CHAPTER 6

NARCISSISTIC OR OVERWHELMED?

Divergent Pathways to Academic Entitlement

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ABSTRACT

Academic entitlement (AE) is expecting favorable academic outcomes regardless of performance. This study tests relationships between AE, narcissism, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-compassion to identify pathways for reducing AE. Results revealed two divergent pathways to AE, narcissism and over identifying with negative emotions (OI). OI, holding onto negative emotions, is the opposite of mindfulness, further supporting AE as a maladaptive coping response. Mindfulness, a component of self-compassion, should be explored in interventions reducing AE.

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Academic entitlement (AE) is the perception that one deserves favorable academic outcomes regardless of performance. AE is a pervasive problem related to undergraduate cheating (Stiles et al., 2017) and noncompliance (Kopp & Finney, 2013). Previous claims have been made that AE may be the result of low self-esteem or connected to narcissism (Baer, 2011; Brummelman et al., 2016; Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Greenberger et al., 2008; Stronge et al., 2016). The purpose of this study was to further explore the relationships of self-esteem and narcissism as underlying characteristics leading to AE and to include self-efficacy as a possible contributing characteristic of AE. Relationships between AE and self-esteem, narcissism, and self-efficacy may lead to interventions addressing self-efficacy and self-compassion to mitigate AE.

Today's undergraduate students bring widely "different attitudes, expectations, preparation, strengths, and shortcomings into the college classroom" (Mazer & Hess, 2016, p. 356). Behavioral differences identified in the literature leading to uncivil behaviors such as engaging with technology, materials, or conversations unrelated to coursework during class or interactions with instructors that are characterized as disrespectful or demanding meet the definition of academic entitlement (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Research has shown that AE is pervasive among undergraduate students and can lead to problematic behaviors such as cheating (Stiles et al., 2017) and noncompliance with academic standards or expectations of behavior (Kopp & Finney, 2013). These negative behaviors can have deleterious consequences for students and can cause distress among teaching faculty. For example, noncompliant behaviors such as cheating in the form of plagiarism can create additional meetings for teaching faculty that require them to demonstrate a burden of proof and place students under intense disciplinary action. These types of stressful situations can contribute to increased feelings of strain and burnout in teaching faculty (Jiang et al., 2017).

Underlying Characteristics and Pathways to Academic Entitlement

Prior studies have examined the relationship between behaviors associated with AE to identify underlying characteristics that may contribute to AE. Individual characteristics among learners such as self-esteem, narcissism, and gender have produced mixed results in relationship to AE. Baer (2011) found that students who had high levels of self-esteem were more likely to exhibit behaviors linked to AE. Previous research has shown links between increased levels of narcissism and behaviors associated with AE

(Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Greenberger et al., 2008; Whatley et al., 2019); however, results have also indicated that narcissism is not the only characteristic leading to AE.

The relationship between self-esteem and narcissism is somewhat inconclusive and complex (Bosson et al., 2008; Stronge et al., 2016). Results from some studies indicate that those who show narcissistic personality traits have a high level of self-esteem (Brummelman et al., 2016). Other studies have shown the opposite and propose that narcissism is related to low self-esteem (Bosson et al., 2008; Kohut, 1966). Further exploration of the relationships between AE and self-esteem, narcissism, and other potential contributing characteristics is needed to identify clear pathways leading to AE.

Identifying pathways to AE is one way that researchers can begin to think about potential interventions to reduce AE and improve outcomes for students and faculty. Previous research suggests that it is essential to identify pathways to academic entitlement to effectively design interventions (Sohr-Preston & Boswell, 2015). Specifically identifying pathways that result in entitlement and subsequently using these pathways to design interventions that address students' lack of ability to cope with failure in a way that does not threaten their self-efficacy or self-esteem could provide students with healthier and more productive strategies. The use of pathway-based interventions may reinforce student agency by allowing students to take an active role in their learning rather than relying on entitled behaviors to gain their desired outcomes.

CURRENT STUDY

This study was designed to provide additional clarity around the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem as they relate to AE. To further explore underlying characteristics of AE, measures of self-efficacy and self-compassion were included. Specifically, this study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between AE, narcissism, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-compassion?
2. Which relationships show pathways with potential for reducing AE?

To provide further rationale for the use of these specific characteristics as they relate to AE, definitions and related literature on self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-compassion are provided in the following sections.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is defined in the literature as the evaluation of one's abilities, qualities, and characteristics as good or bad (Baumeister et al., 2003; Leary, 1999; Levine & Munsch, 2014). For this study, using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE), self-esteem was defined as a global evaluation of one's own self-worth (Rosenberg, 1965). In academic settings, researchers initially thought that high self-esteem in students led to improved academic outcomes; however, further research has indicated that self-esteem is likely a product of academic achievement (Baumeister et al., 2003). For students who may not be achieving in ways they expect, behaviors related to AE could potentially be an attempt to protect self-esteem in academic settings (Kernis et al., 2008; Neff et al., 2005). Given the inconclusive relationship between self-esteem and narcissism and AE in prior research, including self-esteem as a potential pathway to AE was necessary.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief that they will or will not be successful at a given task (Bandura, 1977). The more successful experiences one has, the greater the sense of efficacy in that area and, potentially, the higher one's sense of self-esteem. A mastery experience occurs when a learner attempts a new or challenging task and is successful. By definition, mastery experiences place a great deal of agency in the hands of the learner. It may take a learner multiple attempts before they master a new skill, making it likely they will encounter failure along the way. In the case of AE, episodes of failure can cause increased stress, leading to entitled behaviors (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Rather than continue with the struggle of learning, academically entitled students resort to less-than-desirable behaviors that will hopefully yield their desired outcome of a perceived good grade (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). While self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to be successful in a specific domain (Bandura, 2002), general self-efficacy refers to a tendency to view oneself as capable in a variety of situations. Increased general self-efficacy should result in decreased AE, because individuals with high self-efficacy tend to set high goals, persist at tasks, and attribute failure to their own efforts or lack thereof (Devonport & Lane, 2006). If general self-efficacy hinders academic entitlement, accurate understanding and measurement may offer insights for reducing academic entitlement. Thus, a measure of general self-efficacy was also included in the study design.

Self-Compassion

Using Neff's (2003) model of self-compassion as a framework for learners to cope with failure in a positive way may be the key to helping students who exhibit AE. Self-compassion is defined as "being open to and moved by one's own suffering, experiencing feelings of caring and kindness toward oneself, taking an understanding, nonjudgmental attitude toward one's inadequacies and failures, and recognizing that one's own experience is part of the common human experience" (Neff, 2003, p. 224). Self-compassion is often associated with one's psychological well-being and fosters emotional resilience (Neff, 2009). Neff (2003) proposed that there are three components of self-compassion: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Self-kindness is described as treating oneself with care instead of harsh self-judgment (Neff, 2003). Common humanity is defined as recognizing that imperfection is a common and human shared experience rather than feeling isolated by one's failures (Neff, 2003). Neff (2003) defined mindfulness as it relates to self-compassion, as viewing one's experience in a balanced perspective instead of exaggerating the dramatic storyline of suffering.

Taken together, we designed this study to further examine the relationships of narcissism, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-compassion to AE. Understanding these relationships will provide a more refined model of potential pathways leading to AE and inform interventions designed to reduce AE.

METHODS

Participants

In fall of 2018, 140 students across one general education and one social science course at a public, southwestern university anonymously completed an online survey designed to take one hour or less. Both courses included undergraduate general education courses and most students were either in their first or second year at the university. The average age of participants was 19.95 years (SD = 2.65). Detailed demographic information for participants is presented in Table 6.1. Students in the two cooperating courses had the option to participate in various research studies of their choosing or to complete an alternative assignment as a research engagement component of the course (5% of their final grade in each class). Participants received partial credit towards the research engagement component. All procedures were approved by the institution's IRB, including the determination that the minor credit towards the final grade was not considered coercive.

Table 6.1

Demographics of Participants

Descriptor	*n*	%
	Gender	
Female	96	71.11
Male	38	28.14
Non-binary	1	0.74
Total	135	99.99
	Race/ethnicity	
White	70	51.85
Latinx	41	30.37
Black	11	8.14
Asian	9	6.67
Native American	1	.74
Prefer not to respond	3	2.22
Total	135	99.99

Note. Participants were on average 19.95 years old (SD = 2.65)

Reading speed greatly varied by participant. Participants who spent less than 10 minutes to complete the entire survey and who demonstrated any evidence of patterned responding (i.e., choosing 4 = *Agree* for all items on one page of the survey) were removed from all data analyses for satisficing (Barge & Gehlbach, 2012; Hamby & Taylor, 2016), leaving n = 135.

Materials and Measures

Participants completed a variety of attitudinal, behavioral, and demographic self-report measures. Of interest in this study were five measures: the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ; Kopp et al., 2011), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), the shortened 16-item version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Ames et al., 2006), the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE; Chen et al., 2001), and the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS; Neff, 2003). The SCS was developed to have 6 subscales measuring the 6 poles of 3 continuums which include: self-kindness versus self-judgment, common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over identification with emotion. All other scales were developed to be unidimensional. Only the RSE contained reverse-scored items (half of the items). Item responses on appropriate items of the RSE

were reverse scored so that higher RSE scores indicated higher self-esteem. For all other scales and subscales, higher scores indicated more of that construct.

The study takes a two-step approach to build a structural equation model (SEM) that examines pathways to academic entitlement through the aforementioned factors. While the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ), Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE), Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), and General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) are all considered unidimensional, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were done on each scale to examine the underlying factor structure prior to application in the structural equation model and as a data reduction technique to determine the strongest relationships within each factor. Table 6.2 illustrates the survey measures of interest resulting from the EFA and CFA two-step approach and Table 6.3 illustrates the factor model fit by measure prior to determining the final structure of the SEM.

Table 6.2

Survey Measures of Interest

Measure	Example item	Response scale anchors
Academic entitlement (AEQ; Kopp et al., 2011)	If I don't do well on a test, the professor should make tests easier or curve grades.	1 = *strongly disagree* 7 = *strongly agree*
Self-esteem (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965)	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1 = *strongly disagree* 4 = *strongly agree*
Narcissism (NPI; Ames et al., 2006)	Pick the statement that best describes you:	1 = *I think I am a special person.* 0 = *I am no better or no worse than most people.*
General self-efficacy (GSE; Chen et al., 2001)	I will be able to achieve most of the goals I have set for myself.	1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*
Self-compassion scale (SCS; Neff, 2003)		
Self-judgment (SCS-SJ)	When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself	1 = *Almost never* 5 = *Almost always*

Table 6.3

Factor Model Fit by Measure

Measure and model (*N* items)	χ^2(df)	*p*	TLI CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	ev > 1adj. or |*r*| > .100	Model comparison $\chi^2(df)$, *p*
			AEQ (8)				
EFA						1	
1-factor	44.396(20)	.001	.910	.098	.061		
2-factorH	28.834(13)	.007	.910	.099	.043		15.562(7), .029
3-factorH	10.857(7)	.145	.959	.068	.025		17.977(6), .006
CFA							
1-factor	45.889(20)	.001	.934	.098	.049	2	
			RSE (10)				
EFA						2	
1-factor	154.144(35)	<.001	.765	.163	.098		
2-factor	42.062(26)	.024	.957	.072	.035		112.080(9), <.001
3-factor	16.912(18)	.529	1.004	.000	.023		25.150(8), .001
CFA							
1-factor	160.796(35)	<.001	.816	.163	.082	11	
2-factor	104.656(34)	<.001	.897	.124	.064	9	56.139(1), <.001
SE, Method	63.202(30)	<.001	.951	.091	.048	4	41.455(4), <.001
			GSE (8)				
EFA						1	
1-factor	63.177(20)	<.001	.920	.130	.051		
2-factorH	28.979(13)	.007	.954	.099	.025		34.198(7), <.001
3-factorH	10.547(7)	.160	.981	.066	.016		18.432(6), .005
CFA							
1-factor	63.121(20)	<.001	.945	.126	.040	1	

(Table continued on next page)

Table 6.3 (Continued)

Factor Model Fit by Measure

Measure and model (*N* items)	χ^2(df)	*p*	TLI CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	ev > 1adj. or |*r*| > .100	Model comparison $\chi^2(df)$, *p*
			NPI (12)				
EFA						1	
1-factor	87.468(44)	<.001	.762	.089	.082		
2-factorL	48.612(34)	.050	.896	.050	.055		38.856(10), <.001
3-factor	29.241(25)	.254	.959	.041	.042		19.371(9), .022
CFA							
1-factor [a]	80.535(44)	.001	.902	.079	.120	--	
1-factor [a], with 1 error	47.045(43)	.310	.989	.026	.094	--	22.558(1), <.001
			SCS (26)				
EFA						3	
1-factor	923.787(299)	<.001	.493	.136	.137		
2-factor	623.381(274)	<.001	.688	.108	.082		300.410(25), <.001
3-factor	492.181(250)	<.001	.762	.095	.062		131.200(24), <.001
4-factor	405.016(227)	<.001	.806	.087	.051		87.165(23), <.001
5-factor	345.477(205)	<.001	.829	.083	.044		59.539(22), <.001
6-factor	293.358(184)	<.001	.851	.078	.039		52.119(21), <.001
7-factor	251.590(164)	<.001	.865	.075	.034		41.768(20), .003
8-factorH	194.692(145)	.004	.913	.064	.029		56.898(19), <.001
CFA							
6-factor	570.483(284)	<.001	.809	.087	.079	79	
6-factor, 2 super factors	589.724(292)	<.001	.802	.088	.089	95	19.241(8), .014
super factors							

(Table continued on next page)

Table 6.3 (Continued)

Factor Model Fit by Measure

Measure and model (*N* items)	χ^2(df)	*p*	TLI CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	ev > 1adj. or |*r*| > .100	Model comparison $\chi^2(df)$, *p*
SCS – Negative Subscales (SJ, IS, OI; 13 items)							
CFA							
3-factor	123.099(62)	<.001	.915	.086	.061	11	
3-factor, 1 super factor	123.099(62)	<.001	.915	.086	.061	11	Equivalent (cannot test)

Note. TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; CLI = comparitive fit index; RMSA = root-mean-square error of approximation SRMR = standardized-root-mean residual.

HSolution included one or more Heywood cases. Guidelines from Hu and Bentler (1999) were used to evaluate model fit. Number of eigenvalues > adjusted cut-offs from parallel analysis given in EFA rows. Number of |correlation residuals| > 0.100 given for CFA solutions.

[a] Satorra-Bentler scaled test statistics and WLSMV used. Only two items loaded on the second factor. Correlated errors were a better solution.

AEQ,[1] GSE,[2] and NPI[3] responses were unidimensional. Four NPI items were removed for trivial loadings in all models, and two remaining NPI items were permitted correlated residuals due to the fact that factor structure is not of primary interest in relation to the hypotheses of this study. The unidimensional measure of narcissism allows for an understanding of the relationship between general narcissism and self-esteem. For this reason, a two-factor model was tested for RSE (Hunter & Gerbing, 1979). RSE items loaded on one self-esteem factor, with reverse-scored items cross-loaded on one method factor as shown in Table 6.3. The cross-loading onto the method factor is likely attributed to the variance of the reverse-coded items. RSE items were uncorrelated with self-esteem items. Of the six SCS factors, self-judgment (SJ), isolation (IS), and over identification with emotion (OI) were retained for hypothesized relationships with AE. To reduce additional models, only the three anti-self-compassion factors previously referenced were kept after running a separate 3-factor model with just these subscales due to hypothesized positive relationships to AE.

Structural Model

Next, a structural equation model with 8 factors (AEQ; GSE; RSE-self-esteem; RSE-method factor; NPI; and the SJ, IS, and OI subscales from

the SCS measure) was fit to the data using lavaan and WLSMV estimation, given the mix of binary and Likert scale responses. Item loadings and residual variances were fixed to the values obtained in the independent factor models and thus were not estimated (Steiger, 2002). Fifteen factor correlations and six regression weights for factors were freely estimated. Factor variances were fixed to one. Correlations were included between the GSE, self-esteem, NPI, and three anti-self-compassion factors. The AEQ factor was regressed on these six factors. Regression coefficients that were not statistically significant ($\alpha = .05$) and not practically significant ($sr2 > .02$) were fixed at 0. Final correlations, regression coefficients, and fit statistics from this structural equation model are presented in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4

Factor Correlations and Regression Weights from the 8-Factor SEM

Factor Correlations						
Factor	**RSE**	**GSE**	**NPI**	**SCS-SJ**	**SCS-IS**	**SCS-OI**
RSE-Method	-- [a]	-- [a]	-- [a]	-- [a]	-- [a]	-- [a]
RSE	1.000					
GSE	0.690	1.000				
NPI	0.243	0.195	1.000			
SCS-SJ	-0.574	-0.065	-0.136	1.000		
SCS-IS	-0.462	-0.258	-0.225	0.793	1.000	
SCS-OI	-0.427	-0.187	-0.191	0.740	0.679	1.000
Factor Regressions						
AEQ ~	β	*B*	*z*	*p*	*CI*	sr^2
RSE	-- [a]	-- [a]				-- a
GSE	-- [a]	-- [a]				-- a
NPI	0.218	0.226	1.933	.053	-0.003, 0.455	.048
SCS-SJ	-- [a]	-- [a]				-- a
SCS-IS	-- [a]	-- [a]				-- a
SCS-OI	0.207	0.215	2.182	.029	0.022, 0.409	.043

Note. RSE = Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale; GSE = General Self-Efficacy scale; NPI = Narcissistic Personality Inventory; SCS-SJ = Self-Compassion Scale - Self Judgement; SCS-IS = Self-Compassion Scale- Isoloation; SCS-OI = Self-Compassion Scale - Over identification with emotion; AEQ = Academic Entitlement Scale.

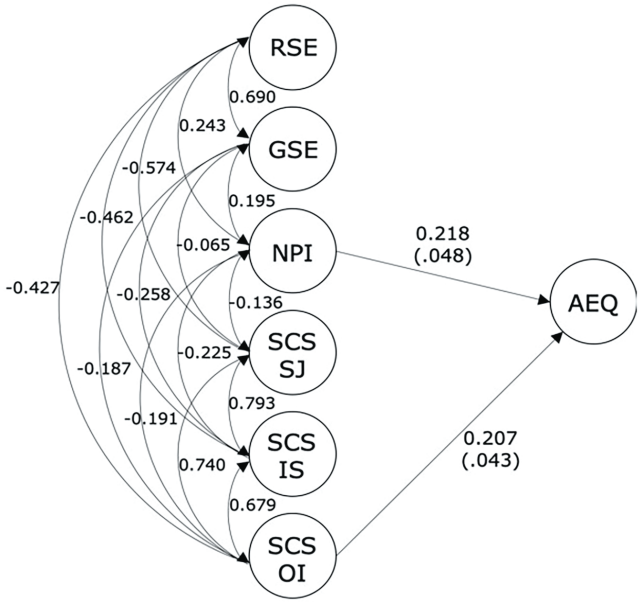
Model Fit: cSB2(1258) = 1347.391, $p = .040$, CFI = .920, RMSEA = .023, SRMR = .104. Correlation residuals unavailable for WLSMV estimation.

[a] -- = fixed to 0.

Only two constructs with both statistical and practical significance predicted academic entitlement: narcissism (*sr2* = .048) and over identification with emotion (*sr2* = .043), the opposite of mindfulness. Figure 6.1 shows the final model with corresponding correlations among predictors with statistically ($p < .05$) and practically significant regression paths.

Figure 6.1

Pathways to Academic Entitlement



Note. Final SEM containing all correlations among predictors with statistically ($p < .05$) and practically ($sr^2 > .02$) significant regression paths. Parameters provided are correlations and raw regression weights (with variance uniquely explained or semipartial r^2 noted in parentheses).

Overview of Results

When considered holistically, results indicate that self-esteem and AE are not related as suggested in previous research and would not be an effective intervention pathway (Baer, 2011; Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Additionally, no relationship between self-efficacy and AE was found in the current model, suggesting self-efficacy interventions may not be effective in the context of AE.

The model does suggest two pathways to AE that may be helpful to understanding plausible and applied interventions. A positive relationship exists between narcissism and AE ($sr2 = .048$) and over identification with emotion ($sr2 = .043$), the opposite of mindfulness. The statistical and practical significance of these pathways indicate a potential area for future meaningful interventions.

DISCUSSION

Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, and Academic Entitlement

The lack of relationship between self-esteem and AE could be attributed to the fact that the model used for data analysis was designed to separate out unique effects contributing to AE. It is plausible that the portions of global self-esteem that relate to AE overlapped with characteristics from other measures used in this study. If the part of self-esteem related to AE overlaps with the narcissism measure, then the relationship could be attributed to narcissism rather than self-esteem which would correspond with previous studies' results examining narcissism, self-esteem, and AE (Baer, 2011; Brummelman et al., 2016; Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Greenberger et al., 2008; Stronge et al., 2016; Whatley et al., 2019). The lack of relationship between self-efficacy and AE could be because a general self-efficacy measure was used rather than examining self-efficacy as a context-specific construct within an academic context or in relation to a student's perceived most difficult or easiest course. Using a measure of self-efficacy that is tied to challenging academic situations or general academic beliefs may yield additional useful information as to whether there is or is not a relationship between self-efficacy and AE.

Two Pathways to Academic Entitlement

Results did provide support for two possible pathways to AE. The first pathway is similar to results from previous studies where students who scored high on the NPI (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Greenberger et al., 2008; Whatley et al., 2019) also scored high in AE. Students in this sample who scored higher on the NPI were more likely to endorse items such as "I think I am a special person" and "I am more capable than other people." If these students view themselves as superior to their classmates, it is likely that they also believe that they are more deserving of good grades and special treatment from faculty.

The other pathway leading to AE was among students who scored high on the measure of self-compassion, specifically related to over-identifying with negative emotions. Students who are more likely to over identify with negative emotions may ruminate on negative emotions associated with perceived failure creating a sense of self-doubt and questioning their place in the college or university community. Both groups of students may feel as though their place within the higher education community is somewhat fragile. As pressures have continued to mount for students through increased tuition, increasingly competitive scholarships and financial aid, and increased performance expectations, maintaining a sense of belongingness and making sure their place in the community is secure has become a central concern for students (Kuh et al., 2006; Twenge, 2017). When faced with information and experiences that students view as a threat to their belongingness, the need to defend their position within the academic community increases. Research has shown that the response of individuals who possess high levels of narcissism when presented with information or feedback that they view as threatening or contradictory to their grandiose views of themselves is often anger (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). Students who experience anger related to criticism and who are high in AE may resort to confrontational and hostile behaviors when experiencing struggle or failure (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kopp & Finney, 2013; Stiles et al., 2017).

Students who score high on the NPI may be more likely to use aggressive behaviors to refute the information they see as incorrect and reaffirm their place within the academic environment. Students who score high on the measure associated with over-identifying with negative emotions may be more likely to exhibit more covert or internalized behaviors to solidify their place within the academic environment when faced with failure. Results also support a positive relationship between over identifying with negative emotions and self-judgment.

Which Relationships Identify Pathways With Potential for Reducing AE?

In consideration of the second research question, the two pathways leading to AE provide potential avenues for intervening and decreasing the presence of AE. Helping students develop self-compassion (Neff, 2003) with particular emphasis on developing mindfulness practices may prove effective as an intervention for reducing AE among students on either pathway leading to AE. Students who tend to over identify with negative emotions may turn to negative self-judgment as a coping mechanism when experiencing failure. Practices aligned with self-compassion may serve as a useful tool to help reframe failure from negative self-judgment to healthier

attributions supporting a mastery orientation. Neuroscience research has shown that engaging in self-criticism triggers the fight or flight response in the brain and causes cortisol levels to increase. Engaging in self-compassion triggers the hormones associated with belongingness, connectedness, and love such as oxytocin (Brackett, 2019). Replacing self-criticism with compassionate self-talk is one way to express self-compassion when dealing with undesirable outcomes. Compassionate self-talk could potentially help students move from the fight or flight response of engaging in behaviors of AE to a more mindful and more productive response. Using ERP and fMRIs, Moser et al. (2017) found that using compassionate self-talk in the third person allows one to regulate their emotions rather than having to exert cognitive control. By using the third person perspective it often becomes easier to express ideas of compassion as many students are well versed in expressing compassion for others. By making themself the "other" using third person language, compassionate self-talk becomes much less effortful and could potentially allow the student to regulate their emotions in a more positive way, as opposed to engaging in self-judgment or behaviors associated with AE.

Another suggestion to decrease AE worth exploring is to incorporate low stakes opportunities for students, allowing them to make mistakes or experience failure as a part of the learning process without jeopardizing outcomes in their higher education careers. Incorporating low stakes opportunities for feedback and assessment of student learning may help reaffirm student beliefs that they belong in the institution and assist in reframing mistakes as a part of the learning process rather than a signal that they do not belong in higher education classrooms.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

One major limitation of this study is that the measure of self-efficacy used was for general self-efficacy. Bandura (2002) proposed that self-efficacy was much more reliant on context and environment and varied within these contexts. While there may be a global concept of self-efficacy, in practice, levels of self-efficacy vary widely. Using the measure of global self-efficacy in this study did not yield any statistically significant results in relation to AE which could be the result of using a general measure of self-efficacy for the very specific context of the academic classroom. A better match that may have provided a more precise measure of the relationship between AE and self-efficacy would have been utilizing a measure related to self-efficacy within the specific subject area that each participant was reporting on throughout the survey. It seems plausible that low levels of self-efficacy in a specific subject area may lead to over-identifying with negative emotions when faced with failure, given Bandura's (1997) findings that it is

difficult for those with low levels of self-efficacy to perform because they often dwell on potential failure and have more self-doubt. Future research should explore the relationship of AE and self-efficacy in these specific contexts using more precise measures of self-efficacy to determine if self-efficacy truly does impact AE or not.

Another limitation of the present study is the use of self-report measures as the main source of data. Self-report measures are inherently problematic for a variety of reasons including but not limited to social desirability bias, response bias, and the use of rating scales that may not accurately capture each participant's most precise response to each item.

Future research should also be focused on the development and implementation of mindfulness practices such as the third-person self-talk to examine whether these kinds of skills are useful in decreasing behaviors associated with AE. It would also be useful to know whether interventions such as these are equally as effective in decreasing AE for students who are high in over-identifying with negative emotions and those who scored high on the narcissism scale. While this study provided useful insight into these two pathways that result in AE, it is unknown whether similar interventions would be effective or if differing interventions would be necessary.

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NOTES

1. 1-factor CFA: $\chi 2(20) = 45.889$, $p < .001$, CFI = .934, RMSEA = .098, SRMR = .049, 2 of 28 correlation residuals slightly > |.10|, additional factors resulted in Heywood cases.
2. 1-factor CFA: $\chi 2(20) = 63.121$, $p < .001$, CFI = .945, RMSEA = .126, SRMR = .040, 1 of 28 correlation residuals slightly > |.10|.
3. 1-factor CFA with 1 residual correlation: $\chi 2(43) = 47.054$, $p = .310$, CFI = .989, RMSEA = .026, SRMR = .094, no correlation residuals > |.10|.