Understanding Academic Entitlement: Gender Classification, Self-Esteem, and Covert Narcissism

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Academic entitlement (AE) refers to a personality characteristic reflecting the degree to which students believe they have a right to special treatment within the classroom even though it may be undeserved. The construct has been linked to narcissism (Wasieleski, Whatley, Briihl, & Branscome, 2014). The present study investigated how self-reported gender classifications, GPA, and self-esteem relate to the academic narcissism subscale of the Academic Entitlement Scale (AES: Wasieleski et al., 2014). Subjects were 418 undergraduate students from the University of Alabama. Results indicated that biological males reported higher levels of academic narcissism, which is consistent with previous research. Surprisingly, subjects classified as undifferentiated reported higher levels of academic narcissism than masculine, feminine, or androgynous individuals. In addition, masculine and androgynous individuals exhibited higher levels of self-esteem. Results provide further validation of the AES and its potential utility for student services. Implications for using identified gender classification when researching self-esteem and narcissism are discussed.

Keywords: academic entitlement, narcissism, self-esteem, academic entitlement scale, GPA

The concept of academic entitlement (AE) likely arose from anecdotal discussion among faculty regarding student attitudes toward higher learning. AE refers to the phenomenon in which students feel entitled to special treatment (e.g., higher grades, ability to turn in work late, special exceptions, immediate access to instructors) when it is undeserved or unwarranted (Reinhardt, 2012). While there appears to be ample research support for the existence of AE, reliable definition

and measurement of this construct has not seemed to be achieved (see Wasieleski et al., 2014, for an overview). AE has been measured through multiple scales (e.g., Achacoso, 2002; Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kopp, Zinn, Finney, & Jurich, 2011), but a clear and useful definition of the construct and strongly validated measure have yet to emerge from the literature. Wasieleski et al. (2014) also redefined the construct to include characterological and dysfunctional elements of narcissism to entitlement attitudes, both in reference to academic situations. The resulting measure of this reconceptualization of AE demonstrated reliability and initial support for construct validity as well.

The purpose of this study was to further validate this scale of AE by relating it to variables with which AE has been related in the past, such as gender (e.g., Ciani, Summers, & Easter (2008), self-esteem (e.g., Stronge, Cichocka, & Sibley, 2016), and narcissism (e.g., Greenberger, Lessard, Chen, & Farruggia, 2008). Development of this scale built upon and expanded past efforts to define and measure AE, while attempting to provide a more definitive and empirically-based construction of the concept of AE. One result of that development study (Wasieleski et al., 2014) was that male participants held stronger academic entitlement attitudes compared to females, a finding consistent with Ciani et al. (2008). While evidence for the scale's validity, the issue of gender beyond the biological definition might provide an additional level of analysis. Thus, a secondary purpose of this study was to use the AES to determine whether a more complex and potentially valid construct of gender would reveal a more complicated relationship with AE and with the other variables of interest (i.e., self-esteem and narcissism). Narcissism, as it relates to academics, is one dimension of the revised construct of AE (Wasieleski et al., 2014); the more general trait of narcissism, which, like gender, may be multifaceted (see Wink, 1991), has also been related to the concepts of gender and AE. A tertiary purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship of gender and AE with the adaptive

characteristic of self-esteem and its more dysfunctional cousin, narcissism.

Academic Entitlement and Gender

Entitlement as an attitude has also been related to the narcissistic personality type, most prominently in the DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). Narcissistic traits are typically more often found in males than in females (APA, 2013). Grijalva et al. (2015) conducted a series of meta-analytic studies investigating differences in types of narcissism in general by self-reported gender. Reviewing literature on the Narcissism Personality Inventory, they found the largest gender difference on the exploitative/entitlement facet of that scale; consistent with biosocial theory, men may be more prone to entitlement due to societal forces. These forces may predispose men, more so than women, to expect certain privileges and positions of leadership, and these social expectations might manifest in narcissistic and/or entitled attitudes.

This issue is further ironically complicated by the recognition that it is simplistic to define gender based purely on biological sex. One of the more popular psychological theories of gender categorization is Bem's (1981) gender schema theory. While the content of many such theories focuses on the factors within a person, gender schema theory instead provides a description and analysis regarding the how of behavior (Stotz & Bolger, 2007). This emphasis results in a framework for understanding interpersonal differences of gender schema through the depiction of behaviors stereotypically assimilated as being masculine or feminine. Thus, these stereotypical behaviors represent ingrained self-concepts, resulting in gender classifications of masculinity, femininity, androgyny, and undifferentiation (see Bem, 1981; Knaak, 2004).

The research on gender demonstrates that this difference has implications for mental health. In terms of gender classification, masculinity has stereotypically been associated with stress, depression,

and negative social functioning (Wong, Ho, Wang, & Miller, 2017). Femininity, on the other hand, has been stereotypically associated with body dysmorphic and histrionic personality disorder (Boysen, Ebersole, Casner, & Coston, 2014). Research has found that men are more often involved with antisocial behavior and abuse of alcohol and drugs; whereas, women suffer more from depression, anxiety, and panic disorders (e.g., Dawson, Goldstein, Moss, Li, & Grant, 2010; Kessler, McGonagle, Swartz, Blazer, & Nelson, 1993; Trull, Jahng, Tomko, Wood, & Sher, 2010).

Individuals who are classified as androgynous (defined as having high levels of both masculinity and femininity) tend to show higher levels of optimal mental health (Lefkowitz & Zeldow, 2006; cf. Watson, Biderman, & Boyd, 1989) as assessed by a California Q-set (CAQ) profile (Gough & Bradley, 1996). Undifferentiated individuals (defined as having low levels of both masculinity and femininity) may not adapt as well to social norms (Juster et al., 2016) due to a lack of hallmark traits that would facilitate fitting in with either traditional gender group. Research has demonstrated that undifferentiated individuals report lower self-esteem; lower emotional, psychological, and social well-being; lower perceived social support; and higher depression scores compared to sex-typed and androgynous individuals (e.g., Juster et al., 2016; Vafaei, Ahmed, Freire, Zunzunegui, & Guerra, 2016). However, relatively little work has been done with undifferentiated individuals; still, their affective, cognitive, and behavioral tendencies may provide a rich framework for investigating the construct of AE.

Studies have not gone beyond the simplistic self-report of gender to instead investigate the degree to which gender identity is related to AE. It is possible that, rather than biological sex serving as a differentiator of levels of AE, the degree of masculinity and femininity serve as stronger predictors. In addition to investigating a broader definition of gender affiliation than previous studies, the

current study attempts to relate AES to narcissistic attitudes and self-esteem.

Academic Entitlement, Self-Esteem, and Narcissism

The relationship between narcissism and self-esteem has been amply reviewed in the literature, though often with conflicting results (Stronge et al. 2016). Brummelman, Thomaes, and Sedikides (2016) offered evidence to challenge the view that narcissism is related to high self-esteem, instead proposing that individuating experiences shape narcissism and self-esteem differently. Stronge et al. (2016) identified profiles with differing relationships between narcissism, self-esteem, and entitlement, suggesting a lack of an exclusive correlation among these characteristics and personality types. They concluded that self-esteem is a necessary, but not sufficient, prerequisite for entitlement.

Greenberger et al. (2008), using their own scale of AE, found AE to be significantly correlated with narcissism as a personality characteristic and negatively correlated with overall self-esteem. Nonetheless, self-esteem and narcissism were strongly and significantly positively correlated with one another. Still, the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem is not as clear-cut as that result suggests.

Several studies (e.g., Brookes, 2015; Wink, 1991; Zondag, 2013) have argued for the presence of two distinct types of narcissism. Overt narcissism is represented by the typical pathological characteristics associated with narcissism, including grandiosity and arrogance. Covert narcissism is thought to reflect a defensive narcissism as an attempt to compensate for low or fragile self-esteem, along with the desire to assert one's competence or superiority through expressions of entitlement (Weikel, Avara, Hanson, & Kater, 2010).

Weikel et al. (2010) studied the relationship between each type of narcissism with gender and various types of dysfunction and distress. They found that overt narcissism correlated negatively with emotional distress and interpersonal difficulties among female, but not

male, students (cf. Kealy, Ogrodniczuk, Rice, & Oliffe, 2017). After controlling for self-esteem, overt narcissism correlated positively with self-reported depression among female students and with emotional distress and interpersonal difficulties among male students. On the other hand, covert narcissism correlated positively with emotional distress and interpersonal and academic difficulties among all students; these latter findings were maintained even after the authors controlled for self-esteem. We speculate that the covert form of narcissism is more consistent with the academic narcissism factor on the AES developed by Wasieleski et al. (2014).

Similarly, the review of the literature by Grijalva et al. (2015) suggested that covert narcissism might be more related to a form of narcissism termed "vulnerable narcissism." This form is distinct from the "grandiose narcissism" which is more consistent with the *DSM-5* diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. Vulnerable narcissism entails greater emotional variability and a decreased self-esteem as compared to its more famous cousin. Grijalva et al. (2015) also noted that there is a more equal prevalence of this type of narcissism by gender.

Hypotheses

Given the above findings and the factor structure of the AES, we focused on the following areas of inquiry:

1. We expected covert narcissism would be significantly positively correlated with scores on the academic narcissism factor of the AES (e.g., Greenberger et al., 2008).
2. We expected that a masculine gender classification would reveal a stronger relationship with covert narcissism and AES scores than other gender classifications (e.g., Kealy et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2017).

3. We examined the relationship between grade point average (GPA) and academic entitlement, covert narcissism, and self-esteem.

Method

Participants

The participants were 109 male and 309 female undergraduates haphazardly selected from the University of Alabama during the 2015-2016 academic year. They ranged in age from 18-28 (M = 18.71, SD = 1.21). The present sample was 83.1% White, non-Hispanic, 9.5% African American, 3.1% Hispanic, 2.4% Asian, 0.5% Native American, 0.2% Pacific Islander, and 0.7% indicated Other. The average self-reported grade point average (GPA) was 3.46 (SD = 0.59) with 3.50 being the median.

Materials

Academic entitlement. The Academic Entitlement Scale (AES: Wasieleski et al., 2014) was used to assess the degree to which students held entitlement attitudes related to academics. The scale consists of 26 items that assess the multidimensional nature of academic entitlement attitudes: Academic narcissism (items: 1-13) and academic outcome (items 14-26). Participants respond to each statement on a 7-point scale from (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree with higher scores indicating stronger narcissistic tendencies. Academic narcissism manifests itself in student beliefs that poor performance is an insult to their intelligence. Academic outcome manifests itself in student beliefs' that any academic effort (e.g., taking notes) should gain them credit. Wasieleski et al. (2014) report the reliability (internal consistency) of the two subscales was .86 and .84, respectively. The reliability (internal consistency) in the current sample was .74 and .78, respectively.

Gender assessment. Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp's (1973) Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) is a widely used and

validated measure to classify participants as masculine, feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated. The PAQ consists of 24 traits with participants indicating their level of agreement with each trait on a 5-point scale from (1) not at all to (5) very. Sample traits include participants' agreement with their level of aggressiveness, kindness, warmth in relations to others, and need for security. This scale was chosen for two reasons. First, the scale provides an economical gender assessment. Second, the literature evaluating the scale finds that it is generally a reliable and valid measure of an individual's gender identity (Hill, Fekken, & Bond, 2000). The reliability of the PAQ's scales ranges from .51 to .85 for Masculinity and .65 to .82 for Femininity. Examination of the androgyny scale is even more infrequent, with its internal consistency reported as .78 by Spence and Helmreich (1978). All three coefficients from the Likert formats (MF, .63; M, .79; F, .87) were higher than the corresponding coefficients from the original format (Choi, 2004). The reliability (internal consistency) in the current sample was .75 (M), .82 (F), and .76 (MF).

Self-esteem. Self-esteem was assessed by Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale (SES). Although the SES was developed in 1965, it is still the most widely used and well-validated measure of self-esteem. The scale consists of 10 items (e.g., "I am able to do things as well as most other people") that are scored on a 5-point scale from (1) not at all to (5) very much. The negatively worded questions (i.e., 3, 5, 8, 9, and 10) are recoded so that scores could range from 10 to 50, with higher scores indicative of greater self-esteem. The reliability (internal consistency) ranged from .77 to .88 with a test-retest reliability ranging from .82 to .85 (Rosenberg, 1965). Studies using undergraduates report reliability (internal consistency) ranging from .78 (Hojat & Lyons, 1998) to .96 (Vispoel, Boo, & Bleiler, 2001). When translated to other languages the reliability (internal consistency) of the SES remains consistent (e.g., .86) with other studies (see Tinakon & Nahathai, 2012). For the present study, the scale was used with state self-esteem instructions, which informed participants to answer in

accordance to how much each statement currently describes them. The reliability (internal consistency) of the SES for the present study was .89.

Hypersensitive narcissism. The Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS: Hendin & Cheek, 1997) was used to assess covert narcissism. The scale consists of 10 items (e.g., "My feelings are easily hurt by ridicule or the slighting remarks of others" and "I often interpret the remarks of others in a personal way") that are assessed on a 5-point scale from (1) very uncharacteristic or untrue, strongly disagree; (2) uncharacteristic; (3) neutral; (4) characteristic; to (5) very characteristic or true, strongly agree. Scores can range from 10 to 40 with higher scores indicating more covert narcissistic tendencies. Hendin and Cheek (1997) reported the reliability (internal consistency) ranges from .62 to .75 and the reliability and validity is supported in cross-cultural samples (e.g., Fossati et al., 2009). The reliability (internal consistency) for the present sample was .70.

Procedure

Participants completed the survey online. The survey was delivered using Qualtrics, a product that facilitates survey creation, distribution, and data monitoring and/or collection. At the beginning of the survey, participants read that they would be answering questions about themselves and their academic opinions. Because of the different response formats of the measures, participants were informed that specific instructions would be given throughout and that each survey will have a specific range of numbers or scale when answering questions that will be different from the others. They were informed that the survey should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete and they would receive one research credit for participation that counted toward their introduction to psychology course research requirement.

To fulfill the introduction to psychology research requirement, students need to earn 12 units of credit. They receive 1 research credit for each hour spent participating in on-line studies and 1.5 research

credits for every hour spent in face-to-face lab experiments as it takes more effort to travel to the appropriate lab. For those students who do not want to participate in research, they can write short papers on relevant psychology research and they receive 1 research credit for each paper completed. Students may complete the 12 research credit requirement through a combination of writing papers and participating in research. For students who do not complete all 12 research credits, there is a 10% deduction from the students' final grade.

In order to get the genuine assessment of academic entitlement attitudes, the AES was the first survey completed. The presentation of the remaining surveys was randomized using the block randomization feature in Qualtrics. The last page of the survey contained demographic questions, such as participants' age, sex, race, etc.

After participants completed the survey, they informed that the purpose of the study was to explore the possible relationship(s) between college students' individual characteristics and other variables, such as attitudes and narcissism. Participants were instructed not to tell other students about the details of this study as such knowledge could influence how future participants respond to the survey.

Results

We first explored the APA (2013) finding that narcissistic traits are typically more often found in males compared to females. We next explored the relationship between biological sex and self-esteem, the outcome subscale of the academic entitlement scale, and covert narcissism followed by examining the relationship between academic narcissism and covert narcissism (Hypothesis 1). These analyses are then qualified by our gender classification analyses (Hypothesis 2). Lastly, we present additional analyses of the data where the relationship between self-reported GPA and academic entitlement, covert narcissism, and self-esteem.

Sex and Academic Entitlement, HSNS, and Self-Esteem Scores

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated on participants' score on the narcissism subscale of the AES as a function of biological sex. The analysis was significant, $F(1, 416) = 15.09$, $p < .001$ ($r = .19$). Males reported higher narcissism scores ($M = 34.39$, $SD = 10.59$) compared to females ($M = 29.73$, $SD = 10.83$).

Biological sex was not a significant factor for self-esteem [$F(1, 416) = 0.40$, $p = .529$ ($r = .03$)], academic outcome [$F(1, 416) = 0.74$, $p = .785$ ($r = .04$)], or covert narcissism [$F(1, 416) = 0.01$, $p = .928$ ($r < .01$)].

Covert Narcissism and Academic Narcissism

A correlational analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between covert narcissism and academic narcissism. The analysis was significant, $r(425) = .18$, $p < .001$. In general, participants who scored higher on academic narcissism also scored higher on covert narcissism.

Gender and Academic Entitlement

Gender and narcissism entitlement. A one-way ANOVA was calculated on participants' score on the narcissism subscale of the AES as a function of gender classification. The analysis was significant, $F(3, 415) = 18.96$, $p < .001$. Participants classified as undifferentiated reported higher narcissism scores compared those classified as masculine, feminine, and androgynous.

Table 1: Gender and Academic Entitlement: Means and Standard Deviations

		Academic Entitlement			
		Narcissism subscale		Outcome subscale	
	n	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Gender					

Masculine	100	32.23	11.26	49.84	12.26
Feminine	92	29.33	10.68	50.01	10.23
Androgynous	134	26.87	9.67	50.99	14.08
Undifferentiated	102	36.81	9.89	47.93	14.07

Note: Post hoc contrasts indicated that those classified as undifferentiated were significantly different from those classified as masculine, feminine or androgynous, ts(415) ≥ 3.11, ps ≤ .002 (rs ≥ .15). Participants classified as masculine were significantly different from those classified as androgynous, t(415) = 3.89, p < .001 (r = .19). Participants classified as feminine were not different from those classified as masculine [t(415) = 1.91, p = .057 (r = .09)] or androgynous [t(415) = 1.74, p = .082 (r = .09)].

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, *post hoc* contrasts, and associated effect sizes.

Gender and outcome entitlement.

A one-way ANOVA was calculated on participants' score on the outcome subscale of the AES as a function of gender classification. The analysis was not significant, $F(3, 415) = 1.11$, $p = .346$.

Gender and Self-Esteem

A one-way ANOVA was calculated on participants' self-esteem score as a function of gender classification. The analysis was significant, $F(3, 415) = 39.08$, $p < .001$. Participants classified as androgynous reported higher self-esteem compared to those classified as masculine, feminine, and undifferentiated. Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, post hoc contrasts, and associated effect sizes.

Table 2: Gender and Self-Esteem: Means and Standard Deviations

	Self-Esteem		
	n	*M*	*SD*
Gender			
Masculine	100	40.17	5.99
Feminine	92	34.53	8.27
Androgynous	134	41.22	6.42

Undifferentiated	102	32.65	6.86

Note: Post hoc contrasts indicated that those classified as undifferentiated were significantly different from those classified as masculine, feminine or androgynous, ts(415) ≥ 3.11, ps ≤ .002 (rs ≥ .15). Participants classified as masculine were significantly different from those classified as androgynous, t(415) = 3.89, p < .001 (r = .19). Participants classified as feminine were not different from those classified as masculine [t(415) = 1.91, p = .057 (r = .09)] or androgynous [t(415) = 1.74, p = .082 (r = .09)].

Gender and Covert Narcissism

A one-way ANOVA was calculated on participants' covert narcissism (HSNS) score as a function of gender classification. The analysis was significant, $F(3, 415) = 9.23$, $p < .001$. Participants classified as undifferentiated reported higher covert narcissism scores compared to those classified as masculine, feminine, and androgynous. Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, *post hoc* contrasts, and associated effect sizes.

Table 3: Gender and Covert Narcissism: Means and Standard Deviations

	Self-Esteem		
	n	*M*	*SD*
Gender			
Masculine	100	27.69	6.12
Feminine	92	28.34	5.90
Androgynous	134	26.87	6.15
Undifferentiated	101	30.90	4.82

Note: Post hoc contrasts indicated that those classified as masculine were significantly different from those classified as androgynous and undifferentiated, ts(415) ≥ 5.64, ps < .001 (rs ≥ .27). Participants classified as androgynous were significantly different from those classified as feminine and undifferentiated, ts(415) ≥ 7.34, ps < .001 (rs ≥ .34). Participants classified as undifferentiated were significantly different from those classified as masculine [t(415) = 3.68, p < .001 (r = .18)], feminine [t(415) = 2.84, p = .005 (r = .14)], and androgynous [t(415) = 5.14, p < .001 (r = .24)]. Participants classified as feminine were not different from those classified as masculine [t(415) = 0.76, p = .450 (r = .04)] or androgynous [t(415) = 1.94, p = .053 (r = .09)]. Participants classified as masculine were not different from those classified as androgynous, t(415) = 1.15, p = .152 (r = .07).

Sex and Academic Entitlement, HSNS, and Self-Esteem Scores

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated on participants' score on the narcissism subscale of the AES as a function of biological sex. The analysis was significant, $F(1, 416) = 15.09$, $p < .001$ ($r = .19$). Males reported higher narcissism scores ($M = 34.39$, $SD = 10.59$) compared to females ($M = 29.73$, $SD = 10.83$).

Biological sex was not a significant factor for self-esteem [$F(1, 416) = 0.40$, $p = .529$ ($r = .03$)], academic outcome [$F(1, 416) = 0.74$, $p = .785$ ($r = .04$)], or covert narcissism [$F(1, 416) = 0.01$, $p = .928$ ($r < .01$)].

Self-Reported GPA and Academic Entitlement, HSNS, and SES

A bivariate correlation was calculated on participant self-reported GPA and Academic Entitlement, HSNS, and SES scores. The correlation between academic outcome and self-reported GPA was not significant, $r(361) < -.01$, $p = .976$.

Academic narcissism and GPA. The correlation between academic narcissism and self-reported GPA was significant, $r(361) = -.14$, $p = .006$. Participants with stronger academic narcissism beliefs and attitudes reported a lower GPA.

Covert narcissism and GPA. The correlation between covert narcissism (HSNS) and self-reported GPA was not significant, $r(361) = -.03$, $p = .634$.

Self-esteem and GPA. The correlation between self-esteem and self-reported GPA approached significance, $r(361) = .10$, $p = .051$. Participants reporting higher GPA had higher self-esteem scores.

Discussion

The primary impetus of this study was to further validate the use of the AES (Wasieleski et al., 2014) by examining its scores as they relate to other variables with which it has been previously associated: gender and narcissism. Overall, the results provided support for the utility and construct validity of the AES. The first hypothesis was confirmed by the significant positive correlation between covert

narcissism and academic narcissism (see Greenberger et al., 2008). The second hypothesis that a masculine gender classification would reveal a stronger relationship with covert narcissism and AES scores than other gender classifications was partially supported (e.g., Kealy et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2017).

As expected, and consistent with prior research, biological males reported significantly higher levels of academic narcissism than did females (e.g., APA, 2013; Grijalva et al., 2015). Based on this research, we predicted that subjects with a masculine gender classification would report higher levels of covert and academic narcissism (e.g., (e.g., Kealy et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2017). Unexpectedly, subjects with an undifferentiated gender classification reported the highest levels of covert and academic narcissism. This finding is inconsistent with previous research showing masculinity leading to greater narcissism (e.g., Kealy et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2017); however, this research did not specifically include undifferentiated individuals. Juster et al. (2016) reported that undifferentiated individuals may encounter more social problems. It is plausible that given the traditional categorization of both narcissism and undifferentiated gender identity as dysfunctional, perhaps these narcissistic attitudes and behaviors reflect dysfunctional attempts at coping skills, consistent with the findings of Grijalva et al. (2015) and Juster et al. (2016).

In the current study, participants with either masculine or androgynous classifications exhibited higher self-esteem scores than did those reporting feminine or undifferentiated scores. The notable finding here is that undifferentiated participants reported low self-esteem, suggesting that their narcissistic attitudes are unlike those of masculine identity, which should likely not be surprising given the lower levels of masculine traits in undifferentiated individuals. As stated earlier, the academic narcissism scale of the AES seems more akin to the covert rather than overt type of narcissism; results from the current study confirmed the hypothesis that the academic narcissism

scale of the AES was significantly correlated with covert narcissism. Covert narcissism, in turn, has been related to emotional distress and both academic and interpersonal difficulties in college students (Weikel et al., 2010).

These findings supplement the argument that identified gender classification provides further explanatory value than a simplified and biologically based gender variable, particularly when related to self-esteem and narcissism, whether general or specific, such as with academic narcissism. In addition, these findings, given their consistency with prior research in this area, provide further validation for the academic narcissism subscale of the academic entitlement scale (Wasieleski et al., 2014).

The correlation between GPA and academic narcissism was statistically significant. One problem with using self-reported GPA is that students likely inflated their GPA for self-presentation reasons (e.g., Dobbins, Farh, & Werbel, 1993). This explanation is plausible given that the median self-reported GPA was approximately 3.50 and 44.4% reported a GPA of 3.70 or higher. The tendency to inflate GPA is stronger among lower GPA students compared to higher GPA students (Dobbins et al., 1993; Frucot & Cook, 1994; Kuncel, Credé, & Thomas, 2005). Access to students' official GPA would likely provide greater variance, less random error, and a stronger correlation with academic narcissism (see Cassady, 2001; Goldman, Flake, & Matheson, 1990; Kuncel et al., 2005). Nonetheless, the analysis resulted in a significant negative correlation.

Lower grade point averages can lead to students or universities terminating their enrollment (e.g., Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004; Seirup & Rose, 2011). If colleges and universities do not provide student support services and resources, then the retention rates of such institutions are negatively impacted (e.g., Horn & Carroll, 1996). As a result, colleges and universities jeopardize an important and substantial revenue stream. Given the tentative link between GPA and academic narcissism, institutions should increase their student-success strategies

and resources to perhaps target dysfunctional attitudes and, in turn, increase retention and graduation rates.

Taken together, these results support the construct validity of the AES by demonstrating it relates in predicted ways with sex, narcissism, and gender classification, the unexpected result regarding undifferentiated individuals notwithstanding. Moreover, the AES may prove to be an efficient tool for assessing narcissistic beliefs and attitudes held by students. Student assessment of academic attitudes could prove useful in identifying students with dysfunctional academic entitlement beliefs and developing interventions for them.

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