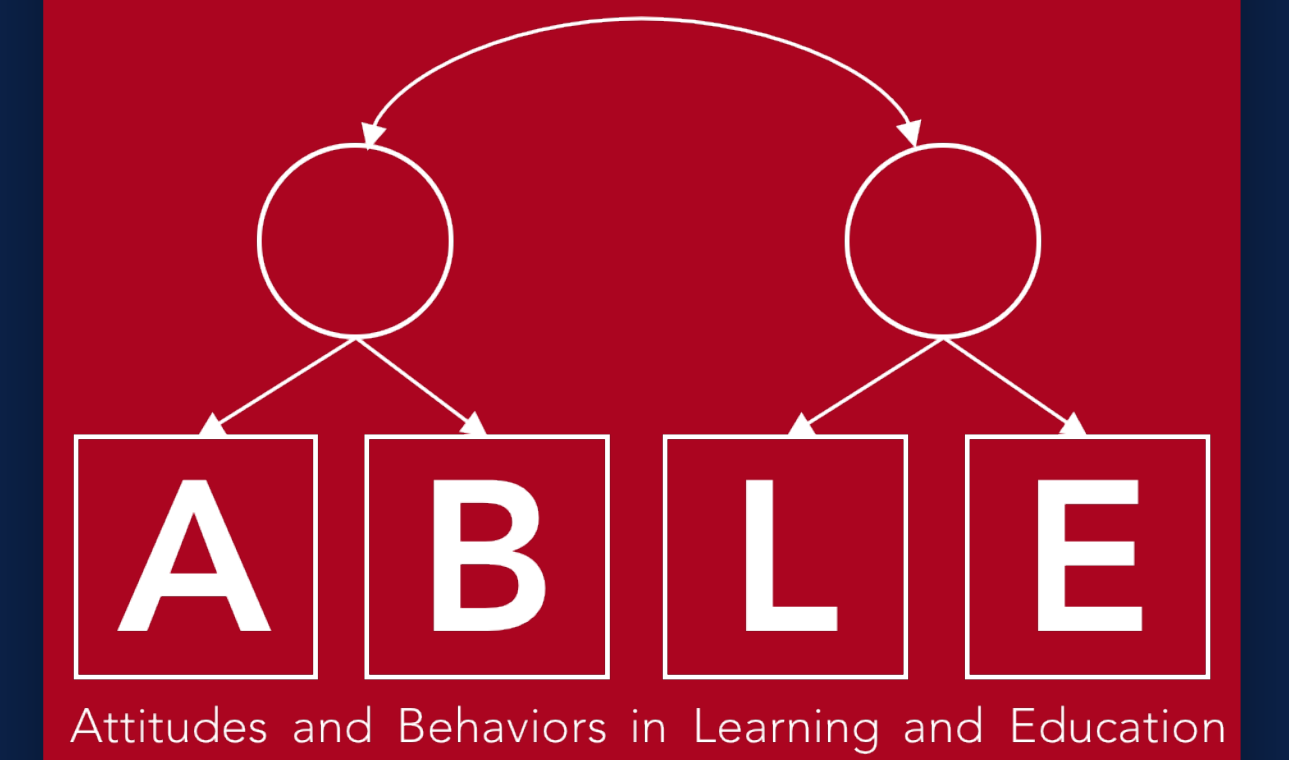


Narcissistic or Overwhelmed? Divergent Pathways to Academic Entitlement

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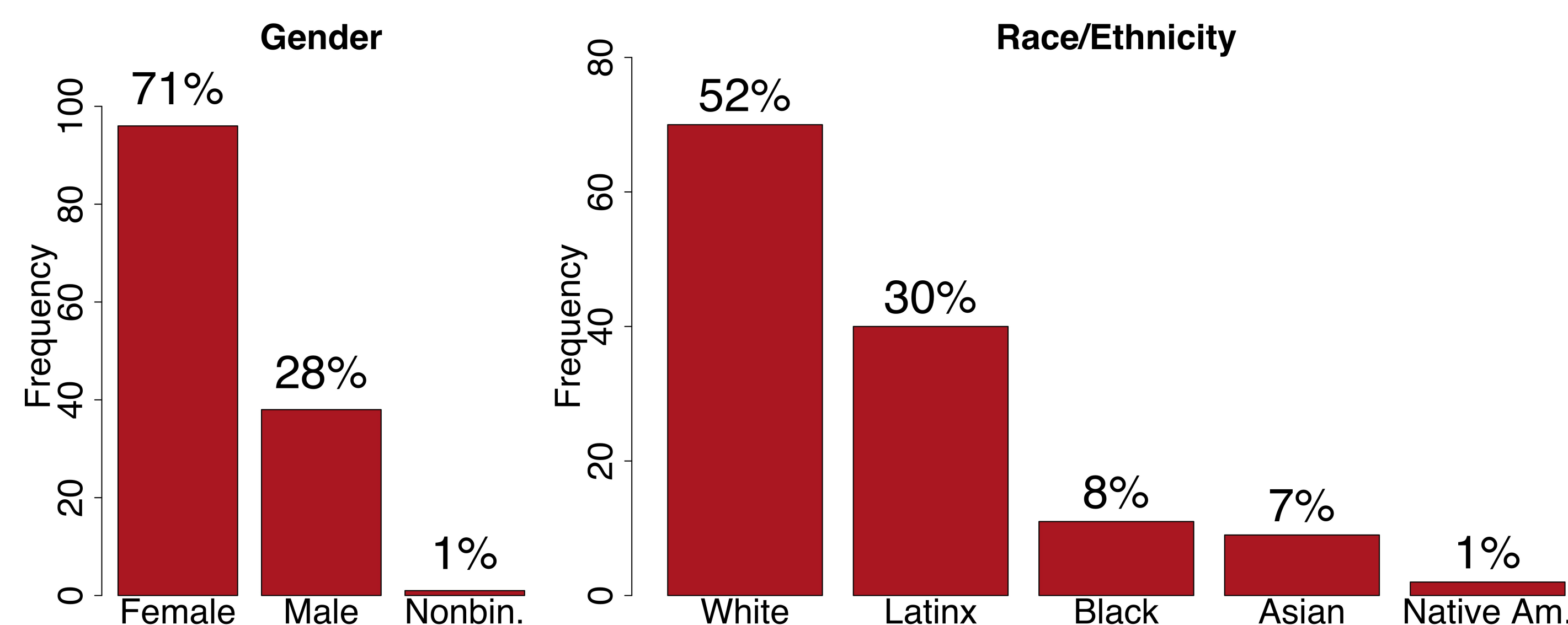
Background

Academic entitlement (AE), expecting favorable academic outcomes regardless of performance, is a pervasive problem related to undergraduate cheating (Stiles et al., 2017) and noncompliance (Kopp & Finney, 2013). AE has been linked with self-esteem (Baer, 2011) and narcissism (Brummelman et al., 2016; Greenberger et al., 2008; Stronge et al., 2016).

Self-esteem is the evaluation of one's abilities, qualities, and characteristics as good or bad and often involves social comparison (Baumeister et al., 2003; Leary, 1999; Levine & Munsch, 2014). The development of self-esteem has also been linked to mastery experiences and self-efficacy, one's belief they will or will not be successful at a task (Bandura, 1977). When faced with failure in mastery experiences, entitled students seem to resort to undesirable behaviors (e.g., rude grade disputes, Lippman et al., 2009). Thus, we hypothesized self-efficacy and AE are negatively related. Self-compassion (Neff, 2003), kindness to oneself in the face of failure, may be key to overcoming AE.

We tested relationships between AE, narcissism, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-compassion to identify pathways of reducing AE. Designing interventions around self-compassion components could provide students with adaptive strategies towards taking an active role in learning.

Sample & Procedure



Undergraduate participants ($N = 135$) from a public four year university completed an online survey containing items from each relevant measure during Fall 2018.

Age in years: $M = 19.95$, $SD = 2.65$

References 1

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Measures

Exploratory (EFA, principal axis factoring, promax rotation) and confirmatory (CFA, FIML estimation) factor analysis were used to analyze item responses on each measure.

Measure	Example Item	Response Scale
Academic Entitlement (AE; 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) to 7 (Strongly agree)
Self-esteem* (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965)	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1 (Strongly agree) to 4 (Strongly disagree)
Narcissism (NPI; 16-item; Ames et al., 2006)	Pick the statement that best describes you: I think I am a special person. (1) I am no better or no worse than most people. (0)	
General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE; Chen et al., 2001)	I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself.	1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree)
Self-Compassion Scale (SCS; Neff, 2003) Negative Subscales:		
Self-Judgement (SCS SJ)	When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself.	
Isolation (SCS IS)	When I fail at something that's important to me I tend to feel alone in my failure.	1 (Almost never) to 5 (Almost always)
Overidentifying with Emotions (SCS OI)	When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings	

*Items on the Self-Esteem Scale loaded onto 2 factors: a Self-esteem factor and a method factor, on which only reverse-scored items loaded. The other measures and the three Self-Compassion subscales each loaded onto 1 factor.

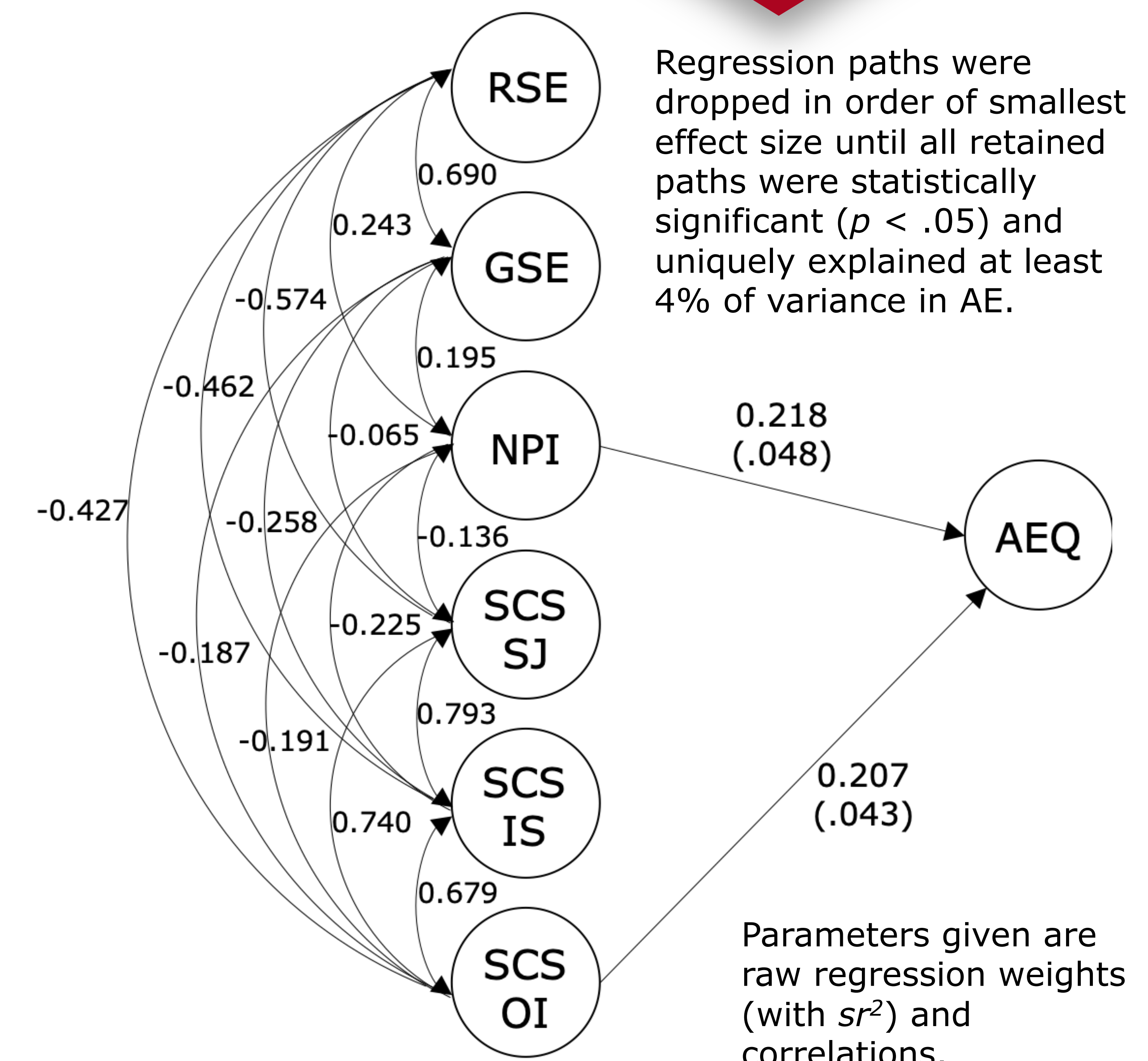
Results

All latent factors were included in a structural equation model (SEM; WLSMV estimation, Satorra-Bentler χ^2). Factor loadings were fixed to values obtained in measure-specific CFAs.

Factor Correlations and Regression Weights from the 8-factor SEM						
Factor Correlations						
	RSE	GSE	NPI	SCS-SJ	SCS-IS	SCS-OI
Method	--	--	--	--	--	--
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 ~	B	β	z	p	95% CI	sr ²
RSE	--	--				--
GSE	--	--				--
NPI	0.218	0.226	1.933	.053	-0.003, 0.455	.048
SCS-SJ	--	--				--
SCS-IS	--	--				--
SCS-OI	0.207	0.215	2.182	.029	0.022, 0.409	.043

Model Fit:

$\chi^2_{SB}(1258) = 1347.391$ $p = .040$, $CFI = .920$, $RMSEA = .023$, $SRMR = .104$
Correlation residuals unavailable for WLSMV estimation. -- = fixed to 0.



Discussion

Results refute a relationship between AE and self-esteem, support a relationship between AE and narcissism, and reveal new evidence that AE is not related to self-efficacy in this population of college students. Most importantly, results suggest over-identifying with emotions contributes to AE.

Implications:

- 1) Over-identifying with emotions is a form of poor emotion regulation, suggesting AE is a defensive coping response; and
- 2) The antithesis of over-identification with emotions, mindfulness, may be a successful target for interventions aimed at reducing AE. Mindfulness exercises should be explored in future interventions on academic entitlement.

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