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Expanding the Nomological Network: Entitlement and Associated Constructs

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Expanding the Nomological Network: Entitlement and Associated Constructs

Abstract
Consistent with emerging empirical concern with transcending self-interest, the construct of psychological entitlement has become a topic of empirical attention. Entitlement, the sense that one is more deserving than others, has been shown to be associated with multiple negative interpersonal and mental health outcomes. Although it has become a focus of recent research, outcomes, moderators, and mediators of entitlement have yet to be clearly delineated. The current study examined the relationships between psychological entitlement and several potentially related constructs: dogmatism, knowledge certainty, resiliency, self-efficacy, modesty, and how one views of the self in relation to others. Results of the study indicated entitlement was significantly positively associated with knowledge certainty and negatively associated with modesty. Entitlement was also significantly related to how one perceived the self in relation to others. Such findings and other significant results, including demographic effects on entitlement, are discussed in further detail. Implications for further research on transcending self-interest are also addressed.

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Abstract
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Introduction

In 2005, an Associated Press article labeled the generation born between the approximate years of 1979 and 1994, “The Entitlement Generation” (Irvine, 2005). The article contends that young employees exhibit high expectations for salary, job flexibility and duties but little willingness to do unpleasant tasks or remain loyal to a company. Additionally, the article proposes many young people who had too much success early and who have become accustomed to instant gratification find it difficult to transition into the workforce. Similarly, Twenge (2006) suggests narcissism is much more common in recent generations. He notes that in the early 1950s, “only 12% of teens aged 14 to 16 agreed with the statement ‘I am an important person.’ By the late 1980s, an incredible 80%...claimed they were important” (p. 69). He goes on to discuss entitlement as a facet of narcissism that involves believing one deserves more and is entitled to more than others. In light of recent trends described above, it seems prudent to better understand the construct of entitlement so that prosocial attitudes and behaviors may more effectively be promoted.

The purpose of the current study is to expand the nomological network of psychological entitlement. The nomological network is an idea proposed by Chronbach and Meehl (1955), who assert that the validity of a construct may be established by examining, in part, the relationship of said construct to other constructs. Specifically, the aim of the current study is to clarify the relationships between psychological entitlement, epistemic perspectives, modest behavior, resilience, and self-efficacy. It is hypothesized that high entitlement scores will positively correlate with epistemic certainty. It is also hypothesized that high entitlement scores will be negatively associated with high resilience scores and modest behavior.

However, the current study is set within a broader context, which should briefly be described. In 2008, transcending self-interest was introduced as a “new area of scientific inquiry” (Bauer & Wayment, p. 7), and much related psychological research that has emerged in recent years was compiled to provide framework and to suggest directions for future research.
Bauer and Wayment (2008) argue the majority of past psychological research on self-interest emphasizes the negative effects of egotism. Instead, they recommend taking a more constructivist approach by researching topics related to what they term the quiet ego. They suggest a quiet ego is characterized by four prototypical qualities: (1) detached awareness, or a mindful and non-defensive type of attention (2) interdependence, central to which is the ability to understand others’ perspectives in a way that enables identification with them (3) compassion, or an accepting and empathic stance toward the self and others, and (4) growth, the tendency towards prosocial development over time.

Several methodologies for quiet-ego research have been proposed (Bauer & Wayment, 2008). One suggested methodology for quiet-ego research is to examine existing ego-related concepts from new perspectives. Examples of extant research areas using such a methodology include the study of narcissism as a social trap, how noisy and quiet egos respond differently within terror management theory, mindfulness in the process of self-identity, and the different paths toward a quiet ego in the individualist West and collectivist East. Another proposed methodology for examining quiet-ego topics is to explicitly designate present areas of study, such as self-determination theory, as quiet-ego topics. The final suggested methodology is to formulate new topics for empirical study. Currently, proposed phenomena include egosystem versus ecosystem goals, self-compassion, allo-inclusive identity, and humility.

Although a smattering of research has begun to address the broad topic of transcending self-interest, related empirical research remains limited. Additionally, many constructs related to self-interest have yet to be validated or operationalized. The current study represents an effort to respond to both of the above limitations in the field of transcending self-interest.

In particular, the construct of humility, which was proposed as a new phenomenon in quiet-ego research, is a construct that has been recently clarified conceptually, but has not been adequately operationalized or studied empirically. Specifically, humility has been defined as a “nondefensive willingness to see the self accurately, including both strengths and limitations”
(Exline, 2008). Key features of humility have also been described by Tangney (2000, 2002): an accurate sense of one’s abilities; the ability to acknowledge mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations; openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice; keeping one’s abilities and accomplishments in perspective; low self-focus and an ability to forget the self; and an appreciation of the value of all things.

However, efforts to study humility empirically have proved problematic. In part, empirical research on humility is scarce due to the limited current validity of the humility construct, and the resultant poor psychometric properties of self-report humility measures. Peterson and Seligman (2004) suggests that using proxy measures for low humility (e.g., narcissism, entitlement, self-enhancement or defensiveness) may currently prove a more effective method for conducting empirical research on humility, as they view humility as more appropriately construed as the absence of narcissism, self-enhancement, or defensiveness.

Although the purpose of the current study is to expand the nomological network of psychological entitlement, it is a secondary aim that clarification of the construct of entitlement will contribute to a fuller understanding of, and ability to empirically study, the construct of humility.

**Literature Review**

**Narcissism Reconceptualized: Overt and Covert Narcissism**

Narcissism is a well-studied construct in the history of psychology. However, many researchers have recently proposed the construct of narcissism is better represented by two distinct constructs, which have been termed *overt narcissism* and *covert narcissism*. Overt narcissism appears to capture the grandiosity aspect of narcissism, and is characterized by exhibitionism, self-importance, and the preoccupation with receiving admiration from others (Fossati, Borroni, Eisenberg, & Maffei, 2010). At the core of covert narcissism, on the other hand, is a sense of entitlement and exploitativeness; covert narcissism is also typified by hypersensitivity, anxiousness, and insecurity (Fossati *et al.*, 2010).
The distinction between overt and covert narcissism has evolved, in part, from research employing the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). There are two widely used versions of the NPI, which differ in their subscales. One version uses a four-factor model of narcissism, which includes Leadership/Authority (L/A), Self-admiration/Self-absorption (S/S), Superiority/Arrogance (S/A), and Exploitativeness/Entitlement (E/E). The other version uses a seven-factor model, which is composed of Authority, Exhibitionism, Superiority, Entitlement, Exploitativeness, Self-sufficiency, and Vanity (Brown, Budzek, & Tamborski, 2009). Although subscale scores are not often reported in research, the E/E scale tends to receive more attention than other subscales because the E/E subscale often produces different empirical results than the remaining NPI subscales (Brown et al., 2009). For instance, in one study, E/E scores were unrelated to self-esteem and self-certainty, although the total NPI score was strongly positively correlated with both (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995). In the same study, total NPI scores were negatively correlated with the magnitude of actual-ideal self-discrepancies, but E/E was positively related to such self-discrepancies. Similarly, one study showed that total NPI scores predicted optimism, low hopelessness, and high positive affect, whereas E/E scores were unrelated to all of the above variables (Watson, Hickman, & Morris, 1996). Finally, in a recent study, E/E correlated negatively with self-esteem, whereas L/A and S/S correlated positively with self-esteem, and S/A was unrelated to self-esteem (Brown et al., 2009).

In sum, research using the NPI suggests the entitlement dimension of narcissism behaves differently than the grandiosity aspect of narcissism. Such findings have led to recent proposals that narcissism is more accurately represented by the unique constructs of overt narcissism, which captures the grandiosity aspect, and covert narcissism, which captures the entitlement aspect.

Additionally, some researchers have conceptualized overt narcissism as *intrapersonal*, being primarily related to a grandiose sense of self-importance, whereas covert narcissism has been conceptualized as *interpersonal*, and is concerned with an “entitled, socially objectifying
sense of the self in relation to others” (Brown et al., 2009). Brown et al. (2009) also assert, rather than measuring narcissism as a unitary construct using the NPI, it should be measured as two distinct constructs. As measurement tools, they suggest Rosenthal, Hooley, and Steshenko’s (2007) Narcissistic Grandiosity Scale to measure overt narcissism, and suggest Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, and Bushman’s (2004) Psychological Entitlement Scale to measure covert narcissism.

In light of the literature on covert narcissism and entitlement, several studies have recently examined how a sense of entitlement is related to mental health, life satisfaction, and relationships. Specifically, with regards to mental health and life satisfaction, research suggests covert narcissism is associated with low self-esteem, anxiousness, insecurity, depression, pessimism, irritability, motivation to avoid negative outcomes, fear of failure, and lower life satisfaction. With regards to interpersonal relationships, covert narcissism has been associated with hypersensitivity, self-indulgence, arrogance, reactive aggression, low agreeableness, deliberate cheating, hostility, affect-laden defensive behavior, impulsivity, less loyalty, an inability to forgive, an inability to empathize and adopt different perspectives, and a self-serving attributional bias. In the following pages, correlates of entitlement and covert narcissism will be discussed in more detail.

**Empirical Research on Entitlement**

Although still limited, empirical research has begun to address the construct of covert narcissism. Additionally, several recent studies have examined the interpersonal and psychological outcomes of a sense of entitlement, which, as suggested above, has been identified as the defining feature of covert narcissism (Brown et al., 2009).

For instance, Brown et al. (2009) conducted a study in which 288 undergraduate students from the University of Oklahoma were administered several measures. Participants were administered the NPI, the Narcissistic Grandiosity Scale, and the Psychological Entitlement Scale to measure narcissism. Mental health measures included the Centers for
Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) to measure depression, the Satisfaction With Life (SWL) scale, the Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R) to measure optimism and pessimism, and the 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE) scale to measure self-esteem. Results of the study suggested, whereas grandiosity was positively related to self-reported mental health, entitlement was *negatively* related to mental health across the domains of depression, life-satisfaction, optimism, and self-esteem.

Fossati et al. (2010) found covert narcissism was associated with reactive aggression, whereas overt narcissism was associated both with proactive and reactive aggression. The authors correlated scores on the Reactive-Proactive Questionnaire (RPQ), the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), and the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS). Interestingly, results of the study indicated a sense of entitlement “represented a psychopathological core that was common both to overt and covert subtypes of pathological narcissism” (Fossati et al., 2010, p. 24; Wink, 1991), which may challenge the contention that the construct of narcissism is better represented as separate constructs.

Brown et al. (2009) found entitlement was more strongly related to low agreeableness than was grandiosity, which is consistent with prior research suggesting higher levels of entitlement were associated with a greater propensity to engage in antisocial behavior (Campbell et al., 2004).

Brown et al. (2009) also found that narcissistic entitlement was positively correlated with deliberative cheating, whereas grandiosity was only associated with rationalized cheating. In their study, 93 undergraduate students from the University of Oklahoma were given a computerized math test, in which they were told the best performer would win $30. In the first half of the test, the answers would appear on the screen after 10 seconds, which could be prevented by pressing the space bar. Failing to press the space bar was operationalized as deliberative cheating. In the second half of the test, the answers would appear in 1 second, which
could also be prevented by pressing the space bar. Failure to press the space bar during the 1-second interval was operationalized as rationalized cheating.

Additionally, Fossati et al. (2010) contend, “the emotionality of covert narcissists is not confined simply to hypersensitivity, anxiety, and insecurity, but also includes the propensity to respond with irritation, hostility, and affect-laden defensive behavior when provoked” (p. 26). Backing their claim, results of a study conducted by Fossati et al. (2010) showed entitlement was the only dimension of overt narcissism (using the NPI Entitlement subscale) that predicted reactive aggression, even when controlling for proactive aggression.

Reidy, Zeichner, Foster, and Martinez (2008) found entitlement and exploitation, the two characteristics present in both overt and covert narcissism, were associated with a tendency to explosively initiate aggression. Fossati et al. (2010), who assert reactive aggression tends to be emotionally driven and impulsive, hypothesize entitlement may be linked with reactive aggression because “due to their emotionality, adolescents prone to reactive aggression tend to ruminate about what they feel entitled to receive (and believe they have not received)” (p. 26).

Results of the study conducted by Fossati et al. (2010) were consistent with research on the relationship between types of narcissism and approach versus avoidance motivation. Specifically, overt narcissism has been linked with strong approach motivation, whereas covert narcissism has been linked to only strong avoidance motivation (Foster & Trimm, 2008). Foster and Trimm (2008) also found covert narcissists were afraid of failure and negative results of actions.

Despite a recent increase in research on entitlement, there is still a need for the nomological network of entitlement to be more clearly delineated both by theoretical analysis and by empirical research (Harvey & Martinko, 2009). The aim of the proposed study is to expand the nomological network of entitlement by examining the relationships between entitlement and related constructs. In the following sections, empirical literature on related constructs and the possible connection to entitlement will be reviewed.
Epistemic Certainty and Its Relation to Entitlement

A key focus of the present study is to assess whether unjustified certainty in one’s beliefs is significantly related to one’s sense of entitlement. Although several scales measure various facets of epistemic beliefs, few focus specifically on unjustified certainty of knowledge.

In 1996, Altemeyer redefined dogmatism as an enduring and inflexible certainty in one’s beliefs, revealing “conviction beyond reach of evidence to the contrary” (p. 201). Conceiving dogmatism as belief certainty represented a significant departure from prior conceptualizations of dogmatism, which generally construed dogmatism as a cognitive system of beliefs and disbeliefs (e.g., Rokeach, 1960; Troldhal & Powell, 1965; Ray, 1973; Ehrlich, 1979; Shearman & Levine, 2006). It also resulted in the development of the Dogmatism (DOG) Scale, which, along with the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory (EBI) Certain Knowledge Subscale, is one of few measures that specifically assess certainty of beliefs.

Studies employing the DOG Scale have shown that unjustifiable and unchangeable certainty in one’s beliefs has been correlated with numerous psychological variables, including fundamentalism, nationalism, conservatism, and dangerous world beliefs (Crowson, 2009). Also, importantly, belief certainty has been linked with general intolerance of, and aggression toward, people holding worldview-incompatible beliefs and values (Crowson, 2009). That belief certainty has been linked with intolerance and aggression suggests a possible relationship with entitlement, as high entitlement has been associated with lower perspective-taking ability and lower empathy (Campbell et al., 2004), as well as reactive aggression (Fossati et al., 2010). Additionally, dogmatism has been linked with perceiving threat from individuals with different worldviews and with the perception that one’s mission is to persuade others to adopt one’s worldview. Both of the above also suggest a relationship to a sense of entitlement, as covert narcissism has been associated with hypersensitivity and a self-serving attributional bias. Specifically, hypersensitivity (as well as reactive aggression) may suggest a higher perception of threat. It would also make sense that a self-serving attributional bias, in which one takes credit
for successes and blames others for failures, might extend to realms of knowledge, in which one might assume that one’s own beliefs are right and the beliefs of others are wrong, resulting in a tendency to persuade others to adopt one’s worldview.

Empirical research has also focused on the relation of belief certainty to political conservatism. Jost et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis and found endorsement of conservative (as opposed to liberal or moderate) opinions was positively associated with uncertainty avoidance and intolerance of ambiguity. They also found endorsement of conservatism was negatively associated with openness to experience, which has been shown to negatively correlate with uncertainty avoidance (Hodson & Sorrentino, 1999). In other words, less avoidance of uncertainty should be related to increased openness to experience, which has also been linked to intellectual curiosity, creativity, and flexibility (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Jost et al. also found conservatism positively correlated with dimensions of threat, such as death anxiety, system instability, and fear of threat or loss.

As brief context, Jost et al. (2009) theorize that individuals who endorse conservative or right wing political ideologies are less tolerant of ambiguity and tend to perceive the world as more dangerous and threatening. They conceptualize political conservatism as an ideological belief system that consists of “two core components, resistance to change and opposition to equality, which reduce uncertainty and threat” (p. 990). Working from such a framework, Jost et al. found that uncertainty avoidance was a strong predictor of resistance to change and was a marginally significant predictor of opposition to equality of all people. Threat, on the other hand, was found to be unrelated to resistance to change, but was significantly related to opposition to equality. After controlling for other variables in the model, resistance to change was a marginally significant predictor of political conservatism and opposition to equality was a significant predictor. The fact that uncertainty avoidance has been negatively correlated with openness to experience suggests it may also be correlated with entitlement, as entitlement has been demonstrated to be associated with lower levels of perspective-taking ability (Campbell et
Additionally, covert narcissism has been associated with strong avoidance motivation and fear of negative results, which indicates a potential link with a fear of uncertainty.

In summary, empirical studies suggest that persons who harbor inflexible certainty in their beliefs have a greater tendency to see the world as dangerous, tend to be less open to different experiences and to change in general, and tend to show more intolerance and aggression toward individuals with incompatible worldviews. Additionally, research suggests that persons who endorse inflexible certainty in their beliefs have a greater propensity to endorse fundamentalist, nationalist, and conservative ideologies. Pertinent research on entitlement suggests persons who endorse a greater sense of entitlement also tend toward emotional hypersensitivity, fear of negative outcomes, and avoidance motivation. Additionally, persons endorsing higher entitlement tend toward a self-serving attributional bias, display less empathy and ability to adopt different perspectives, as also show greater propensity toward reactive aggression.

The above suggests that belief certainty may be positively linked with a sense of entitlement. Specifically, it is understandable how a tendency to see the world as dangerous might relate to hypersensitivity, fear of negative outcomes, motivation to avoid, and reactive aggression. It is also plausible that less openness to change and greater intolerance and aggression toward different worldviews might be related to a self-serving attributional bias, less empathy and perspective-taking ability, and greater propensity toward reactive aggression. If belief certainty has been shown to correlate with important outcomes such as those that play out in the political arena, it seems important to discern what other constructs, such as entitlement, may be involved.

**Resilience and Its Relation to Entitlement**

According to Mancini and Bonanno (2009), resilience can be operationally defined as an “outcome following a highly stressful event” (p. 1807). They assert the term resilience cannot be used to describe individuals in the abstract because it is the response to stress, but that one can study the variables that “promote or detract from that outcome” (p. 1807). Mancini and
Bonanno outline three common ways individuals react to stressful events. Specifically, they distinguish resilience from a pattern of chronic dysfunction and a pattern of recovery. Chronic dysfunction is characterized by “acute, persistent, and disabling symptoms” (p. 1807), whereas recovery is typified by “acute symptoms that generally subside” (p. 1807). Resilience, on the other hand, is characterized by a stable pattern of low distress over time. People who exhibit resilience seem to experience minimal functional disruption after stressful events, whereas, in the pattern of recovery, individuals gradually return to pre-loss functioning over the course of a year or two (Mancini & Bonanno, 2009).

It is suggested two different coping styles predict resilient outcomes, known as flexible adaptation and pragmatic coping (Bonanno, 2005; Bonanno & Mancini, 2008; Mancini & Bonanno, 2006). Pragmatic coping is characterized by a single-minded and goal-directed response to stress. It is also associated with rigid personality characteristics, such as repressive coping, dismissive attachment, and the habitual use of self-enhancing attributions. It has also been associated with narcissism and negative health consequences. However, the majority of individuals who demonstrate resilience in response to stress exhibit flexible adaptation, which is characterized by an ability to adapt behaviors to the demands of a stressful event (Mancini & Bonanno, 2009). In light of the above, resilience would likely show a positive correlation with entitlement for individuals who employed a pragmatic coping style. However, for the majority of those exhibiting resilience—who cope using flexible adaptation—resilience would likely not show a positive association with entitlement.

Empirical research is mixed regarding the potential relationship between entitlement and resilience. Although few studies have explicitly addressed the association between entitlement and resilience, several have addressed the interaction between self-enhancement and adjustment. For instance, Taylor and Brown (1988) suggest self-enhancement improves mental functioning. It was also shown that positive illusions resulted in improved health functioning in response to stress, as evidenced by lower autonomic activity and lower baseline cortisol (Taylor,

Others have argued self-enhancement is detrimental to adjustment. For instance, it was found that psychologists and trained observers rated self-enhancers to be narcissistic and less adjusted (John & Robins, 1994; Robins & John, 1997). It has been suggested that self-enhancement might result in better short-term adjustment, but poorer long-term adjustment (Paulhus, 1998; Robins & Beer, 2001).

In light of the inconsistent findings related to self-enhancement, the relationship between entitlement and resilience is unclear. Using Mancini and Bonanno’s (2009) framework that the majority of resilient responses are characterized by flexible adaptation, it is hypothesized that resiliency will show a significant positive relationship with entitlement.

**Self-efficacy and Its Relation to Entitlement**

Self-efficacy refers to the perceived ability to achieve a desired outcome, based on evaluating different sources of information about one’s own competence at the task (Bandura, 1986). According to social cognition theory, perceived self-efficacy is the basis of human agency because it “plays a central role in the self-regulation of motivation through goal challenges and outcome expectations” (Bandura, 2001). Previous research indicates efficacy beliefs impact many domains of functioning, including work performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998), psychosocial functioning in children and adolescents (Holden, Moncher, Schinke, & Barker, 1990), academic achievement (Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991), health functioning (Holden, 1991), and athletic performance (Moritz, Feltz, Fahrbach, & Mack, 2000).

Although the widely researched construct of self-efficacy was originally conceptualized as a domain-specific construct, the current study uses the construct of general self-efficacy, which refers to a global confidence in one’s coping ability across various situations (Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001; Scholz, Gutierrez, Doza, Sud & Schwarzer, 2002). Research suggests general self-
efficacy predicts specific self-efficacy in a variety of tasks and moderates the influence of previous performance on subsequent specific self-efficacy formation (Chen et al., 2001).

The construct of self-efficacy was included to observe whether a higher sense of entitlement would be associated with more perceived self-efficacy. It is hypothesized that self-efficacy will not yield a significant correlation with entitlement. Specifically, at face value, it may seem that higher levels of entitlement, or a sense of deservingness, would be associated with perceived self-efficacy. In other words, it might seem a higher sense of entitlement would increase one’s motivation to realize expected outcomes. Along similar lines, some believe that the construct of humility, which is conceptualized in the current study as along the same continuum as entitlement, holds negative associations. Specifically, Tangney (2000) asserts humility is often associated with weakness, passivity, and lacking self-respect and confidence. Instead, Peterson and Seligman (2004) argue humble individuals may see themselves positively if their sense of worth is based on their intrinsic value, a sense of self-compassion, and their connections with other people, among other factors. If entitlement and humility represent end points on the same continuum, the argument put forth by Peterson and Seligman predicts perceived self-efficacy should result in no correlation or a negative correlation with entitlement.

Empirical research on perceived-self efficacy does not clearly suggest a positive or negative relationship with entitlement. Specifically, research on the relationship between self-efficacy and depression suggests a negative correlation between entitlement and self-efficacy; however, studies examining self-efficacy and attributional bias suggest a positive association between entitlement and self-efficacy. Empirical literature examining the way self-efficacy relates to attributional bias and depression is described in further detail below.

With regards to self-efficacy and depression, Kanfer and Zeiss (1983) found depressed individuals considered their performance below their personal standards. Low levels of self-efficacy have also been found to predict long-term depression among adolescents (Bandura, Pastorelli, Barbaranelli, & Caprara, 1999). That entitlement has also been shown to correlate
with self-esteem, anxiousness, insecurity, and depression suggests a higher implicit sense of deservingness would correlate with lower perceived self-efficacy.

Alternately, research on attributional bias suggests a positive association between entitlement and self-efficacy. Specifically, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies indicate depressed individuals take responsibility for failures but attribute success to others (Anderson, 1999). Further, depressed individuals and are more likely to attribute negative events to internal, stable, and specific causes, but attribute positive events to external, stable, and global causes (Seligman et al., 1984). In other words, depressed individuals, who likely do not perceive themselves as efficacious, do not demonstrate a self-serving attribution bias. By extension, individuals who perceive themselves as efficacious should demonstrate a self-serving attributional bias. Research suggests individuals who endorse higher levels of entitlement exhibit a self-serving attributional bias, thereby suggesting that entitlement should positively correlate with entitlement.

Studies have linked self-efficacy to other mental health outcomes as well. For instance, Luszczynska and Schwarzer (2003) found, for individuals diagnosed with cancer, strong general efficacy beliefs were associated with lower levels of depression and fatigue, and also with better reported quality of life in the domains of emotional, social, and cognitive functioning. Results of the study also indicated strong general efficacy beliefs were associated with lower levels of anxiety and pain intensity for individuals with gastrointestinal disease. Among the participants with gastrointestinal disease, general self-efficacy was related to more frequent use of active coping with pain, and less frequent use of passive coping. Among the participants with cancer diagnoses, general self-efficacy was related to more frequent use of active coping, planning, positive reframing, humor, and more frequent seeking of information. Lower self-efficacy among cancer patients was more frequently associated with the use of coping strategies such as self-blame or behavioral disengagement.

In summary, the construct of self-efficacy was included in the present study to assess
whether one’s implicit sense of deservingness relates to one’s perceived ability to achieve a desired outcome. Minimal theoretical and empirical literature suggests a connection between entitlement and self-efficacy, and, of available literature, it is unclear in what direction entitlement might correlate with self-efficacy. It is hypothesized that there will not be a significant positive association between the two constructs.

**Modesty and Its Relation to Entitlement**

Entitlement, as previously described, has been conceptualized as a defining feature of covert, or interpersonal, narcissism. With entitlement in mind, modesty was included as a variable of interest in the present study to assess whether higher levels of entitlement would be associated with lower levels of modesty.

In the psychological literature, modesty has been conceptualized in a number of ways. However, the majority of conceptualizations fit into two broad categories. In the first category, modesty is represented as an interpersonal phenomenon and emphasizes behavioral self-evaluation. In the second general conceptualization, modesty is viewed as an intrapersonal in nature, and a form of psychological self-evaluation.

Among those who conceive of modesty as interpersonal are psycholinguists, who view modesty as a politeness phenomenon. For instance, modesty has been characterized as “minimizing praise of oneself or maximizing dispraise of oneself in verbal expressions” (Leech, 1983). Social psychologists have also generally conceived of modesty as a form of behavioral self-presentation. In other words, modesty is viewed as a tactic of impression management. For example, Cialdini, Wosinska, Dabul, Whetstone-Dion, and Heszen (1998) define modesty as “the public underrepresentation of one’s favorable traits and abilities” (p. 473).

Among those who view modesty as intrapersonal are personality psychologists, who construe modesty as a personality disposition that is stable across time and situations (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992). In the five-factor model of personality, the Agreeableness factor has modesty as one of its six facets. The Modesty factor signifies “humble and self-effacing traits, but
not necessarily a lack of self-confidence or self-esteem” (Chen, Bond, Chan, Tang, & Butchel, 2009, p. 604). Others, such as Sedikides, Gregg, and Hart (2007), define modesty as a moderate self-view and emphasize its “intrapsychic reality” (p. 164).

Other researchers propose modesty is comprised of both intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions. For instance, Exline, Campbell, and colleagues (2004) assert the term modesty refers to “the moderate estimation of one’s merits or achievements and also extends into other issues relating to propriety in dress and social behavior” (p. 463). Chen et al. (2009) also contend modesty “should be examined as a constellation of social behaviors as well as a personality trait.” In the present study, modesty is conceived along both dimensions, and as a form of moderate self-evaluation that manifests behaviorally. However, the self-report measure used in the present study measure primarily assesses behavioral manifestations of modesty.

Recently, Gregg, Hart, Sedikides, and Kumashiro (2008) conducted a study to clarify the construct of modesty. With the intention of generating a prototype of modesty, Gregg et al. generated a list of attributes and surveyed everyday conceptions of modesty among a sample of 118 undergraduate students from the U.S. and 97 civil employees from the U.K. Descriptors strongly associated with modesty were termed central categories. Central categories included humble, shy (bashful, introverted, quiet, reserved, retiring, shy), not boastful, and solicitous (caring, considerate, empathetic, helpful, kind, thoughtful, understanding). Attributes moderately associated with modesty were termed peripheral categories, which included attention avoiding, gracious (does not take credit), honest, likeable, not arrogant, and plain (not flashy). Categories marginally associated, or marginal categories, included arrogant, confident, content, easygoing, embarrassed by praise, gentle, good listener, inner confidence, insecure, content, polite, self-effacing, unassuming, unobtrusive, and unpretentious.

The common association of modesty with the construct of humility suggests a negative correlation between modesty an entitlement. In recent psychological literature, several key features of humility have been identified, including an accurate sense of one’s abilities; the
ability to acknowledge mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations; openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice; keeping one’s abilities and accomplishments in perspective; low self-focus or an ability to ‘forget’ the self; and an appreciation of the value of all things (Tangney, 2000, 2002). The common aspect of low self-focus in humility and modesty would seem antithetical to narcissistic behavior, including behaviors reflecting high levels of entitlement. The low level of self-focus in modest behavior and high level of self-focus in narcissistic behaviors, including entitlement, imply a negative correlation between modesty and entitlement.

Few studies have addressed the interpersonal effects of modesty. Rather, much of the psychological literature on modesty has examined modesty in Asian cultures, or has examined differences in modesty across collectivist and individualist cultures (Bond, Leung, & Wan, 1982; Crittenden, 1991; Gu, 1990; Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999). However, there are a few exceptions, which focus on other dimensions of modesty. For instance, Cialdini et al. (1998) found women reacted more negatively to traditional gender role expectations for modesty than did men. Additionally, Tice, Butler, Muraven, and Stillwell (1995) found people use different self-presentations strategies with different audiences. Specifically, they found that individuals were more modest with friends, but relied on favorable self-enhancement with strangers.

Despite limited research on interpersonal outcomes of modesty, one way to understand interpersonal effects of modesty is to examine impression management studies, as modesty has been conceptualized as a tactic of impression management. Impression management studies suggest self-enhancement strategies, such as exaggerating one’s success or attributing one’s success to internal factors, may damage interpersonal relationships rather than enhance one’s reputation of competence (Carlson & Shovar, 1983; Forsyth, Berger, & Mitchell, 1981; Jones & Wortman, 1973; Powers & Zuroff, 1988; Sadalla, Kenrick & Vershure, 1987). Self-effacement tactics have also been found to be more effective in organizational settings (e.g., Cialdini & DeNicholas, 1989; Wosinska et al., 1996). Consistent with such research, research findings
suggest people who respond modestly to their performances are better liked than those who respond boastfully in Chinese culture (Bond, Leung, & Wan, 1982). Similar results have been found in Western culture, with modest teachers being more likeable than boastful teachers (Tetlock, 1980).

Impression management research suggests by attributing one's success to external factors, such as luck or help from others, a person is less likely to offend coworkers and more likely to develop affiliations with coworkers (Weiner, 1979; Zuckerman, 1979). As previously discussed, high levels of entitlement have been linked with a self-serving attributional bias, in which successes are attributed to internal factors and failures are attributed to external factors. If modest behavior is associated with the attribution of successes to external factors, and entitlement is linked with the attribution of successes to internal factors, it is reasonable to expect a negative correlation between modesty and entitlement, with higher levels of entitlement corresponding with lower levels of modesty.

**Purpose and Rationale of Study**

Because of limited information on what cognitive processes are involved in entitlement, understanding how to prevent negative effects of entitlement is problematic. By examining the relationships between entitlement and related constructs, the current study will more clearly delineate what may contribute to the development of entitlement, what may moderate the relationship of entitlement to negative interpersonal outcomes, and how entitlement levels relate to mental health. Ideally, the current study will lay groundwork for future research on how to prevent negative effects of entitlement and to promote prosocial attitudes and behaviors.

Although the purpose of the current study is to expand the nomological network of psychological entitlement, it is a secondary aim that clarification of the construct of entitlement will contribute to a fuller understanding of, and ability to empirically study, the construct of humility.
Method

Participants and Setting

The sample included a total of 281 participants (67 male, 214 female) who took part in the study, with 236 participants completing the study. Prior to conducting the analyses, data was removed for participants where the majority of responses were missing. For participants that did not complete a single measure only, their data was included for the measures completed.

Measures were administered using a secure Internet-based survey program after obtaining IRB approval. All data were collected, analyzed, and contained in a password-protected computer that was only accessible by investigators.

Research Design and Procedure

Participants were recruited via posted notice at locations in the greater Portland area, through newspaper ads, online classified websites, and on websites that host postings of psychological survey studies. An Internet web address for the study survey was provided on the recruitment notice. Upon entering the secure study website, participants were presented with and asked to read the informed consent document (Appendix A). Upon agreeing to participate in the study, each participant was presented with a demographics questionnaire (Appendix B) and the 7 scales used in the study. Specifically, they were presented with the Psychological Entitlement Scale (Appendix C), the Dogmatism Scale (Appendix D), the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory – Belief in Certain Knowledge subscale (Appendix E), the Resiliency Scale (Appendix F), the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Appendix G), the Modest Behavior Scale (Appendix H), and the Me Versus Other Scale (Appendix I). Upon completion of the measures, the participant was thanked for his or her time, and was provided the opportunity to provide contact information for the provision of a summary of the results if desired. The participants that indicated interest in a summary of the results were directed to a second secure website wherein they provided an e-
mail address. By keeping e-mail contact information in a second site, survey responses were unable to be associated with a given individual.

**Measures**

**The Psychological Entitlement Scale.**

The Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES), developed by Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, and Bushman (2004), is a questionnaire designed to measure a sense of entitlement. The PES is a 9-item measure and responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale. Although psychometric information on the PES is limited to that provided by the developers, it has shown good reliability and validity, and several studies have employed it as a measure since its development. Campbell et al. (2004) conducted several studies to test the psychometrics properties of the PES. In Study 1, a sample of 262 undergraduate students from the University of Georgia completed several personality questionnaires, including the PES and other narcissism scales. Principal components analysis yielded a one-factor solution to the 9-item measure, with the one factor accounting for 46% of the variance in scores, indicating a high level of construct validity. Cambell et al. confirmed the factor structure of the PES in a second study with a larger sample size. In a third study, Cambell et al. examined test-retest reliability of the PES over 1-month and 2-month time periods. Results indicated the 1-month test-retest correlation for the PES was $r = .72$, $p < .001$. The 2-month test-retest correlation for the PES was $.70$, $p < .001$.

**Dogmatism Scale.**

The Dogmatism (DOG) scale (Altemeyer, 1996) was administered to measure certain and unjustifiable beliefs (Altemeyer, 2002). The DOG scale is comprised of 22 items and responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale. Confirmatory factor analysis, conducted by Crowson (2009), yielded a two-factor solution as the best fit, with positively- and negatively-worded items comprising the two factors. A one-factor solution yielded a marginal fit to the data. There is evidence for convergent validity for the DOG, as the scale was highly correlated with the Belief in Certain Knowledge subscale of the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory. Research also suggests
reasonable discriminant validity, evidenced by low correlations with measures assessing need for cognition, need for structure, and need to evaluate, all of which have been included as facets of dogmatism in previous conceptualizations. Additionally, Crowson’s (2009) study suggests good criterion-related validity for the DOG scale, as it was positively and significantly correlated with many constructs in predictable ways. For instance, it was correlated with measures of fundamentalism, nationalism, conservatism, dangerous world beliefs, and intolerance of other worldviews. Overall, research on the psychometric properties is limited. However, studies conducted by Altemeyer and Crowson suggest reasonable psychometrics.

**Epistemic Beliefs Inventory - Belief in Certain Knowledge subscale.**

The Belief in Certain Knowledge subscale of the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory (EBI) (Schraw, Bendixen, & Dunkle, 2002) was designed to measure the belief that “knowledge is certain, as opposed to being tentative and changing” (Crowson, 2009, p. 270). The Certain Knowledge subscale is comprised of 8 items and responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The authors reported five clean factors for the EBI, which comprise the following five subscales: Simple Knowledge, Certain Knowledge, Omniscient Authority, Quick Learning, and Fixed Ability. However, another study (Nussbaum & Bendixen, 2002) only reported two factors, with Certain Knowledge and Omniscient Authority composing the Uncertainty factor, and Simple Knowledge, Quick Learning, and Fixed Ability forming the Complexity factor. Several studies have assessed internal consistency reliability of the five EBI subscales, which yielded reliabilities ranging from .42 to .79 (Ravindran et al., 2005; Crowson et al., 2007). Overall, although sample sizes of studies have been modest, the EBI has higher internal consistency coefficients than other scales measuring epistemic beliefs.

**The Resiliency Scale.**

The Resiliency Scale (RS) used in the current study is a 15-item measure adapted by Neill and Dias (2001) from Wagnild and Young’s (1993) 25-item measure. Responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale. The adapted measure used items that were representative of higher
resiliency, based on an exploratory factor analysis conducted by Neill and Dias (2001). Factor analysis yielded a two-factor solution for the Resiliency Scale, comprised of Personal Competence (e.g., self-reliance, independence, determination, invincibility, mastery, resourcefulness, and perseverance) and Acceptance (e.g., adaptability, balance, flexibility, and a “balanced” life perspective) (Wagnild & Young, 1993). RS demonstrated good internal consistency, with total inter-item correlations ranging from .76 to .91. Additionally, RS demonstrated adequate test-retest reliability, evidenced by correlations ranging from .67 to .84. Concurrent validity for the Resiliency Scale has been assessed by measuring theoretically relevant constructs, including life-satisfaction, physical health, morale, and depression. Taken together, the RS correlations with depression ($r = -.37$), life satisfaction ($r = .30$), morale ($r = .28$), and health problems ($r = -.26$) all suggest good concurrent validity for RS. It should be noted, however, that the majority of psychometric research on the Resiliency Scale has been conducted by the developers.

**The General Self-Efficacy Scale.**

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES-12) is a 12-item measure that was adapted by Bosscher and Smit (1998) from the original 17-item measure developed by Sherer (1982). Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The scale developed by Sherer was one of the first measures constructed to measure general self-efficacy, which conceptualizes self-efficacy as a trait, as opposed to the older conceptualization of self-efficacy as situation dependent. Sherer’s factor analysis suggested the construct measured by GSES was unidimensional. However, some studies (e.g., Chen et al., 2001; Woodruff & Cashman, 1993) have found multifactor solutions. For instance, one study yielded three factors: Initiative, Effort, and Persistence (Sherer, 1982; Bosscher & Smit, 1998), although Bosscher and Smit also suggest a one-factor solution is reasonable because the three factors had moderate intercorrelations. In general, psychometric evidence for the GSES has been mixed, with internal consistency coefficients ranging from .70 to .90 (Chen et al., 2001). The New General Self-Efficacy Scale
(Chen et al., 2001) may prove useful for future research as a measure of general self-efficacy, as it yields higher internal consistency estimates than the GSES and has yielded a single-factor solution (Chen et al., 2001, 2004).

**Integrated Modest Behavior Scale.**

The Modest Behavioral Scale (MBS) (Chen et al., 2009) was designed to measure behavioral aspects of modesty. The present study uses the 39-item culturally integrated version of the MBS (Integrated MBS), which was developed to tap manifestations of modesty across Eastern and Western cultures. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Specifically, in addition to items developed to measure modesty in Hong Kong, the Integrated MBS also includes items to measure behavioral modesty in Canada. The MBS shows sufficient construct validity, evidenced by modest to strong correlations with measures of trait modesty over three studies conducted by the test developers. Factor analysis yielded the following three factors for the culturally integrated MBS: self-effacement, other-enhancement, and avoidance of attention seeking, the alphas for which were .73, .78, and .80, respectively (Chen et al., 2009). In one study using the Integrated MBS, the test developers indicated the self-effacement factor accounted for 32.7% of the total variance. The other-enhancement factor accounted for 20% of the total variance, whereas the avoidance of attention seeking factor explained 25.2% (Chen et al., 2009).

**The Me Versus Other Scale.**

The Me Versus Other Scale (MVOS) (Campbell et al., 2004) is a single-item measure that assesses “the view of self versus others in a visual, nonverbal way” (p. 31). The scale has 7 images; each image is comprised of 4 circles, with one labeled “me” and the three others labeled “other.” The size of the circle labeled “me” varies, ranging from smaller than others to larger than others. Participants were asked to select the number of the diagram (1-7) that best represents “how you see yourself ‘Me’ compared to others ‘O’.” To date, minimal research has evaluated the psychometric properties of the MVOS. However, Campbell et al. (2004) reported a
significant positive correlation between the MVOS and the PES, lending convergent validity to the scale.

**Results**

**Significant Relationships Among Study Constructs**

We were interested in examining whether significant relationships existed between individual levels of entitlement, dogmatism, knowledge certainty, self-efficacy, resilience, modesty, and how one perceives the importance of the self in relation to others. All variables were measured using self-report measures. Specifically, entitlement was measured using the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES); dogmatism was measured using the Dogmatism Scale (DOG), knowledge certainty was assessed using the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory (EBI) – Belief in Certain Knowledge subscale; resilience was quantified using the Resiliency Scale; self-efficacy was gauged with the General Self Efficacy Scale (GSES-12), and the Me Versus Other scale was used to assess the importance of the self in relation to others.

Pearson product-moment correlations were computed between the seven variables, resulting in 11 significant correlations. Entitlement, which was the primary focus of the study, correlated significantly with dogmatism, modesty and the subjective importance of the self in relation to others. Specifically, the association between entitlement and dogmatism ($r = .22, p < .01$) indicates that higher levels of entitlement are associated with a greater tendency toward enduring and inflexible certainty in one’s beliefs. The negative relationship between entitlement and modest behavior ($r = -.34$) shows higher levels of entitlement are associated with lower rates of modest behavior. Finally, the correlation between entitlement and the MVOS ($r = .20, p < .01$) indicates individuals who had a higher perception of themselves as entitled also perceived themselves as more important than others when presented with a visual task comparing the size of the self to the size of others.

The way one perceived oneself in relation to others (MVOS) showed significant correlations with all other study variables. Beyond the association with entitlement mentioned
above, there was also a significant negative correlation with modesty \(r = -.40, p < .01\), wherein a greater tendency to perceive oneself as more important than others was associated with lower endorsement of modest behavior. Additionally, how one perceived the self in relation to others significantly correlated with dogmatism \(r = .22, p < .01\) and belief in knowledge certainty \(r = .14, p < .05\), both of which suggest a tendency to perceive the self as more important than others is associated with greater certainty in the correctness of one’s own beliefs. The tendency to view oneself as more important than others was also positively correlated with resiliency \(r = .28, p < .01\) and self-efficacy \(r = .21, p < .05\). The correlation with resiliency suggests a greater tendency to view oneself as more important than others was associated with a greater tendency to endorse resilient attitudes. Finally, the connection between the MVOS and self-efficacy suggests that the perception of oneself as more important than others is associated with a greater sense of self-efficacy. A strong correlation was also found between self-efficacy and resiliency \(r = .72, p < .01\), indicating higher levels of self-efficacy were associated with higher levels of resiliency.

Dogmatism also held four significant correlations. Beyond its connection to entitlement and the perception of the self in relation to others, discussed above, dogmatism significantly correlated with knowledge certainty and resiliency. The relationship between dogmatism and knowledge certainty \(r = .57, p < .01\) indicated higher levels of dogmatism were associated with higher levels of belief in the certainty of one’s own knowledge. The positive association between dogmatism and resiliency \(r = .14, p < .05\) suggests that greater endorsement of dogmatic attitudes were also associated with greater endorsement of resiliency.

To summarize, how one perceived oneself when presented with a visual task comparing the size of the self to the size of others yielded the highest number of significant correlations. Specifically, the MVOS resulted in positive correlations with entitlement, dogmatism, belief certainty, resiliency, self-efficacy, and modesty. However, none of these represented the strongest correlation in the study. The strongest correlation was a positive association between
resiliency and self-efficacy. Dogmatism also yielded a particularly strong correlation with belief certainty, and was also positively linked to resiliency. Finally, and most pertinent to the hypotheses of the present study, results showed entitlement was positively and significantly associated with dogmatism, and was negatively correlated with modesty.

Several correlations, however, were found to not be statistically significant. Of note, although entitlement associated with dogmatism, modesty, and the view of the self in relation to others, it was not significantly associated with knowledge certainty, resiliency, or self-efficacy. Additionally, behavioral modesty, although significantly associated with entitlement and the view of the self in relation to others, yielded no significant correlations with other constructs of interest. All correlations are depicted below in Table 2.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Entitlement</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.34**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dogmatism</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Knowledge Certainty</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Resiliency</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Self-efficacy</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Modest behavior</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Self Versus Others</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
**p < .01

Demographic Effects on Entitlement and Associated Constructs

Additional analyses were conducted to determine whether group differences within demographic variables existed for any of the scales used in the study. One-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to evaluate the effects of each demographic variable on each
construct of interest. Specifically, the independent variables were the following demographic variables: age, gender, ethnicity, income, education, economic status of family of origin, degree of material provision in childhood, urbanity of current residence, urbanity of childhood residence, degree to which early caregivers advocated material wealth, degree to which early caregivers advocated educational success, exposure to other cultures, exposure to poverty, and number of siblings. The dependent variables were the following seven constructs: entitlement, dogmatism, epistemic certainty, resiliency, self-efficacy, modest behavior, and self versus others.

Demographic effects on entitlement.

With regards to entitlement, significant group differences were found for five demographic variables: ethnicity, urbanity of current residence, exposure to poverty, degree to which early caregivers advocated material success, and degree to which early caregivers advocated educational success.

Specifically, results of the ANOVA examining the effect of ethnicity was significant, $F(5, 280) = 8.86, p < .01$, indicating there were significant differences in entitlement scores based on one’s ethnic identification. With an effect size of .14, the group difference may be considered large. To evaluate pairwise comparisons, Bonferroni post hoc analyses were conducted. Results indicated a significant difference ($p < .01$) between Caucasians and Latinos, with a mean difference of -8.79, 95% CI [-17.22, -.36], suggesting Caucasians were significantly less likely to endorse entitled attitudes than Latinos.

With regards to entitlement scores, Bonferroni post hoc results also indicated significant differences between African Americans and several other groups. Specifically, a significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between African Americans and Caucasians, with a mean difference of 10.71, 95% CI [5.25, 16.17], indicating African Americans were more likely to endorse attitudes of entitlement than Caucasians. There was also a significant mean difference ($p < .01$) of 12.99, 95% CI [3.43, 22.55] between African American entitlement scores and entitlement scores of those who identified as Other. Finally, there was a significant mean
difference ($p < .01$) of $14.28$, 95% CI $[1.71, 26.84]$, between African American entitlement scores and scores of those who identified as Multiethnic. There were no significant differences in entitlement between African Americans and either Latinos or Asians.

In general, African Americans obtained the highest entitlement scores, followed by Latinos, Asians, Caucasian, Other-identified, and those identified as Multiethnic, respectively.

Means and standard deviations for entitlement scores of each ethnicity are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>$N$</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>31.42</td>
<td>10.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42.14</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40.21</td>
<td>8.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33.54</td>
<td>11.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.14</td>
<td>10.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27.86</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the effect of ethnicity on entitlement, the results of the ANOVA examining the effect of urbanity of current residence on entitlement was significant, $F(4,277) = 3.34$, $p < .05$, with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .05$). In other words, there were significant differences in entitlement scores based on the degree to which a person’s current residence was urban or rural. Specifically, Bonferroni post hoc analyses indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) between those who considered their current residence very urban and those who considered their residence very rural. The mean difference was $18.27$, 95% CI $[.18, 36.35]$, indicating participants living in very urban areas obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than participants living in very rural areas. In general, individuals who considered their current residence very urban obtained the highest entitlement scores, followed by those whose residences were
considered suburban, moderately urban, moderately rural, and very rural, respectively. Means and standard deviations are listed below in Table 3.

Table 3

*Significance of Group Differences on Entitlement: Urbanity of Current Residence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urbanity of Current Residence</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very urban</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35.60</td>
<td>10.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately urban</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>32.23</td>
<td>10.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>34.15</td>
<td>11.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately rural</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30.45</td>
<td>10.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rural</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>6.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, results of the ANOVA examining the effect of exposure to poverty on entitlement was significant, $F(4,280) = 3.07, p < .05$, with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .04$), indicating there were significant differences in entitlement scores based on the degree to which one had been exposed to poverty (either observed or experienced). Specifically, Bonferroni post hoc analyses indicated there was a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the group that reported being moderately exposed to poverty and the group that reported very much exposure to poverty. The mean difference, -5.82, 95% CI [-11.12, -.52], indicated those endorsing significant exposure to poverty obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than those who endorsed moderate exposure to poverty. In general, those who experienced the most poverty and the least poverty obtained the highest entitlement scores. Means and standard deviations for the effect of exposure to poverty on entitlement scores are represented below in Table 4.

Table 4

*Significance of Group Differences on Entitlement: Exposure to Poverty*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposure to poverty</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37.20</td>
<td>9.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With regards to entitlement scores, the ANOVA examining the effect of early caregiver advocacy of material wealth was also significant, $F(4,278) = 2.76, p < .05$, and showed a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .04$), indicating there were significant differences in entitlement scores based on the degree to which one’s early caregivers advocated material success. Specifically, Games Howell post hoc analyses indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) between those whose parents or caregivers advocated material success very little and those whose caretakers moderately advocated material wealth. The mean difference was $-5.04, 95\% \text{ CI } [-9.81, -.28]$, indicating those whose caretakers moderately advocated material wealth obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than those whose caretakers advocated material success very little. Overall, higher entitlement scores were associated with greater advocacy of material wealth. Means and standard deviations of entitlement scores by degree of material advocacy are depicted below in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Significance of Group Differences on Entitlement: Early Advocacy of Material Success*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caretaker Advocacy of Material Success</th>
<th>$N$</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30.87</td>
<td>12.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>31.01</td>
<td>10.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>32.11</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>36.06</td>
<td>9.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35.34</td>
<td>11.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, the results of the ANOVA examining the effect of early caregiver advocacy of education on entitlement was significant $F(4,278) = 3.37, p < .01$, and showed a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .05$). In other words, there were significant differences in entitlement scores based on the degree to which one’s childhood caregivers advocated educational success. Bonferroni post hoc analyses indicated significant differences between those whose caregivers did not advocate education at all and several groups.

Specifically, the analyses indicated a significant difference ($p < .01$) between those whose caregivers did not reportedly advocate education at all and those whose caregivers advocated education very little. The mean difference was -12.85, 95% CI [-22.97, -2.90], indicating individuals whose caregivers advocated education very little were more apt to endorse attitudes of entitlement than participants whose early caregivers did not advocate education at all. Interestingly, the group that endorsed receiving very little childhood advocacy of education obtained the highest scores on entitlement, whereas the group endorsing no childhood advocacy of education obtained the lowest entitlement scores. Additionally, there was a significant difference ($p < .05$) between those whose caregivers did not advocate education and those whose caregivers advocated education to a moderate degree. The mean difference was -9.23, 95% CI [-18.41, -.05]. The mean difference indicated that individuals whose caregivers advocated education to a moderate degree were more apt to endorse attitudes of entitlement than participants whose early caregivers did not advocate education at all. Additionally, there was a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the group for whom educational success was not advocated and the group receiving very much educational advocacy. The mean difference was -8.75, 95% CI [-17.33, -.18], indicating the group receiving very much educational advocacy obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than the group receiving no educational advocacy.
Overall, the group whose caregivers did not advocate educational success at all was least likely to endorse attitudes of entitlement. Means and standard deviations for entitlement scores categorized by degree of educational advocacy in childhood are represented below in Table 6.

Table 6

*Significance of Group Differences on Entitlement: Early Advocacy of Education*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Educational Advocacy in Childhood</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24.36</td>
<td>9.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37.21</td>
<td>11.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32.94</td>
<td>10.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33.58</td>
<td>10.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>33.11</td>
<td>10.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To summarize, results showed significant group differences on entitlement for five demographic variables. First, the effect of ethnicity on entitlement was significant, and showed African Americans obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than several other groups. Latinos also obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than Caucasians. Second, the effect of urbanity of current residence on entitlement was significant, and showed inhabitants of very urban areas obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than inhabitants of very rural areas. Third, the effect of poverty exposure on entitlement was significant, and showed entitlement scores of individuals endorsing very much poverty exposure were significantly higher than scores of individuals endorsing only moderate exposure. Fourth, the effect of early advocacy of material success on entitlement was significant, and showed individuals whose caregivers moderately endorsed material success obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than those whose caregivers advocated material wealth very little. Finally, the effect of early advocacy of education on entitlement was significant, and showed individuals endorsing no early advocacy of education obtained significantly lower entitlement scores than several other groups.
Demographic effects on dogmatism.

With regards to dogmatism, significant group differences were found for two demographic variables: ethnicity and urbanity of current residence. With regards to ethnicity, the ANOVA examining the effect of ethnicity on dogmatism was significant, $F(5,253) = 3.83, p < .01$, and showed a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .07$), indicating there were significant differences in dogmatism scores based on reported ethnicity. Bonferroni post hoc analyses showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in dogmatism scores between Latinos and Caucasians, with a mean difference of 14.56, 95% CI [.81, 28.31], indicating Latinos endorsed significantly higher attitudes of dogmatism than Caucasians. Latinos also endorsed significantly higher ($p < .05$) dogmatism scores than those identified as Other, with a mean difference of 20.92, 95% CI [2.13, 39.71]. Overall, Latinos obtained the highest scores on dogmatism, followed by African Americans, Asians, Caucasians, those identified as Other, and those identified as Multiethnic, respectively. Means and standard deviations for dogmatism scores of each ethnic group are represented below in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>$N$</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>58.83</td>
<td>16.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>65.96</td>
<td>14.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>73.38</td>
<td>14.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>61.33</td>
<td>13.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52.46</td>
<td>13.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48.40</td>
<td>12.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, results showed the ANOVA examining the effect of urbanity of current residence on dogmatism was significant, $F(4,251) = 3.34, p < .01$, and showed a medium effect
size ($\eta^2 = .05$), In other words, there were significant differences in dogmatism scores based on the degree to which one’s residence was urban or rural. Bonferroni post hoc analyses showed significant differences between those who lived in very rural areas and all other groups, with inhabitants of very rural areas obtaining significantly higher scores on dogmatism than all other groups. Specifically, there was a significant difference ($p < .01$) between inhabitants of very rural areas and inhabitants of very urban areas, with a mean difference of 33.40, 95% CI [5.94, 60.86]. There was also a significant difference ($p = .01$) between those living in very rural areas and those living in moderately urban areas, with a mean difference of 31.88, 95% CI [4.70, 59.06]. Results also showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) between inhabitants of very rural areas and suburban inhabitants, with a mean difference of 29.32, 95% CI [2.26, 56.38]. Finally, there was a significant difference ($p < .05$) between very rural inhabitants and moderately rural inhabitants, with a mean difference of 28.96, 95% CI [1.35, 56.56]. Overall, results showed higher dogmatism scores were associated with more rural residencies, and lower dogmatism scores were associated with more urban residencies. Means and standard deviations of the effect of urbanity of current residence on dogmatism are shown below in Table 8.

### Table 8

*Significance of Group Differences on Dogmatism: Urbanity of Current Residence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urbanity of Current Residence</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very urban</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>56.93</td>
<td>12.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately urban</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>58.45</td>
<td>12.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>61.01</td>
<td>15.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately rural</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>61.38</td>
<td>19.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rural</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90.33</td>
<td>16.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To review, results showed significant group differences on dogmatism for two demographic variables. First, the effect of ethnicity on dogmatism was significant, and showed
Latinos obtained significantly higher dogmatism scores than Caucasians and Other-identified individuals. Second, the effect of urbanity of current residence was significant, and showed inhabitants of very rural areas scored significantly higher on dogmatism than all other groups.

**Demographic effects on modesty.**

With regards to modesty, significant group differences were found for three demographic variables: ethnicity, urbanity of current residence, and number of siblings. First, the ANOVA examining the effect of ethnicity on modesty was significant, $F(5, 235) = 4.37, p < .01$, indicating there were significant differences in modest behavior scores based on the reported ethnicity of the participant. The effect size of the differences ($\eta^2 = .09$) is considered large. Bonferroni post hoc analyses showed several significant differences between Latinos and other ethnic groups. Specifically, there was a significant difference ($p < .05$) in modesty scores between Latinos and Caucasians, with a mean difference of $-18.63$, 95% CI [-36.45, -0.70], indicating Latinos reported significantly fewer modest behaviors than Caucasians. Analyses also showed a significant difference ($p < .01$) in modesty scores between Latinos and African Americans, with a mean difference of $-27.74$, 95% CI [-48.46, -7.02], indicating African Americans endorsed significantly more modest behaviors than Latinos. Further, there was a significant difference ($p < .01$) in modesty scores between Latinos and those who identified as Other, with a mean difference of $-28.73$, 95% CI [-52.64, -4.83], indicating Latinos endorsed significantly fewer modest behaviors than those identified as Other. Finally, there was a significant difference ($p < .05$) in modesty scores between Latinos and those identified as Multiethnic, with a mean difference of $-30.07$, 95% CI [-63.51, 3.37], similarly indicating Latinos obtained lower modesty scores than those identified as Multiethnic. With regards to behavioral modesty, results only showed significant group differences between those identified as Latino and other ethnic groups; there were no significant differences between other ethnicities. Overall, those identified as Multiethnic obtained the highest scores on behavioral modesty, followed by those identified as Other,
African Americans, Caucasians, Asians, and Latinos, respectively. Means and standard deviations for behavioral modesty scores of each ethnic group are represented below in Table 9.

Table 9

*Significance of Group Differences on Modesty: Ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>175.82</td>
<td>19.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>184.92</td>
<td>17.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>157.18</td>
<td>17.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>169.00</td>
<td>19.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>185.92</td>
<td>21.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>187.25</td>
<td>5.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, the effect of urbanity of current residence on modesty scores was significant, \( F(4,233) = 2.78, p < .05 \), with a medium effect size \( \eta^2 = .05 \), indicating there were significant differences in modesty scores based on whether one’s residence was more or less urban. Specifically, Games Howell post hoc analyses showed a significant difference \( (p = .01) \) in modesty scores between those living in very urban areas and those living in moderately rural areas, with a mean difference of -12.14, 95% CI [-22.17, -2.11], indicating inhabitants of moderately rural areas obtained significantly higher behavioral modesty scores than inhabitants very urban areas. Means and standard deviations for modesty scores according to urbanity of current residence are represented below in Table 10.

Table 10

*Significance of Group Differences on Modesty: Urbanity of Current Residence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urbanity of Current Residence</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very urban</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>170.37</td>
<td>16.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, results of the ANOVA examining the effect of number of siblings on modesty was significant, $F(5,235) = 2.26, p < .05$, with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .05$). In other words, there were significant differences in modesty scores depending on the number of siblings reported. Specifically, Bonferroni post hoc analyses indicated showed a significant difference in modesty scores between the group with no siblings and the group with five or more siblings. The mean difference of -21.73, 95% CI [-42.57, -.88], indicated those with five or more siblings obtained significantly higher scores on behavioral modesty than those without siblings. In general, the group reporting five or more siblings obtained the highest modesty scores, whereas the group reporting no siblings obtained the lowest modesty scores. Means and standard deviations for modesty scores according to number of siblings are reported below in Table 11.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Siblings</th>
<th>$N$</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>167.35</td>
<td>17.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>178.49</td>
<td>19.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>174.30</td>
<td>20.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>176.37</td>
<td>16.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>174.28</td>
<td>18.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>189.08</td>
<td>27.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In sum, results showed significant group differences on modesty for three demographic variables. First, the effect of ethnicity on modesty was significant, and showed Latinos obtained significantly lower modesty scores than several other ethnicities. Second, the effect of urbanity of current residence was significant, and showed inhabitants of very urban areas were significantly less modest than inhabitants of moderately rural areas. Finally, the effect of number of siblings on modesty was significant, and showed individuals with zero siblings were significantly less modest than individuals with five or more siblings.

Summary of Results

Overall, there were several significant correlations between study constructs. Specifically, how one viewed the self when presented with a visual task comparing the size of the self to the size of others was significantly and positively correlated with all other constructs of interest. Additionally, entitlement was significantly and positively associated with dogmatism; results also yielded a significant negative correlation between entitlement and modesty. Dogmatism was predictably positively associated with belief in knowledge certainty, but was also positively associated with resiliency. Finally, resiliency was positively associated with self-efficacy, which represented the strongest of all significant correlations.

One-way ANOVAs and post hoc analyses were conducted to examine whether, for all variables of interest, significant differences existed within demographic variables. Analyses showed several significant demographic group differences, particularly with regards to entitlement, dogmatism, and modesty scores.

Specifically, there were significant differences in entitlement scores based on one’s identified ethnicity, with African Americans obtaining significantly higher entitlement scores than Caucasians and those identified as Multiethnic or Other. Additionally, Latinos showed significantly higher entitlement scores than Caucasians. Results also indicated significant differences in entitlement based on degree of urbanity of current residence, with inhabitants of very urban areas obtaining significantly higher entitlement scores than inhabitants of very rural areas.
areas. Additionally, the effect of exposure to poverty on entitlement was significant, and showed individuals who endorsed very much exposure to poverty scored significantly higher on entitlement than individuals who endorsed only moderate exposure. Further, the effect of early advocacy of material success on entitlement was significant, and showed individuals whose caregivers moderately endorsed material success obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than those whose caregivers advocated material wealth very little. Finally, the effect of early advocacy of education on entitlement was significant, and showed individuals endorsing no early advocacy of education obtained significantly lower entitlement scores than several other groups.

ANOVAs and post hoc analyses also showed significant demographic differences with regards to dogmatism. Specifically, the effect of ethnicity on dogmatism was significant, and showed Latinos obtained significantly higher scores on dogmatism than Caucasians and individuals who identified as Other. Additionally, results showed significant differences in dogmatism scores based on the degree of urbanity of current residence, with inhabitants of very rural areas scoring significantly higher on dogmatism than all other groups.

Finally, there were significant differences in modesty scores for three demographic variables: ethnicity, urbanity of current residence, and number of siblings. Post hoc analyses showed Latinos obtained significantly lower modesty scores than several other ethnic groups. With regards to the effect of urbanity of current residence on modesty, results showed inhabitants of very urban areas were significantly less modest than inhabitants of moderately rural areas. Finally, the effect of number of siblings on modesty was significant, and showed individuals without siblings were significantly less modest than those with five or more siblings.

No demographic group differences existed for the remaining variables of interest, including knowledge certainty, self-efficacy, resilience, and how one perceives the importance of the self in relation to others.

**Discussion**
In the present study, the nomological network of entitlement was examined. As such, the present study fits within a body of emerging research on the transcendence of self-interest, and clarification of entitlement will potentially contribute to the ability to operationalize and measure such theoretical constructs as humility. It was hypothesized entitlement would show positive correlations with the epistemic certainty measures, as well as with resiliency. It was also hypothesized entitlement would correlate negatively with modesty. Results showed entitlement correlated significantly and positively with dogmatism, as well as a tendency to see oneself as larger than others when presented with a visual task comparing the size of the self to the size of others. As noted earlier, dogmatism in the present study refers to enduring and inflexible certainty in one’s beliefs.

**Prevention of Negative Entitlement Outcomes**

As described earlier, research shows entitlement is associated with many negative outcomes. Specifically, with regards to mental health and life satisfaction, research suggests covert narcissism is associated with low self-esteem, anxiousness, insecurity, depression, pessimism, irritability, motivation to avoid negative outcomes, fear of failure, and lower life satisfaction (Brown et al., 2009; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995; Watson, Hickman, & Morris, 1996). With regards to interpersonal relationships, covert narcissism has been associated with hypersensitivity, self-indulgence, arrogance, reactive aggression, low agreeableness, deliberate cheating, hostility, affect-laden defensive behavior, impulsivity, less loyalty, inability to forgive, inability to empathize and adopt different perspectives, and a self-serving attributional bias (Brown et al., 2009; Fossati et al., 2010; Campbell et al., 2004; Reidy et al., 2008).

However, results of the current study suggest no significant association between entitlement and resiliency, or entitlement and self-efficacy. The minimal associations may suggest self-efficacy and resilience, which were predictably correlated, are unrelated to the construct of entitlement. However, the non-association may reflect a shortcoming of the present study. Specifically, grandiosity, the intrapersonal aspect of narcissism, has been associated with
resiliency and self-efficacy (Watson et al., 1996). Because the current study did not include a measure of overt narcissism, it is unclear whether resiliency and self-efficacy would be associated with individuals who demonstrated a low level of grandiosity but a high level of entitlement. In light of the above limitation, which may also apply to other correlative interpretations, generalizations of results should be made with caution.

Results of the current study suggest entitlement is associated with dogmatism, or an enduring an inflexible certainty in one’s beliefs. The association with dogmatism may underlie several negative outcomes of entitlement, such as reactive aggression, defensive behavior, inability to empathize and adopt different perspectives, and a self-serving attributional bias. For instance, a person who is certain in her beliefs may interpret contrary evidence as a threat and react defensively or aggressively. Additionally, a high degree of certainty in personal beliefs may inhibit one’s ability to view others’ perspectives as valid, thereby decreasing the ability to empathize and adopt different perspectives. Similarly, a self-serving attributional bias may be moderated by epistemic certainty. A self-serving attributional bias – the tendency to attribute successes to oneself and failures to others—suggests it is difficult for a person to view herself as wrong, which would likely be necessary in order to be able to attribute failures to oneself. If an individual feels certain in her beliefs, it would likely inhibit the ability to view one’s beliefs or actions as wrong, thereby engendering a self-serving attributional bias.

The connection between entitlement and dogmatism suggests one method to reduce negative entitlement outcomes may be to reduce the rigidity of belief certainty. For instance, in a clinical context, a psychotherapy treatment may include a module on the tolerance of uncertainty. On a larger scale, it may be beneficial to develop education programs that focus on acceptance of ambiguity and how to respond effectively in ambiguous contexts.

The significant correlation between entitlement and dogmatism also suggests avenues for future research. Specifically, as described earlier, dogmatism has previously been shown to correlate with high levels of fundamentalism, nationalism, conservativism, and the view of the
world as dangerous (Crowson, 2009; Jost et al., 2003). To date, there is minimal psychological research that addresses the relationship of entitlement to political attitudes and organizations. As the relationship between the world population and natural resources becomes more strained, research to examine the political effects of a sense of deservingness seems particularly relevant.

**Contribution to the Understanding of Humility**

Results of the current study suggest entitlement is positively associated with dogmatism and negatively associated with modesty, which suggests a relationship to the construct of humility. As described above, recent research has conceptualized entitlement as the defining feature of covert narcissism, and potentially as the psychopathological core of narcissism in general. Further, although essential features of humility have been proposed in recent theoretical literature, the construct of humility has often been defined in terms of what an individual does not do, rather than by the presence of certain behaviors. In other words, humility has often been construed as the absence of narcissism, self-enhancement, or defensiveness (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). If entitlement represents the core feature of covert – and possibly overt – narcissism, and the construct of humility has often been characterized as the absence of narcissism, it stands to reason that the absence of entitlement may represent a prominent feature of humility.

Such a hypothesis is consistent with the finding in the current study that entitlement holds a significant negative correlation with modesty. Specifically, modesty and humility have often been used interchangeably. Although humility and modesty are often viewed as synonymous, Peterson and Seligman (2004) view humility as a “private stance toward the evaluation of the self,” whereas modesty is viewed as a “socially oriented virtue, a style of presentation that can be consistent with an inner sense of humility but can also arise for other reasons, such as situational pressures and demands” (p. 463). In other words, someone does not have to exhibit humility to behave modestly if they believe that modest behavior is appropriate for the situation. Further, the above differentiation between humility and modesty suggests the
behavioral manifestation of humility often appears similar to modesty. Because no measure adequately assesses humility, a behavioral modesty measure was included in the present study. The fact results showed a significant negative correlation between entitlement and modesty lends credibility to the proposal that low entitlement may be a defining feature of humility.

Humility has been conceptualized as a private stance toward the self, whereas modesty is viewed as a social virtue. Similarly, entitlement has been conceptualized as the interpersonal aspect of narcissism, whereas grandiosity represents the intrapersonal aspect of narcissism. If entitlement and humility lie along the same continuum, humility, by extension, may be seen as the private evaluation of the self in relation to others.

Another finding from the current study provides convergent evidence that low entitlement comprises a defining feature of humility. Specifically, the significant positive association between entitlement and dogmatism fits with the current theoretical conceptualization of humility. As noted earlier, in a review of the existing theoretical literature, Tangney (2000, 2002) identified several fundamental features of humility. To review, key characteristics of humility include an accurate sense of one’s abilities; the ability to acknowledge mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations; openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice; keeping one’s abilities and accomplishments in perspective; low self-focus and an ability to ‘forget’ the self; and an appreciation of the value of all things. The positive association between entitlement and dogmatism suggests individuals with low entitlement, or high humility, would exhibit less certainty their beliefs were correct. By extension, an individual endorsing less entitlement would likely be more able to perceive personal abilities accurately, acknowledge mistakes and imperfections, and display more openness to new ideas. In other words, many of the theoretical key features of humility seem to revolve around a stance of epistemic uncertainty.

In the current study, the view of self-importance in relation to the importance of others showed significant correlations with all other study constructs. Of note, the tendency to see
oneself as more important than others corresponded with a greater sense of deservingness. Such a correlation is consistent with the current theoretical framing of humility, which includes a relatively low focus on the self. The view of the self in relation to others negatively correlated with modesty, with a greater tendency to see the self as larger than others associated with less modesty. Such results lend further convergent evidence to the proposal that entitlement and humility lie along the same continuum.

In light of the above discussion on humility, the interaction between entitlement, dogmatism, and modesty suggests an important implication for the construct of humility. Specifically, in addition to the extant features of humility synthesized by Tangney (2000, 2002), results of the current study suggest another key facet of humility is a low sense of deservingness. Framed in positive terminology, the view that others are as equally deserving as oneself represents an important aspect of humility.

Additionally, Tangney (2000) asserts that the term humility has negative associations, specifically with weakness, passivity, and a lack of self-respect and confidence. Alternatively, Peterson & Seligman (2004) argue humble individuals may see themselves in a positive light if they “base their sense of worth on their intrinsic value, their good qualities, a sense of compassion toward the self, their connections with other people, or their alignment with a higher power” (p. 463). Although the current study used a proxy measure for humility, results showed no significant correlation between entitlement and resiliency or entitlement and self-efficacy. Such results suggest, by extension, that individuals endorsing less entitlement view themselves as equally resilient and efficacious as those endorsing a higher sense of entitlement.

**Cultural Implications**

Results showed differences in entitlement, dogmatism and modesty scores were significantly affected by ethnic identification. Specifically, with regards to entitlement, African Americans obtained the highest entitlement scores, which were significantly higher than entitlement scores of individuals identifying as Caucasian, Multiethnic, or Other. Latinos also
scored significantly higher than Caucasians. Results showed Latinos also scored significantly higher on dogmatism than Caucasians and Other ethnicities. Additionally, results showed Latinos obtained significantly lower modesty scores than several other ethnic groups. Despite several significant group differences, results of post hoc analyses examining effects of ethnicity on constructs in the present study should be interpreted with caution. Specifically, the majority of participants in the current study identified as Caucasian. Smaller numbers of individuals identifying as African American, Latino, Asian, Multiethnic, or Other may have impacted the accuracy of results.

Interpreting the results with caution, it is unclear what mediates or moderates effects of ethnicity on entitlement, dogmatism, and modesty scores. It is noteworthy that although Latinos obtained lower modesty scores than all other ethnic groups, Latinos only obtained significantly higher entitlement scores than Caucasians. As mentioned previously, modesty represents a tactic of impression management. As a socially oriented virtue or a style of self-presentation, modesty is culturally bound. That Latinos obtained significantly different modesty scores than all other groups, but not significantly different entitlement scores from all other groups, reflects potential value differences among cultures. Additionally, the Integrated Modest Behavior Scale was developed using a Chinese and Canadian sample, and may not have included items that reflected manifestations of modesty in other cultures. Although some research exists examining differences in modesty between Asian and North American samples, further research is warranted to examine cross-cultural differences in entitlement, dogmatism and modesty.

**Moderators of Entitlement and Associated Constructs**

In addition to significant differences related to ethnicity, results showed differences in entitlement, dogmatism and modesty scores were significantly affected by urbanity of current residence. Regarding entitlement, inhabitants of very urban areas showed significantly higher entitlement scores than inhabitants of very rural areas. Similarly, results showed inhabitants of very urban areas were significantly less modest than inhabitants of moderately rural areas.
Alternately, post hoc analyses showed inhabitants of very rural areas scored significantly higher on dogmatism than all other groups. The similar effect of urbanity of current residence on entitlement and modesty further supports the relation between the two constructs. However, the association between higher levels of dogmatism and more rural areas suggests that other variables may moderate the association between entitlement and dogmatism. Overall, the significant effect of urbanity of current residence on entitlement, dogmatism, and modesty scores suggests residential location may be an important moderator of entitlement and potentially humility. It may provide direction for ways to focus efforts on preventing negative outcomes of entitlement. For instance, if higher entitlement and lower modesty levels are associated with very urban areas, further research might explore why attitudes of entitlement are higher in urban areas. Additionally, if one were to develop a strategy to prevent negative outcomes of entitlement and promote modesty, it may be more effective to focus efforts in very urban areas.

Additionally, results suggest exposure to poverty may moderate a sense of entitlement. Interestingly, individuals who reported no exposure to poverty and those who reported very much exposure to poverty obtained the highest entitlement scores, which suggests the development of entitlement may not occur by a single process. Individuals with no exposure to poverty may have expectations about what they deserve based on a precedent set of having plenty. Alternately, individuals endorsing considerable exposure to poverty may have lacked resources in the past, and may have developed a sense of entitlement as a reaction to insufficient resources. However, results of the current study cannot establish a causal relationship between exposure to poverty and entitlement, which would require additional research.

Results also suggest early advocacy of material and educational success may moderate a sense of entitlement, although, similarly, the current study cannot establish a causal relationship between early advocacy of material or educational success and entitlement. However, results suggest a possibility that early expectations set by caregivers for material or educational success
contributes to the development of entitlement. In particular, higher early advocacy of material success was associated with higher entitlement scores. Additionally, no educational advocacy was associated with a significantly lower sense of entitlement than several other groups. Future research on entitlement may explore further how early caregiver advocacy of success contributes to attitudes of entitlement.

**Conclusion**

As humans, what are we owed? Does one person deserve more than another? Imagine for a moment two people apply for the same job. Both are equally competitive; both hope they will be selected for the position; both believe they will be effective in the position. However, one believes the position is owed her based on her efforts. The other believes, despite her efforts and ability, nothing indicates she deserves the job. Only one person will be selected for the position. How might the person with a sense of entitlement react differently to rejection than the person without a sense of entitlement?

Entitlement, the sense that one is more deserving than others, is an especially relevant topic to examine in the current world. As the world population increases and world resources become more strained, learning how to be satisfied with fewer resources seems an important lesson, particularly in the United States. Additionally, personal expectations regarding what one deserves likely impact how a person reacts to situations in which expectations are not met. Psychological research confirms a high sense of entitlement is associated with multiple negative interpersonal and mental health outcomes, including hypersensitivity, reactive aggression, and the inability to empathize and adopt different perspectives.

The primary aim of the current study was to explore how negative outcomes of a sense of entitlement might be prevented by examining the relationship between entitlement and other psychological constructs, and by identifying potential moderators of entitlement. The study found entitlement was significantly associated with dogmatism, an inflexible enduring sense of certainty in one’s beliefs. The association between entitlement and dogmatism suggests
educational curricula to reduce epistemic certainty may mitigate negative outcomes of entitlement. In the current study, entitlement was also positively correlated with the sense of the self as more important than others, which suggests an educational system that promotes human equality and acceptance of one’s metaphysical smallness may promote lower entitlement levels. Further, several potential moderators of entitlement were identified in the current study. Specifically, ethnicity, urbanity of current residence, exposure to poverty, and early caregiver advocacy of material and educational success all significantly impacted entitlement scores. Identification of potential moderators also provides directions for future research on entitlement. For instance, the effect of ethnicity on entitlement scores suggests prudent future research might examine how the meaning and manifestation of entitlement differs across cultures. Future research might also examine why entitlement scores may vary depending on whether a person lives in an urban or rural area. Additionally, the impact of early advocacy of material and educational success on entitlement has important implications for parenting, and suggests one way to reduce future attitudes of entitlement is to deemphasize the importance of material success, and to possibly emphasize instead the value of working independently and interdependently.

Although the purpose of the current study was to expand the nomological network of psychological entitlement, it was a secondary aim that clarification of the construct of entitlement would contribute to a fuller understanding of, and ability to empirically study, the construct of humility. The inverse relationship between entitlement and modesty found in the current study suggests an important relationship between entitlement and humility. Additionally, the current theoretical conceptualization of humility (Tangney 2000, 2002) includes a number of qualities that seemingly relate to a stance of epistemic uncertainty. The significant positive association between entitlement and dogmatism found in the current study suggests entitlement and humility may comprise a single continuum, although further research is still necessary to confirm the relationship between entitlement and humility. However, the
current study findings suggest, to study humility empirically, a psychometrically sound measure of humility may include items related to entitlement as well as perspectives on epistemic certainty.

The current study contributes to a body of emerging research on transcending self-interest. As empirical knowledge of entitlement and humility increases, so, hopefully, will our ability to promote and embody empathic attitudes, leading to improved human relationships and personal wellbeing.
Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

1. Study Title

Expanding the Nomological Network: A Study of Psychological Entitlement and Associated Constructs

2. Study Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator</th>
<th>Faculty Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Camille Curry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Pacific University</td>
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<td>Program</td>
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<td>Telephone</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Name                   | Shawn Davis, Ph.D. |
| Institution            | Pacific University |
| Program                | School of Professional Psychology |
| Email                  | davissh@pacificu.edu |
| Telephone              | (503) 352-7319 |

3. Study Location and Dates

This study is expected to begin February 2010, and to be completed by July 2010. All study information will be collected through the Survey Monkey website, which can be accessed through any computer wherever Internet access is available.

4. Study Invitation and Purpose

You are invited to participate in a study that will examine the ways that a general sense of deservingness relates to beliefs about knowledge, beliefs about the place of the self in society, and mental health outcomes such as resiliency. The results of this study will be used to inform further research examining the interpersonal and mental health effects of entitlement, so that positive interpersonal habits and mental health may be promoted.

5. Study Materials and Procedures

You will be asked to complete a brief demographic survey in this study, followed by the following seven brief questionnaires: the Psychological Entitlement Scale, the Dogmatism scale, the Epistemological Beliefs Inventory—Certain Knowledge subscale, the Resiliency Scale, the General Self-Efficacy Scale, the Modest Behavior Scale, and the Me Versus Other scale. It should take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete your participation in the study.

6. Participant Characteristics and Exclusionary Criteria
To participate in this study, you must be at least 18 years of age. If you are below 18 years of age, please exit this survey.

7. Anticipated Risks and Steps Taken to Avoid Them

Your participation in this project involves no foreseeable risks. Neither the demographic survey nor the questions posed by the study questionnaires should cause any discomfort, but if discomfort occurs, you may stop your participation at any time.

8. Anticipated Direct Benefits to Participants

There are no direct benefits to you for your participation in the study. However, your participation will allow researchers to better understand how a sense of entitlement may impact interpersonal and mental health functioning.

9. Clinical Alternatives (i.e., alternative to the proposed procedure) that may be advantageous to participants

Not Applicable.

10. Participant Payment

Not Applicable.

11. Medical Care and Compensation In the Event of Accidental Injury

During your participation in this project it is important to understand that you are not a Pacific University clinic patient or client, nor will you be receiving medical care as a result of your participation in this study. If you are injured during your participation in this study and it is not due to negligence by Pacific University, the researchers, or any organization associated with the research, you should not expect to receive compensation or medical care from Pacific University, the researchers, or any organization associated with the study.

12. Adverse Event Reporting Plan

If you experience discomfort during the study procedure, you are not obligated to complete the questionnaires. Should an unexpected and adverse reaction occur during the study procedure, please contact the study investigators or the Pacific University Institutional Review Board at (503) 352-1478.

13. Promise of Privacy

The records of this study will be kept private. Results from your participation will be available only to the researchers themselves. If a publication or other educational use results from the study, all identifying material will be substantially modified so that your identity will be safeguarded. Your participation in this project is strictly confidential. If the results of the study are to be presented or published, no information will be included that would make it possible to identify you as an individual.
14. Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Pacific University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without prejudice or negative consequences.

15. Contacts and Questions

The researchers will be happy to answer any questions you may have at any time during the course of the study. The principal investigator can be reached at (971) 678-0575 or via e-mail at curryc@pacificu.edu. If you are not satisfied with the answers you receive, please call Pacific University’s Institutional Review Board, at (503) 352-2215 to discuss your questions or concerns further. All concerns and questions will be kept in confidence.

16. Statement of Consent

I have read and understand the above. All my questions have been answered. I am 18 years of age or over and agree to participate in the study. I understand I can copy and print this form to keep for my records.

Since this is an on-line survey, signatures cannot be obtained. By clicking “NEXT” I understand I will be taken to the study and that my continued participation in the survey denotes my consent. If I choose not to participate or to withdraw from participation, I can close the web page at anytime.

If you would like to have a summary of the results after the study is completed, please select the link below, which will direct you to a second secure website. By collecting email contact information in a second site, your survey responses cannot be associated with your contact information.

If you do not wish to have a summary of the results, please exit the survey now by closing the browser window.
Appendix B
Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer the following demographic questions to the best of your ability.

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your ethnicity?
4. What is your current state of residence?
5. If you do not currently reside in the United States, what is your country of residence?
6. What is your current annual income?
   a. Less than $10,000
   b. $10,000 - $20,000
   c. $20,000 - $30,000
   d. $30,000 - $40,000
   e. $40,000 - $50,000
   f. $50,000 - $60,000
   g. $70,000 - $80,000
   h. $80,000 - $90,000
   i. $90,000 - $100,000
   j. More than $100,000
7. What is the highest education level you have completed?
   a. Less than highschool
   b. Highschool/GED
   c. Some college
   d. Associates degree
   e. Bachelors degree
   f. Masters degree
   g. Doctoral degree
8. How would you characterize the economic status of your family of origin?
   a. Lower class
   b. Lower-middle class
   c. Middle class
   d. Upper-middle class
   e. Upper class
9. To what degree were you provided with material possessions as a child?
   a. I did not have basic needs met.
   b. I had basic needs met.
   c. I had basic needs met with some extra.
   d. I had everything I desired.
   e. I had a surplus of possessions.
10. How would you describe your current place of residence?
   a. Very urban
   b. Moderately urban
   c. Suburban
   d. Moderately rural
   e. Very rural
11. How would you best describe your childhood place(s) of residence?
   a. Very urban
   b. Moderately urban
   c. Suburban
   d. Moderately rural
   e. Very rural

12. To what degree have you been exposed to cultures other than your own?
   a. Not at all
   b. Very little
   c. Somewhat
   d. Moderately
   e. Very much

13. To what degree have you been exposed to poverty (observed or experienced yourself)?
   a. Not at all
   b. Very little
   c. Somewhat
   d. Moderately
   e. Very much

14. To what degree did your parents/caretakers advocate material success?
   a. Not at all
   b. Very little
   c. Somewhat
   d. Moderately
   e. Very much

15. To what degree did your parents/caretakers advocate educational success?
   a. Not at all
   b. Very little
   c. Somewhat
   d. Moderately
   e. Very much

16. How many siblings do you have?
   a. 0
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4
   f. More than 4
Appendix C

Items on the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES)

1. I honestly feel I’m just more deserving than others.
2. Great things should come to me.
3. If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the first lifeboat.
4. I demand the best because I’m worth it.
5. I do not necessarily deserve special treatment.
6. I deserve more things in my life.
7. People like me deserve an extra break now and then.
8. Things should go my way.
9. I feel entitled to more of everything.
Appendix D

Items on the Dogmatism (DOG) Scale

1. I may be wrong about some of the little things in life, but I am quite certain I am right about all the BIG issues.

2. Someday I will probably think that many of my present ideas were wrong.

3. Anyone who is honestly and truly seeking the truth will end up believing what I believe.

4. There are so many things we have not discovered yet, nobody should be absolutely certain his beliefs are right.

5. The things I believe in are so completely true I could never doubt them.

6. I have never discovered a system of beliefs that explains everything to my satisfaction.

7. It is best to be open to all possibilities and ready to reevaluate all your beliefs.

8. My opinions are right and will stand the test of time.

9. Flexibility is a real virtue in thinking, since you may well be wrong.

10. My opinions and beliefs fit together perfectly to make a crystal-clear “picture” of things.

11. There are no discoveries or facts that could possibly make me change my mind about the things that matter most in life.

12. I am a long way from reaching final conclusions about the central issues in life.

13. The person who is absolutely certain she has the truth will probably never find it.

14. I am absolutely certain that my ideas about the fundamental issues in life are correct.

15. The people who disagree with me may well turn out to be right.

16. I am so sure I am right about the important things in life, there is no evidence that could convince me otherwise.

17. If you are “open-minded” about the most important things in life, you will probably reach the wrong conclusions.
18. Twenty years from now, some of my opinions about the important things in life will probably have changed.

19. “Flexibility in thinking” is another name for being “wishy-washy.”

20. No one knows all the essential truths about the central issues in life.

21. Someday I will probably realize my present ideas about the BIG issues are wrong.

22. People who disagree with me are just plain wrong and often evil as well.
Appendix E

Items on the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory – Certain Knowledge Subscale

1. Truth means different things to different people.
2. Absolute moral truth does not exist.
3. I like teachers who present several competing theories and let their students decide which is best.
4. If two people are arguing about something, at least one of them must be wrong.
5. Science is easy to understand because it contains so many facts.
6. The moral rules I live by apply to everyone.
7. What is true today will be true tomorrow.
8. Sometimes there are no right answers to life’s big problems.
Appendix F

The Resiliency Scale

1. When I make plans, I usually follow through with them.
2. I usually manage one way or another.
3. I feel proud I have accomplished things in my life.
4. I usually take things in stride.
5. I am friends with myself.
6. I feel that I can handle many things.
7. I am determined.
8. I have self-discipline.
9. I keep interested in things.
10. I can usually find something to laugh about.
11. My belief in myself gets me through hard times.
12. I can usually look at situations in a number of ways.
13. My life has meaning.
14. When I’m in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it.
15. I have enough money to do what I have to do.
Appendix G

General self-efficacy scale

1. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.

2. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult.

3. When trying something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.

4. When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.

5. If I can’t do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.

6. When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.

7. When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it.

8. Failure just makes me try harder.

9. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.

10. I do not seem to be capable of dealing with most problems that come up in my life.

11. When unexpected problems occur, I don’t handle them very well.

12. I feel insecure about my ability to do things.
Appendix H

Items on the Modest Behavior Scale (MBS) – culturally integrated version

1. Usually praise other people
2. Not praise one’s own strengths
3. Often shift the conversation to talk about myself
4. Wear clothes that draw people’s attention
5. In front of others, attribute success to luck rather than my own ability
6. Avoid causing inconvenience to others
7. Lead people around me to acknowledge my superiority
8. Politely ask others to correct me when I express my own opinions
9. Avoid showing off in front of others
10. Actively avoid asserting my privileges
11. Not praise myself in an attention-getting way
12. Thank the person who criticizes me
13. Admit my mistakes and apologize when criticized
14. Treat everyone equally regardless of status
15. Emphasize others’ contributions when I am praised
16. Ask more questions and listen to others’ opinions attentively
17. Avoid saying too much about myself
18. Assert my needs when in conflict with others
19. Admit and correct my mistakes after doing something wrong
20. Showing off my expensive accessories
21. Deny my own strengths in front of others
22. Try to defend myself when I am criticized
23. Sincerely accept others’ suggestions
24. Say thank you when praised
25. Speak out less; listen to others’ opinions more  
26. Not show off  
27. Accept differences with others  
28. Find and appreciate others’ strengths  
29. Post awards where people can see  
30. Deny my strengths when praised  
31. Wear revealing clothing  
32. Follow tasks and demands  
33. Fulfill duties to friends and family  
34. Finish workload on time and in an adequate manner  
35. Give credit to others  
36. Say polite words and phrases to my companions  
37. Tell others about my accomplishments  
38. Encourage someone else to take the lead  
39. Talk myself down to downplay my talent
Appendix I
Item on the Me Versus Other Scale

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7.
References


