be a means of communication with others. (Jersild, 1952, p. 75)

Research done in relation to perception of clothing usage suggests that clothing gives many cues to the observer. Jacobson (1945) studied the impressions 258 college women had on fellow classmates. Remarks were classified into five categories: psychological nature, grooming, physical characteristics, clothing, and intelligence. Responses showed that students varied greatly in standards of grooming, taste in dress, interpretation of traits and attitudes and in criteria for a good appearance.

Ryan (1954) studied perception of self in relation to clothing. Female college students rated themselves on these factors: physical appearance, individuality in dress, and self-confidence. They were then instructed to rate themselves the way they felt the rest of the group

would rate them. A significant relationship was found between self-ratings and group ratings.

Rosencranz (1962) developed and administered the Clothing Apperception Test to eighty-two married women from various socio-economic levels to assess the symbolic nature of clothing. Approximately 15 percent of the total comments made by the participants related to dress. Rosencranz found that clothing was used by these women as an indicator of age, occupation, sex, culture, economic status, and occasion.

Jones (1968) asked 227 female college students to record their perceptions of clothing. Findings suggested that clothing varies in communicative value dependent on the perceiver's frame of reference. Those figures wearing fashionable clothing received higher self-esteem ratings than those in out-of-fashion clothing.

Reed (1973) used clothing styles as symbolic indicators of self in a study done with female college students. Results suggested clothing was an indicator of identity, attitudes, values, and moods.

Self-Concept and Interest in Clothing

The image of one's body is thought to influence greatly self-concept. Clothing may be considered an extension of the physical body, an extension of the personality, or may be included in the body image (Richards and Hawthorne, 1971).

Zion (1965) reported a linear relationship between body concept and self-concept, using Bill's Index of Adjustment and Values. Zion made the statement, "It appears that the security one has in one's body is

related to the security with which one faces oneself and the world (p. 490)."

Dewey (1973) found a significant relationship between general self-concept and clothing self-concept in a study done with college students.

Ryan (1966) suggested the hypothesis that the individual with a less favorable self-concept would have a greater interest in clothing and a greater need for clothing than the individual with a more positive self-concept.

Matthews (1963) researched attitudes toward clothing and the relationship these attitudes had with personality traits for college students. Findings suggested that clothing importance was associated with submissiveness in females but was not significantly affected by personality traits in males.

Engel (1959) studied the stability of self-concept of high school students in relation to clothing. The students did self-ratings on seven aspects of clothing: aesthetics, modesty, management, interest, special attention, social approval, and comfort. The students then rated themselves using descriptive adjectives to obtain information on stability of self-concept. No significant relationships were found between stability of self-concept and social class. Engel did find that social class was a more important determinant of attitudes toward clothing than was stability of self-concept.

Russell (1969) used the Allport, Vernon, Lindzey Study of Values and Pasnak's Clothing Attitude Measure (1968) to measure six variables from each instrument. Russell reported a positive relationship between

attitudes toward clothing and general values using forty-seven females from two age groups, twenty-one to thirty-five and thirty-six to fifty.

Frost (1968) studied attitudes toward clothing for male college students using a Clothing Attitude Opinionaire. Economy, comfort, and self-expression were found to be the most important aspects for college males. Personal values and attitudes toward clothing were also found to be related.

The following research in relation to self-concept and clothing was done with handicapped and nonhandicapped students. Friend (1969) worked with visibly and nonvisibly handicapped students to determine if a relationship existed between clothing values and self-concept. Friend found age and sex to affect self-concept scores. Males and older persons had higher self-concept ratings. No significant relationship was found between clothing values and self-concept.

Settle (1974) used blind and visually handicapped students to study the relationship between body concept and importance of clothing. The Importance of Clothing Questionnaire designed by Creekmore was used. Significant relationships were shown between body concept and attitudes toward clothing for adolescents.

Feather (1976) used physically handicapped and able-bodied college students as the sample for her research. The Tennessee Self Concept (TSCS) was used to measure self-concept and a Clothing Attitude Scale developed by Zentner measured appearance, fashion, and management. Feather found a greater interest in clothing for females than for males. Self-concept scores did not differ between able-bodied and physically handicapped university students. A correlation between self-concept and

attitudes toward clothing was not found to be significant.

Klassen (1967) used a sample of 251 boys and 270 girls in tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades to test the possible relationship between attitudes toward clothing and self-esteem. Scales were developed to measure attitudes toward clothing and Brownfain's Self Rating Inventory was used to measure self-esteem. Findings indicated a difference in clothing values for males and females of high school age.

Humphrey (1967) also studied self-concept and clothing for adolescents as part of a larger study. Humphrey found that those females with a high level of self-concept may have used clothing as an expression of self, while those with an unstable self-concept may have used clothing to cope with the social situation. These findings agreed with the hypothesis stated by Ryan (1966).

Gregory (1973) studied sixty pre-adolescent females to determine if a relationship existed between attitudes toward clothing and self-concept for individuals from varying socioeconomic levels. No significant differences were found to exist between students of high or low self-concept. No relationship was found to exist between self-concept and socioeconomic level.

Research related to self-concept and clothing has been done with individuals from varying ages using a variety of instruments. In the past two decades, this research has been expanded to include elderly individuals.

Clothing and the Elderly

Robert J. Havinghurst (1953) stated that "clothing, a need common to all people, can also be a rational defense against aging (p. 16)."

Numerous studies have been done related to clothing preferences and suggested styles for elderly women: Rosencranz (1972), Ryan (1965), Bartley and Warden (1962), Newton and Tweten (1975), Richardson (1975), Allen (1975), and Grey (1968). Extensive research has also been done with self-help clothing for handicapped elderly individuals. But, in the area of relationships between self-esteem and clothing, there has been only a limited amount of research reported.

Allen (1954) suggests that the elderly can increase self-esteem through clothing. "A favorable impression through personal appearance is just as important as through behavior (p. 802)."

Ebeling and Rosencranz (1961) initiated a study of 180 women over the age of sixty to measure interest in clothing. A questionnaire specifically designed by Ebeling for use with the elderly was used. A comparison of rural and urban women was made. Results of this study indicate that the majority of women in this age level are interested in fashion magazines, fashion shows, style changes, and window shopping. Design and fit in clothing were more important than either price or ease of care. The majority of women would like to have more money to spend on clothes. Interest in clothing tended to decline after age seventy-five. Rural women sewed and read fashion magazines more regularly than did their urban counterparts. Rural women showed a stronger interest in clothing than did the urban women.

Merritt (1978) researched interest in clothing and self-concept for women over the age of sixty. The Canadian Self Esteem Inventory and the Clothing Interest/Importance Measure developed by Sharpe (1963) were used. Merritt reported no significant relationship between scores on

interest in clothing and self-esteem for elderly women. Women sixty to seventy-nine years of age have a stronger interest in clothing than do women over the age of eighty. Women under the age of seventy have higher self-esteem than do those over the age of seventy. Women in excellent health have significantly higher self-esteem than women with good or fair health. For healthy, active, older women, self-esteem is not related to defensiveness.

Summary

The summary of related literature is pertinent to the research of self-esteem and interest in clothing for confined and nonconfined elderly females. Research was presented as it related to self-esteem, self-esteem and the elderly, clothing, and interest in clothing and the elderly.

Self-esteem is a product of the social interaction process. It can change as the experiences of the individual change. Research has shown that the self-esteem of the elderly is as high or higher than that of younger individuals and that it is not determined by age or place of residence.

Clothing can be considered an extension of self and can be used as a defense against aging. Research has shown that the psychological needs that can be met at least in part by clothing are basically the same for the elderly as for other age groups.

Relationships between self-esteem and clothing have been researched with individuals of varying age groups. Positive relationships have been reported in studies done with individuals under

the age of fifty. Limited research has been done to determine if a difference exists in self-concept or interest in clothing for elderly females due to age, place of residence, socioeconomic level, or general health. With more research, the factors that influence differences in self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females may be explained.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Chapter I presented the problem, purpose, objectives, hypotheses, assumptions, procedure, definition of terms, and limitations of the study. In Chapter II, the literature related to self-esteem and interest in clothing were reviewed. Chapter III will provide a description of the population and procedures used in collecting the data. A description of the instruments and the procedures used for statistical analysis of the data are also presented.

The purpose of this study was threefold: 1) to determine if a difference existed in self-esteem and interest in clothing between two groups of elderly females; 2) to determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females; 3) to determine if a relationship existed between the general variables age, educational level, income level, and self-rated health and self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females.

Description of the Population

The population addressed by this study included confined and nonconfined elderly females in Bozeman, Montana, a city of approximately 30,000 people. To compare the responses between these two groups, a sample of each was obtained.

The elderly sample designated as confined was taken from individuals living in the Gallatin County Rest Home, the Bozeman Convalescent Center, and Extended Care of the Bozeman Deaconess Hospital. The director of each of these three centers was interviewed and asked to compile a list of names of females over the age of sixty-five. From these interviews, a total of thirty-six names was obtained.

It was determined by the researcher that ten women would be interviewed from each nursing home. Since there is a considerable difference in the fees charged for residing in each of these homes, the researcher felt they represented varying economic levels. Using the same number of individuals from each nursing home would then provide a more representative sample of the total nursing home population in Bozeman, Montana.

When the actual interview process was done, only eight women from the first nursing home chose to participate. So, in each of the next two nursing homes, eight women were also interviewed so the confined sample would be evenly distributed between the three nursing homes. A total of twenty-nine women were asked to participate; five women declined.

The nonconfined sample was taken from individuals who participate in activities of the Senior Citizens Center, Bozeman, Montana. The researcher interviewed the director of the center and based on her recommendation, chose to attend five different activities carried on by the Senior Center in a one-week period, in order to get a representative sample of the total Senior Citizens Center population. Thirty

females were asked to participate in the study by filling out the questionnaire and mailing it back to the researcher. All thirty of the women who were given questionnaires at the Senior Citizens' Center completed and returned them.

Instrumentation

Measures in self-esteem, interest in clothing, and general information were utilized in this study. The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, an interest in clothing measure and a general information section, were all compiled into one questionnaire. This questionnaire was typed in large type on yellow paper for ease in reading. A copy of this instrument is presented in the Appendix A.

Self-Esteem

The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale was developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965), to measure the self-acceptance aspect of self-esteem. Ruth Wylie (1974), in evaluating extant self-concept measures, stated that "Rosenberg (1965) is apparently the only person who has tried to achieve a unidimensional measure of global self-regard (called by Rosenberg 'self-esteem') through the use of Guttman scaling (Wylie, 1974, p. 181)." It is a ten-item measure designed for brevity and ease of administration. A Guttman scale reproducibility coefficient of .92 was found when this measure was administered to a total of 5,024 high school juniors and seniors. This scale has been used with a wide variety of populations since that time. Silber and Tippet (1965) produced a test-retest correlation, over a two-week period, of .85 with a sample of twenty-eight adolescents. Convergent validity of .56 to .83 has been

found using similar measures and clinical assessments with a sample size of forty-four.

Rosenberg uses a total score on the ten items of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale to indicate level of self-esteem. "High" self-esteem is signified by a score of 0-1; "Medium" self-esteem is signified by a score of 2, and "Low" self-esteem is signified by a score from 3-6 (Rosenberg, 1965).

Interest in Clothing

The interest in clothing instrument used was a questionnaire designed by Ebeling, 1960, for use with elderly women. The modifications made by the researcher for the purpose of this study were: 1) some questions were reworded for greater clarity; 2) Ebeling's question (3) was eliminated since confined females have few opportunities to attend fashion shows; 3) three questions related to buying habits were added, i.e., numbers (21), (22), (29); 4) two questions related to fitting problems were added, i.e., numbers (24) and (25). (See Appendix A.)

This interest in clothing measure had been pretested by Ebeling, 1960, using an unspecified number of women over the age of sixty. For the current study, the researcher used test-retest to establish reliability. A test-retest correlation, using the total test score, of .90 was established over a two-week period. Participants were twenty retired home economists over the age of sixty-five living in Bozeman, Montana.

A total score on the interest in clothing measure is used to indicate level of interest in clothing. The following point system, based on Ebeling, 1969, was used to obtain the total score: never

(4 points), seldom (three points), sometimes (2 points), and often (1 point); questions that received a "yes" response (1 point), a "no" response (2 points), and the third answer choice (no points). Possible responses for question number 29, which asked what was the most important consideration in buying clothes, received the following points: 1) design and fit of the garment (1 point); 2) how easy the garment will be to care for (2 points); and 3) price of the garment (3 points). Level of interest in clothing is categorized by the following scores: High (24-35); Medium (36-37); and Low (48-58).

General Information

Four questions were included in the general information section of the questionnaire. These questions asked each participant to indicate the category that best described the following variables: age, income level, educational level, and self-rated health, including general health, eyesight, and hearing.

Procedures for Data Collection

The participants for this study consisted of twenty-four females residing in nursing homes and thirty females participating in activities of the Senior Citizens Center. The questionnaire was pretested using one participant from each of the three nursing homes and one participant from the Senior Citizens Center. This interview pretest enabled the researcher to correct any difficulties encountered in administering the questionnaire.

The researcher met with the directors of each of these four centers prior to the time of data collection. The director of the Senior

Citizens Center was not allowed to give out names, addresses, or phone numbers of the senior citizens, so it was decided that the researcher would attend five activities carried on by the Senior Center over a one-week period. These five activities were quilting, arts and crafts, noon lunch, exercise, and kitchen volunteers.

As the researcher came to each of these activities, she was first introduced by the center director. Starting on the researcher's left, every other female was given a questionnaire, asked to fill it out, and send it back in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided. Six questionnaires were given out in each group that had at least twelve participants. Since all the groups did not have that many, the researcher also attended a newsletter activity group in order to give out a total of thirty questionnaires. Of the thirty questionnaires given out, all of them were returned. There were no females who declined to participate.

The researcher met individually with the directors of each of the three nursing homes. At that time, the researcher was provided with a list of names of female residents over the age of sixty-five. A total of thirty-six names was compiled from the directors of the three centers. The researcher then went to each resident's room, introduced herself, and asked if she was interested in participating in the study. Eight women from each nursing home were interviewed.

The researcher read the questionnaire aloud and recorded the response for each of the participants from the nursing homes. The interview session involved approximately forty-five minutes per participant. These data were collected in May and June 1982.

Analysis of Data

Data collected for this research were punched onto data processing cards for the statistical analysis using SPSS at the Montana State University Computer Center. The level of significance selected for analysis of the data was .05.

The following statistical tests were used to analyze the data taken from the Rosenberg Self Esteem measure, the interest in clothing measure, and the general information section of the questionnaire.

A t-Test was used to determine if a significant difference did exist between: 1) the mean scores for the confined and nonconfined on each item of the self-esteem measure; and 2) the mean scores of each item of the interest in clothing measure for confined and nonconfined elderly females. Pearson Product-moment Correlation was used to determine if a relationship did exist between self-esteem and interest in clothing for the confined and nonconfined groups and for the total sample. Spearman Rank Correlation was used to determine if a correlation did exist between self-esteem and/or interest in clothing and the general variables age, educational level, and self-rated health.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the descriptive data and the statistical analysis for the 1) Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, 2) interest in clothing measure, and 3) the general information section of the questionnaire, have been presented in this chapter. The results of the data analysis and the discussion related to other pertinent studies will be presented in relation to the objectives of this research study.

Characteristics of the Sample

The first objective was to provide an accurate description of the elderly population used for this study. Fifty-four women, over the age of sixty-five, living in Bozeman, Montana participated in the study. Three nursing homes in Bozeman, Montana were chosen by the researcher to serve as a source for the confined participants. These included: Gallatin County Rest Home, Bozeman Convalescent Center, and Extended Care facility, a branch of the Bozeman Deaconess Hospital. Twenty-four women, eight women from each of these three nursing homes, made up the confined group. Thirty women who participated in activities at the Senior Citizens Center comprised the nonconfined group. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the participants for this study. Figure I presents an age breakdown suggested by Neugarten in graphic form.

Table 1. Number and Source of Participants

Number	Source
30	Senior Citizens Center (Nonconfined)
8	Gallatin County Rest Home (Confined)
8	Bozeman Convalescent Center (Confined)
8	Extended Care, Bozeman Deaconess Hospital (Confined)
Total	54

The data collected from the general variables age, income level, educational level, and self-rated health will be discussed in the following section.

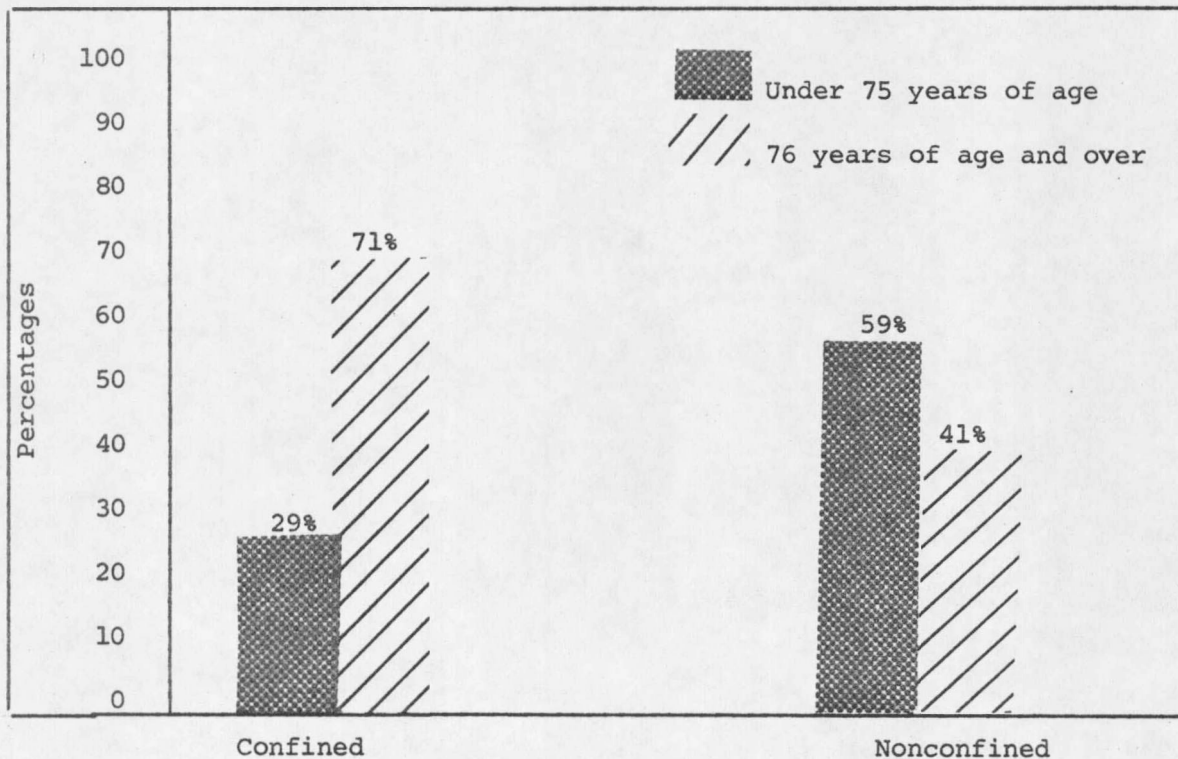
Age

Table 2 provides the data related to age of the participants for this study. For the confined elderly group, seven women (29 percent) were under the age of seventy-five; in the nonconfined group, seventeen women (59 percent) were under seventy-five. The percentage of individuals under age seventy-five in the nonconfined group was almost double the percentage in the confined group. Just the opposite results were found in the over-seventy-five age group. For the nonconfined elderly, 41 percent were of the age seventy-six and over, while 71 percent of the confined were in that age category. This would be in agreement with Tavani (1979) who reported a much larger percentage of individuals over the age of seventy-five residing in nursing homes.

Table 2. Age Group Frequency Distributions and Percentages for Confined and Nonconfined

Variable	Frequency		Percentage	
	Confined	Nonconfined	C	N
Age				
(65-69 years)	3	9	12%	31%
(70-74 years)	4	8	17%	28%
(75-79 years)	4	7	17%	24%
(80-84 years)	8	4	33%	14%
(85-89 years)	4	1	17%	3%
(90 and over)	1	0	4%	0%
Totals	24	29	100%	100%

Figure I. Age Breakdown of Participants in Relation to Place of Residence



Level of Income

The second variable described through the general information data was level of income. Table 3 presents the levels of income for the nonconfined group of elderly females. An annual income from \$5,000 to \$7,900 was the modal level of income for the nonconfined sample. Eighty-seven percent of the participants had an annual income less than \$14,000. Only 25 percent of the nonconfined participants had an annual income over \$10,000.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution and Percentages for Level of Income of Nonconfined Elderly Females

Level of Income	Frequency	Percentage
(Less than \$4,900)	6	22%
(\$5,000 - \$7,999)	12	43%
(\$8,000 - \$9,999)	3	12%
(\$10,000 - \$11,999)	1	3%
(\$12,000 - \$13,999)	2	7%
(\$14,000 - \$15,999)	1	3%
(\$16,000 - \$17,999)	1	3%
(\$18,000 - \$19,999)	0	0%
(\$20,000 - over)	2	7%
Total	28	100%

The confined elderly participants were also asked to state level of income. None of the participants were willing/able to state this; however, each stated source of income or person responsible for their

financial matters. The four sources of income reported by confined elderly females, listed in order of frequency of responses, were: social security, widow's pension, support by relatives, and personal investments. Thirty-eight percent of the women reported social security as a source of income. Table 4 breaks down source of income for the confined elderly.

Table 4. Source of Income for Confined Elderly Females

Source	Frequency	Percentage
In Relative's Care	6	25%
Social Security	9	38%
Widow's Pension	7	29%
Personal Investments	2	8%
Total	24	100%

Educational Level

Table 5 presents the data compiled in relation to the educational level of the participants. A majority of both groups, sixteen women (67 percent) of the confined group and twenty-two (76 percent) of the nonconfined group, had a high school diploma or less. Eight women (33 percent) of the confined and seven women (24 percent) of the nonconfined had an education beyond the high school diploma. Educational levels of the two groups of elderly females were very similar.

Table 5. Frequency and Percentages for the Educational Level of Confined and Nonconfined Elderly Females

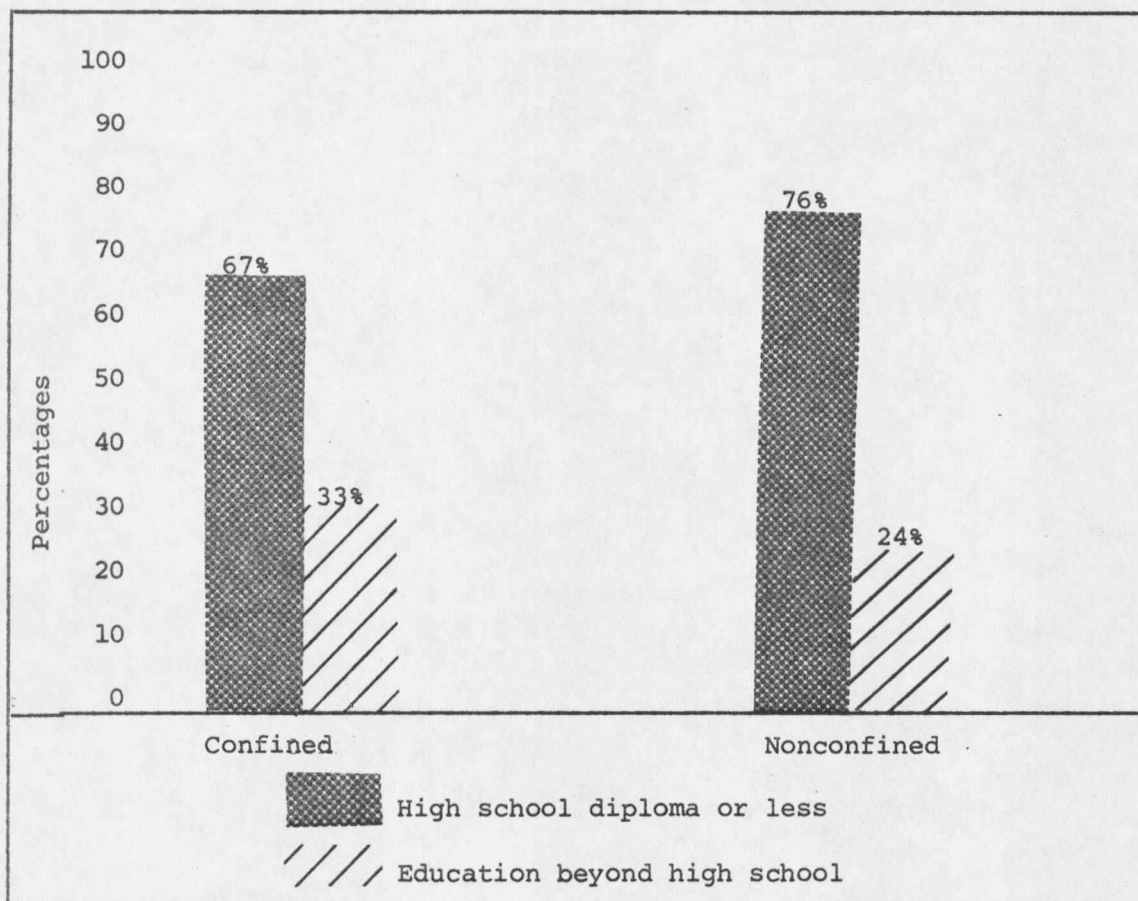
Variable	Frequency		Percentage	
	Confined	Nonconfined	C	N
8th grade or less	8	6	33%	21%
Some high school	4	7	17%	24%
High school diploma	4	9	17%	31%
Vocational training	1	1	4%	3%
Some college, no degree	4	2	17%	7%
College degree	2	3	8%	11%
Advanced degree	1	1	4%	3%
Totals	24	29	100%	100%

Figure II breaks down the educational level of the participants into two groups: high school diploma or less and education beyond high school.

Self-Rated Health

The majority of individuals (over 70 percent) in both groups self-rated their health as being good or excellent. Twenty-nine percent of the confined group reported fair to poor health, while only 21 percent of the nonconfined group self-rated themselves in those categories. Table 6 breaks down self-rated health into four categories for the confined and nonconfined.

Figure II. Educational Level of Participants in Relation to Place of Residence



Summary of General Information

Seventy-one percent of the confined and 41 percent of the nonconfined elderly were seventy-five years or over. The modal income level for the nonconfined elderly was \$5,000 to \$7,900. Social security was the most frequent response to source of income for the confined elderly females. Both the confined and nonconfined groups were very similar on educational level, with the majority of both groups having a high school diploma or less.

Table 6. Frequencies and Percentages for Self-Rated Health of Confined and Nonconfined Elderly Females

Variable	Frequency		Percentage	
	Confined	Nonconfined	C	N
Self-Rated Health				
Excellent	5	4	21%	14%
Good	12	19	50%	65%
Fair	6	4	25%	14%
Poor	1	2	4%	7%
Total	24	29	100%	100%

Twenty-nine percent of the confined group rated themselves as having fair to poor health, while only 21 percent of the nonconfined rated themselves in the same manner. The percentages of both groups were very similar on good to excellent self-rated health.

Statistical Analysis of Data

Statistical methods utilized to test the null hypotheses included: t-Test, Pearson Product-moment Correlation, and Spearman Rank Correlation. The .05 level of significance was utilized in testing all hypotheses.

Differences in Self Esteem

The second objective for this study was to determine if there was a significant difference in self-esteem scores between the confined and nonconfined elderly females. The scores on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale were computed and then divided into high, medium, and low

categories as determined by Rosenberg (1965). The range of scores, frequency, and percentages for the self-esteem measure are reported in Table 7.

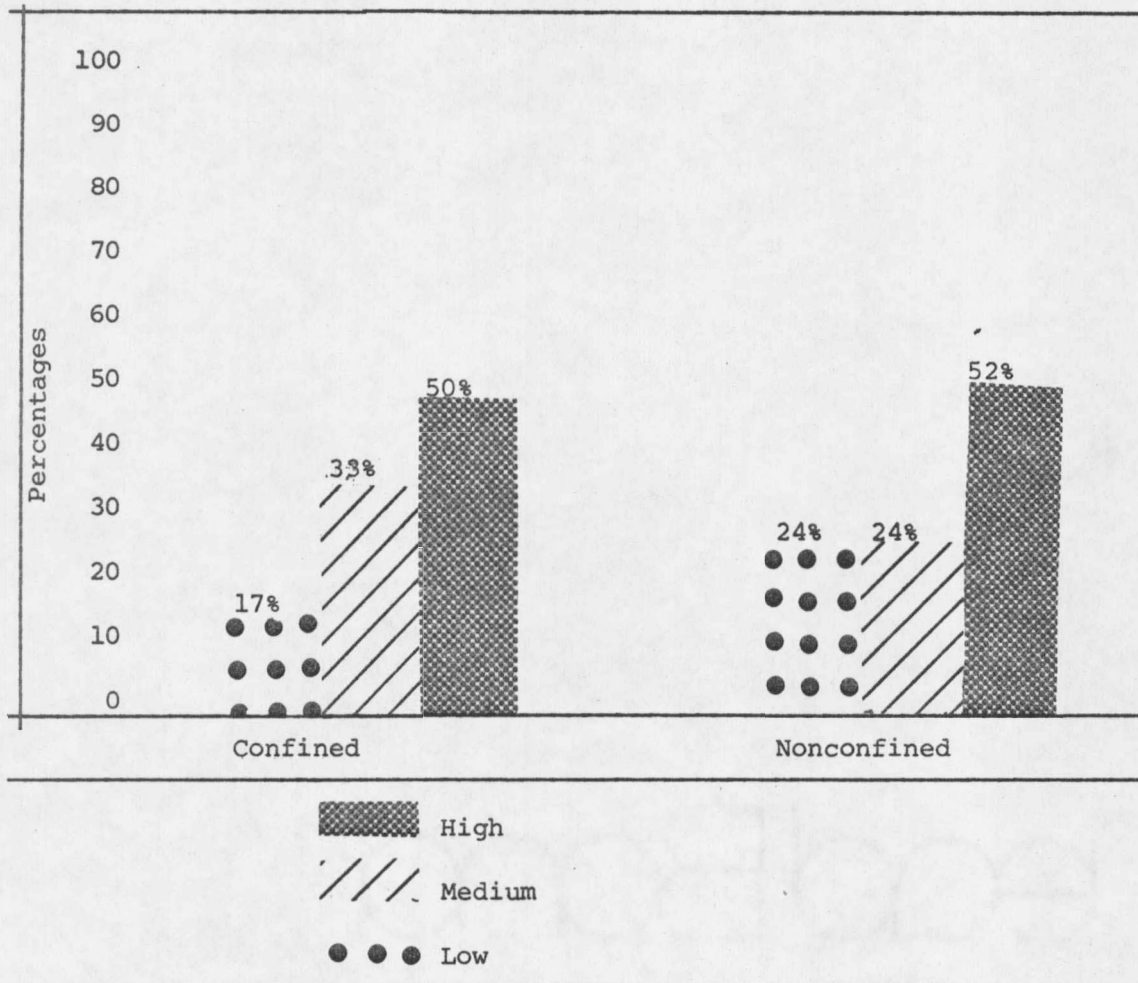
Table 7. Breakdown of the Self-Esteem Scale Scores for Confined and Nonconfined Elderly Females

Range of Scores	Frequency		Percentages	
	Confined	Nonconfined	C	N
High (0-1)	12	15	50%	52%
Medium (2)	8	7	33%	24%
Low (3-6)	4	7	17%	24%
Total	24	29	100%	100%

Findings of this study suggest: the percentage of individuals with high self-esteem was very similar in both the confined and nonconfined groups of elderly females. These findings would be consistent with those of Feather (1976). The percentage of individuals with medium self-esteem was higher for the confined group, while the percentage with low self-esteem was higher for the nonconfined group. The confined women interviewed by the researcher were all mobile and seemed to be independent individuals. This might account for the similarity in the percentages of high self-esteem scores for the two groups. Lower self-esteem has been related to dependency rather than to place of residence (Gordon and Vinacke, 1971). This might also account for the higher percentage of nonconfined females having low self-esteem scores. These nonconfined females who rated themselves low on self-esteem may

have been more dependent individuals. Figure III presents a breakdown of self-esteem scores in graphic form.

Figure III. Self-Esteem Scores Broken Down into Three Categories for the Confined and Nonconfined



A t-Test was used to determine if a significant difference existed between the mean scores on self-esteem for confined and nonconfined elderly females on the ten items of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (See Table 8). As a result of the t-Test, no significant difference was found on the mean scores for the individual questions on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale between the confined and nonconfined elderly females.

This is consistent with Pollack, Karp, Kahn, and Goldfarb (1962), who found self-derogation higher for institutionalized residents.

Table 8. Comparison of Means to Compute t-Values of the Individual Questions on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale

Topic Areas	Mean		df	t-value	Critical Value
	Confined	Nonconfined			
Person of equal worth	1.9167	1.6333	52	-2.09	.062
Number of good qualities	1.8333	1.6667	52	-1.27	.211
Feel a failure	3.4167	3.5333	52	.74	.464
Do things as well as others	1.9583	1.8621	51	-.62	.541
Nothing to be proud of	2.7917	3.1667	52	1.64	.106
Positive attitude toward self	2.0417	2.0345	51	-.04	.965
Satisfied with self	2.0833	2.1333	52	.29	.777
Need more respect for self	2.8333	2.4828	48	.07	.948
Feel useless	2.1667	2.4828	51	1.53	.132
No good at all	2.9167	3.2414	51	1.56	.126

P < .05

Differences in Interest in Clothing

The third objective for this study was to determine if there was a significant difference in interest in clothing for individuals confined to nursing homes and those living independently. When the interest in clothing scores were computed according to Ebeling (1960),

the scores ranged from twenty-four to fifty-eight. The confined group had a range of scores from thirty-seven to fifty-eight and the non-confined group had a range of scores from twenty-four to forty-six. Both groups had a spread of approximately twenty points. Table 16 (Appendix B) provides a comparison of the frequency of scores on the interest in clothing measure for both the confined and nonconfined elderly females.

After the clothing scores were computed (see Table 9), the scores were then grouped into the following categories: High (24-35 points), Medium (36-47 points), and Low (48-58 points). Both the confined (83 percent) and the nonconfined (93 percent) groups had the majority of the clothing scores in the medium range. This is consistent with Ebeling (1960). The nonconfined group had no women with scores in the low category and two women (7 percent) in the high category. The confined group had four women (17 percent) with scores in the low category and none with scores in the high category. These differences in interest in clothing may be due to one of two factors: greater physical dependence for the confined females, or fewer social interaction opportunities for confined females. This tends to show a greater interest in clothing for the sample of nonconfined elderly females than for the confined group.

A t-Test was used to determine if a significant difference on individual items on the interest in clothing for confined and nonconfined elderly females did exist. Table 10 shows a comparison of the mean scores for each question for confined and nonconfined. Of the nineteen items on the interest in clothing measure, five showed a significant difference in response between the two groups of elderly females.

Table 9. Breakdown of Interest in Clothing Scores with Frequencies and Percentages for Confined and Nonconfined Elderly Females

Range of Scores	Frequency		Percentages	
	Confined	Nonconfined	C	N
High (24-35)	0	2	0%	7%
Medium (36-47)	20	27	83%	93%
Low (48-58)	4	0	17%	0%
Total	24	29	100%	100%

Figure IV presents the breakdown of scores on the interest in clothing measure in graphic form.

Figure IV. Clothing Scores Broken Down into Categories for Confined and Nonconfined Elderly Females

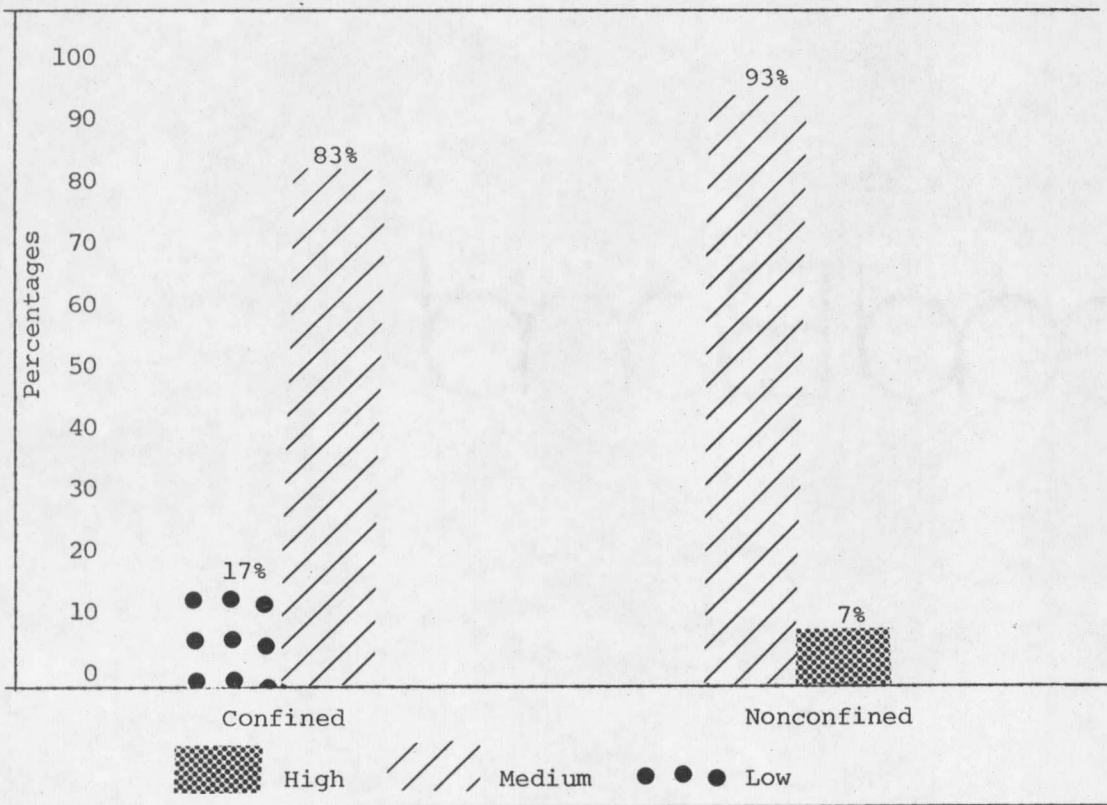


Table 10. Comparison of Means to Compute t-Values on the Interest in Clothing Measure for Confined and Nonconfined

Topics	Mean		df	t-value	Critical Values
	Confined	Nonconfined			
Pay attention to clothes worn	1.7500	1.7000	52	-.23	.819
Buy clothes to cheer up	3.1667	2.4333	52	-2.83*	.007
Want to know what others think of clothes	3.9583	2.0667	52	-3.29*	.002
Clothes affect feeling at ease	1.9583	1.8276	51	-.50	.617
Spend time thinking about clothes	3.0000	1.7667	52	-6.21*	.000
Refuse invitations because of clothes	3.5833	2.9333	52	-2.59*	.012
Women who are dressed well are better liked	3.2500	2.8276	51	-1.43	.160
Like to spend time shopping	2.3333	2.3333	52	.00	1.000
Window shop in store windows	1.9583	2.3000	52	1.26	.215
Look at fashion magazines	2.4167	2.2333	52	-.72	.476
Shop in used clothing stores	3.7083	2.8000	52	-3.54*	.001
Shop in mail order catalogues	2.9167	2.4667	52	-1.57	.124
Interested in how styles change	2.5417	2.1000	52	-1.70	.095
Can you find ready made clothes to fit?	1.5000	1.9000	52	1.90	.063
Can you find patterns to fit?	3.0000	2.5769	37	-1.42	.163
Variety of patterns	1.2083	1.3793	51	.97	.336
Variety of styles, ready made	1.3333	1.2000	52	-.60	.551
More money to spend on clothes	.7083	1.1333	52	1.97	.055
Considerations in buying clothes	2.6957	2.3846	47	-1.55	.127

* P < .05

Table 11 gives the frequency of responses for the confined and nonconfined elderly females on those five questions. There was a significant difference in responses between the confined and nonconfined elderly groups when asked if they ever bought an article of clothing to cheer them up. The confined elderly responded with a majority of "often" or "never," while the nonconfined group responded predominantly with "sometimes" or "seldom." These differences may be attributed to place of residence. Buying an article of clothing on an infrequent shopping trip may have the psychological value of "cheering up" the confined female. The confined female who does not have the opportunity to go shopping for herself might respond with "never." The "sometimes" or "seldom" responses of the nonconfined females are a less decisive answer, indicating the opportunity to shop exists if she chooses.

There was a significant difference in responses between the two groups of females when asked if they ever wanted to know what other people thought of their clothes. There were eleven confined females who responded with "never," compared to only one for the nonconfined. Nonconfined females may tend to use clothing more as an extension of self in social situations, thereby having a greater interest in what other people think of their clothes. For confined elderly females who have fewer social interaction opportunities, clothing may not serve in that capacity.

There was a significant difference in responses to the amount of time one spends thinking about clothes. The nonconfined elderly females all reported that they spent time thinking about clothes, with the

greatest frequency of response being "often." The majority of the confined females reported seldom to never thinking about clothes. This significant difference may be due to any one of the following:

1) several of the confined females stated having very little storage space to keep their clothes in their rooms; 2) fewer social contacts for the confined females may cause a decline in time spent thinking about clothes; and 3) less opportunity for the confined to shop for clothing may have a limiting effect on time spent thinking about clothes.

Table 11. Interest in Clothing Questions Significant at .05 Level

Questions	Frequency of Responses							
	Confined				Nonconfined			
	O	So	Se	N	O	So	Se	N
Do you buy clothes to cheer you up?	13	6	3	13	4	13	9	4
Want to know what people think of clothes?	4	4	5	11	8	13	8	1
Spend time thinking about clothes	0	5	14	5	13	11	6	0
Refuse invitations due to clothing	2	2	0	20	1	9	1	9
Do you shop in used clothing stores?	0	3	1	20	5	5	9	10

O = Often So = Sometimes Se = Seldom N = Never

A significant difference in responses was found when elderly females were asked if they would refuse an invitation due to not having the right clothes to wear. Of the confined group, over 83 percent stated they would never refuse an invitation based on clothes, whereas, only 30 percent of the nonconfined group stated they would never refuse

an invitation on that basis. For the confined elderly females, the desire to socialize may be much stronger than the fear of not being dressed appropriately.

There was a significant difference in the number of women who shopped in used clothing stores. Over 83 percent of the confined females stated they never shopped for clothing in used clothing stores, while only 33 percent of the nonconfined made the same statement. Possible explanations for this difference are: 1) it is possible that the confined females may have become nursing home residents before shopping in used clothing stores became popular as well as more economical; 2) for the confined female, the opportunity to purchase a "new" article of clothing may give more of a psychological lift than a "used" article would; and 3) since the confined female often depends on a relative or friend to do most of the shopping, the value system of the person who purchases the clothing may contribute to the difference.

Three of the five questions on the interest in clothing measure that showed a significant difference in responses between the confined and nonconfined elderly females were related to social interaction. Based on the review of literature, social interaction is one of the key factors in a positive adjustment to aging (Rosel, 1971). Clothing as an extension of self serves as an integral part of this process.

Relationship Between Interest in Clothing and Self-Esteem

The fourth objective was to determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing for confined elderly females (see Table 12). The fifth objective was to determine if a

relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing for nonconfined elderly females (see Table 12). Table 12 gives the r-values for the confined and nonconfined groups of elderly females and for the total population for self-esteem and interest in clothing.

Pearson Product-moment Correlation statistics did not indicate a significant relationship between self-esteem and interest in clothing for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females or for the total sample used for this study. These findings were consistent with Merritt (1978), Feather (1976), and Friend (1969), who found no relationship between self-esteem and clothing. These findings are inconsistent with those of Settle (1974), Russell (1969), and Dewey (1973), who did find significant relationships to exist between self-concept and clothing.

Table 12. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation for Interest in Clothing and Self-Esteem for Confined and Nonconfined Groups and for the Total Population

Population	r-value	Critical Values
Confined (N = 24)	-.2014	.173
Nonconfined (N = 30)	-.0480	.173
Total sample (N = 54)	-.0904	.258

P < .05

This study found self-esteem scores were high for both the confined and nonconfined groups. Both groups had a majority of individuals with an interest in clothing score in the medium range. A lifestyle in which very few of these retired females had been working and professional women, limited income, and the strong work ethic may all be

factors contributing to a medium interest in clothing. As a result, no significant relationship was found to exist between self-esteem and interest in clothing.

Relationship Between General Variables and Interest in Clothing and Self-Esteem

The last objective was to determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and/or interest in clothing and each of the general variables, age, educational level, and health for elderly females. Income level was not used since the confined elderly females did not indicate an income level. Spearman rank correlation was used to determine if a relationship did exist.

Age

Table 13 presents the r-values for confined and nonconfined females when correlated with age. No significant relationship was found to exist between age and interest in clothing for either the confined or nonconfined elderly groups. These findings are inconsistent with those of Ebeling (1960) and Merritt (1978), who found interest in clothing to decline significantly with age. The population addressed by this study indicated a moderate interest in clothing, possibly due to the subjects' lifestyle and income level. Many of these women were retired farm or ranch wives who would not have had a need for professional clothing prior to retirement. Their style of dress or interest in clothing probably did not change with retirement. It is possible that the population sample used by Ebeling and Merritt may have had a greater number of retired working and professional females.

No significant relationship was found to exist between age and self-esteem for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females. The majority of both groups indicated high self-esteem. These findings are consistent with Grant (1967) and Gordon and Vinacke (1971), who found self-esteem to increase or remain constant with age. They are inconsistent with Merritt (1978), who found a moderate negative relationship between self-esteem and age.

Table 13. Spearman Rank Correlation For Mean Age in Relation to Interest in Clothing and Self-Esteem

Variable	Interest in Clothing				Self-Esteem			
	Confined	C.V.	Nonconf.	C.V.	Confined	C.V.	Nonconf.	C.V.
Mean Age	-.1292	.274	.1265	.257	.1860	.192	.1030	.298
P < .05	C.V. = Critical Value							

Educational Level

Table 14 provides the Spearman rank correlation coefficients in relation to educational level of the confined and nonconfined elderly females and interest in clothing and self-esteem. No significant relationship was found to exist between educational level and self-esteem for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females.

A significant negative relationship was found to exist between level of education and interest in clothing for the nonconfined elderly females. As the educational level of the nonconfined females went up,

interest in clothing went down. No significant relationship was found to exist between educational level and interest in clothing for confined females. Increased education may create a more positive self-concept and greater opportunity for positive social interaction for the nonconfined female. The nonconfined female then feels confident enough not to have to use clothing as a symbolic indicator.

Table 14. Spearman Rank Correlation For Mean Educational Level in Relation to Interest in Clothing and Self-Esteem

Variable	Interest in Clothing				Self-Esteem			
	Conf.	C.V.	Nonconf.	C.V.	Conf.	C.V.	Nonconf.	C.V.
Mean Educational Level	.1081	.308	-.4419*	.008	-.0049	.491	-.0955	.311
* P < .05 C.V. = Critical Value								

Self-Rated Health

Table 15 provides the Spearman rank correlation coefficients in relation to self-rated health and self esteem interest in clothing. No significant relationship was found to exist between self-rated health and self-esteem for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females. This is inconsistent with the findings of Rosel (1971). It is possible that sufficient social interaction opportunities may contribute to the maintenance of high self-esteem rather than having self-esteem be dependent on good to excellent health.

No significant relationship was found to exist between self-rated health and interest in clothing. These findings were consistent with Merritt (1978).

Table 15. Spearman Rank Correlation for Mean Self-Rated Health in Relation to Interest in Clothing and Self-Esteem

Variable	Interest in Clothing				Self-Esteem			
	Conf.	C.V.	Nonconf.	C.V.	Conf.	C.V.	Nonconf.	C.V.
Self-Rated Health								
Mean Self-Rated Health	.1917	.185	-.0807	.336	.1486	.244	.2267	.114

P < .05 C.V. = Critical Values

Only one of the general information variables was found to have a significant relationship. Educational level was negatively correlated with interest in clothing for the nonconfined group. There were no significant relationships with any of the general variables and self-esteem.

Summary

Based on the descriptive analysis of the data, the following results were obtained: 1) the confined elderly sample had a much larger percentage of individuals over the age of seventy-five than did the nonconfined; 2) the modal income level for the nonconfined group was \$5,000 to \$7,900; 3) social security was the most frequent response for level of income for the confined elderly females; 4) the educational level reported by the majority of both groups was a high school diploma

or less; and 5) the majority of individuals in both groups rated their health as being good to excellent.

The data were statistically analyzed: 1) to determine significant differences in responses between the confined and nonconfined females on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the interest in clothing measure; and 2) to determine if significant relationships existed.

Using t-Test analysis, no significant differences were found on responses to individual questions on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale between confined and nonconfined elderly females. Significant differences were found to exist on five of the nineteen questions on the interest in clothing measure.

No significant relationship was found to exist between self-esteem and interest in clothing for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females using Pearson Product-moment Correlation statistics. Through the use of Spearman Rank Correlation statistics, a significant negative relationship was found to exist between educational level and interest in clothing for the nonconfined elderly females. The same relationship was not found for confined females. No significant relationships were found to exist either between age or self-rated health and self-esteem and interest in clothing. Income level was not utilized in the statistical analysis.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Within the last two decades increased attention has been drawn to developing a more accurate profile of the elderly. The theoretical framework for this study is based on the acknowledgment that self-esteem is a product of the social interaction process. Clothing has also been identified as an extension of self. In that capacity, a positive interest in clothing may then serve to enhance individual self-esteem and a negative interest in clothing may have the opposite effect.

Since the percentage of elderly in the population has increased significantly, it is no longer appropriate to describe the elderly with one broad description. There appears to be a need to ascertain the extent of differences between various segments of this elderly population. A review of literature indicated that interest in clothing and self-esteem had not been studied in relation to elderly women confined to nursing homes in comparison with those living independently.

Conclusions

The purpose addressed by this study was threefold: 1) to determine if differences existed on the measure of self-esteem for confined and nonconfined elderly females; 2) to determine if a relationship existed between self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females; 3) to

determine if a relationship existed between the general variables age, educational level, income, and self-rated health and self-esteem and interest in clothing for elderly females.

Based on the purpose of this study, the following null hypotheses were presented and conclusions were drawn:

1. No significant differences will exist between mean scores of the confined and nonconfined on the measure of self-esteem. Based on the results of this study this null hypothesis was retained. Since no significant difference in self-esteem was found between the two groups, place of residence did not significantly correlate with self-esteem for this elderly population.
2. No significant difference will exist between the mean scores of the confined and nonconfined elderly females on the measure of interest in clothing. Based on the results of this study this null hypothesis was rejected. Five of the nineteen items on the interest in clothing measure showed a significant difference between the confined and nonconfined groups of elderly females.

Elderly women both confined and nonconfined did express an interest in clothing. This was substantiated by the high percentage of participation in this research study. Individuals interviewed by the researcher were very willing to discuss their feelings about clothing.

The nonconfined group did have higher scores on the clothing measure. This may be attributed to greater

opportunities for social interaction for the nonconfined than for the confined elderly females. No significant difference was found to exist on the total interest in clothing score for the confined or nonconfined elderly females.

3. There is no relationship between the scores on the self-esteem measure and the scores on the interest in clothing measure for confined elderly females. Based on the results of this study, this hypothesis would be retained.
4. There is no relationship between the scores on the self-esteem measure and the scores on the interest in clothing measure for nonconfined elderly females. Based on the results of this study this hypothesis would be retained.

The correlation of self-esteem and interest in clothing was not significantly different than zero for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females or for the total sample of this study. Based on the results of this study, individual self-esteem for elderly females is not reflected through interest in clothing.

5. There is no relationship between self-esteem and/or interest in clothing and the general variables age, educational level, and self-rated health for elderly females. Based on the results of this study this null hypothesis would be rejected.

There was no significant correlation between age and individual self-esteem or interest in clothing. As a person grows older, there is no corresponding change in self-esteem or interest in clothing.

There was no significant correlation between educational level and self-esteem. As educational level of the elderly females went up there was no corresponding change in self-esteem. A negative correlation was found to exist between educational level and interest in clothing for the nonconfined elderly females. As the educational level of the nonconfined elderly females went up, interest in clothing went down. No significant relationship was found to exist between educational level and interest in clothing for confined elderly females.

There was no significant relationship found to exist between self-rated health and self-esteem for confined or nonconfined elderly females. Neither was a significant relationship found between self-rated health and interest in clothing for either the confined or nonconfined elderly groups.

On the basis of this study it was concluded that there are no significant differences in self-esteem between confined and nonconfined elderly females. There are no significant differences in interest in clothing between these two groups of elderly females. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and interest in clothing for either the confined or nonconfined elderly females. There is no significant relationship between age and self-esteem and/or interest in clothing for elderly females. There is a relationship between educational level and interest in clothing for nonconfined elderly females but not for those who are confined. There is no significant relationship between educational level and self-esteem for either group of elderly females. There is no significant relationship between self-rated health

and self-esteem and/or interest in clothing for either group of elderly females.

Recommendations for Further Study

The elderly segment of the population has increased significantly since 1900. Due to this increase it has become necessary to break down the elderly group using variables such as age, income level, place of residence, sex, and health for further study.

Self-esteem and interest in clothing have been researched using elderly females to a limited extent. No studies have been reported using elderly males. Few studies have been reported which make comparisons between confined and nonconfined elderly.

On the basis of the results of this research study, the discussion of the results, and the conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Interest in clothing and self-esteem should be researched using men over sixty-five years of age as participants.
2. Males and females over the age of sixty-five should be studied to determine sex differences in interest in clothing and self-esteem.
3. Instruments need to be developed to assess self-esteem and interest in clothing for the very dependent confined elderly individuals making further comparisons possible.
4. Females who are living independently in private retirement homes should be utilized in a similar study.
5. Studies should be done in other geographic areas.

6. A replication of this study should be made using a larger sample of the elderly population.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

DIRECTIONS: Circle the number of the best choice for each statement. Be sure to circle only one response for each statement.

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

WOMEN'S CLOTHING

DIRECTIONS: Choose the one best response for each question and circle that number.

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
11. Do you think people pay attention to the kind of clothes you wear?	1	2	3	4
12. Do you ever buy an article of clothing to cheer you up?	1	2	3	4
13. Do you ever want to know what other people think of your clothes?	1	2	3	4
14. Do the clothes you wear to a social gathering have an effect on whether or not you feel at ease?	1	2	3	4
15. How frequently do you spend time thinking about the clothes you wear?	1	2	3	4
16. Do you ever refuse invitations to go out because you feel you do not have the right clothes to wear?	1	2	3	4
17. Do you feel women who dress well are better liked than those who do not dress as well?	1	2	3	4
18. Do you like to spend time shopping for clothes or fabrics?	1	2	3	4
19. Do you window shop in clothing store windows?	1	2	3	4

WOMEN'S CLOTHING, Cont.

DIRECTIONS: Choose the one best response for each question and circle that number.

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
20. Do you look at fashion magazines?	1	2	3	4
21. Do you shop in used clothing stores?	1	2	3	4
22. Do you shop through mail order catalogues?	1	2	3	4
23. When you shop for clothing, are you interested in how the styles have changed from year to year?	1	2	3	4
24. When you go shopping, can you find ready-made clothes you like in your size?	1	2	3	4
25. If you sew for yourself or have someone sew for you, do you have trouble finding a pattern to fit?	1	2	3	4

Check here if you buy all of your clothing ready made. _____

WOMEN'S CLOTHING, Cont.

DIRECTIONS: Circle the number of the best response for each of the following questions.

26. If you sew for yourself or have clothing made, do you think pattern companies give you a variety of patterns from which to choose? (Circle number)
1. YES
 2. NO
 3. I BUY ALL OF MY CLOTHING READY-MADE.
27. When you buy clothing ready-made, do you think the clothing stores give you a good variety of styles from which to choose? (Circle number)
1. YES
 2. NO
 3. UNDECIDED
28. Do you wish you had more money to spend on clothes? (Circle number)
1. YES
 2. NO
 3. NOT IMPORTANT TO ME.
29. Your most important consideration in buying clothing is? (Circle number)
1. HOW EASY THE GARMENT WILL BE TO CARE FOR.
 2. PRICE OF THE GARMENT
 3. DESIGN AND FIT OF THE GARMENT

GENERAL INFORMATION

DIRECTIONS: Circle the number of the best response for each question.

30. In which of these age categories do you belong? (Circle number)

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. UNDER 65 YEARS | 5. 80 to 84 YEARS |
| 2. 65 to 69 YEARS | 6. 85 to 89 YEARS |
| 3. 70 to 74 YEARS | 7. 90 YEARS AND OVER |
| 4. 75 to 79 YEARS | |

31. In which of these brackets would you say your yearly income falls? (Circle number)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. LESS THAN \$4999. | 6. \$14,000. to \$15,999. |
| 2. \$5000. to \$7999. | 7. \$16,000. to \$17,999. |
| 3. \$8000. to \$9999. | 8. \$18,000. to \$19,999. |
| 4. \$10,000 to \$11,999. | 9. \$20,000. AND OVER |
| 5. \$12,000. to 13,999. | |

32. In which of these educational brackets would you best fit? (Circle number)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 8TH GRADE OR LESS | 5. SOME COLLEGE, NO DEGREE |
| 2. SOME HIGH SCHOOL | 6. COLLEGE DEGREE |
| 3. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA | 7. ADVANCED DEGREE |
| 4. VOCATIONAL TRAINING | |

EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR POOR

(Circle number of best response)

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 33. How would you describe your general health? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 34. How would you describe your eye sight? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 35. How would you describe your hearing? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

APPENDIX B

SOURCE DATA TABLE

Table 16. A Comparison of Frequency of Scores on the Interest in Clothing Measure for Confined and Nonconfined Elderly Females

Clothing Scores	Frequency	
	Confined	Nonconfined
Range of Scores (24 - 58)		
24	0	1
25	0	0
26	0	0
27	0	0
28	0	0
29	0	0
30	0	0
31	0	0
32	0	0
33	0	0
34	0	0
35	0	2
36	0	3
37	3	2
38	1	3
39	3	4
40	1	4
41	1	3
42	0	0
43	2	2
44	3	1
45	2	1
46	1	2
47	3	1
48	0	0
49	1	0
50	1	0
51	0	0
52	0	0
53	0	0
54	0	0
55	0	0
56	1	0
57	0	0
58	1	0
Total	24	29
Mean Score	45.7	39.4

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