

10-5-2017

# Psychological and Academic Entitlement: Psychosocial and Cultural Predictors and Relationships with Psychological Well-Being

Siqi Huang  
*University of Windsor*

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PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ACADEMIC ENTITLEMENT: PSYCHOSOCIAL AND  
CULTURAL PREDICTORS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-  
BEING

By

Siqi Huang

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Department of Psychology  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts  
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

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Psychological and Academic Entitlement: Psychosocial and Cultural Predictors and Relationships with Psychological Well-Being

by

Siqi Huang

APPROVED BY:

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G. B. Angell

School of Social Work

---

S. Towson

Department of Psychology

---

B. C.H. Kuo, Advisor

Department of Psychology

September 7, 2017

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this thesis and that no part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication.

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined psychological entitlement (PE) and academic entitlement (AE) in a sample of undergraduate students from the University of Windsor. Contrary to the popular belief that entitlement is rampant among today's young adults, on average, the present study found that less than 80% of the participants endorsed the items on the entitlement scales. Multiple regression analyses of self-report responses showed that higher PE was predicted by unemployment, older age, more recent generation status, and engaging in less social comparison. Higher AE was predicted by younger age, more recent generation status, lower self-esteem, and lower self-efficacy. Furthermore, AE was negatively associated with several psychological well-being (PWB) factors, while PE had no correlation with PWB. Although PE and AE are moderately correlated, AE appeared to be a more problematic form of entitlement than PE in the current sample.

In addition, PE and AE levels were compared across broad ethnocultural groups. Although PE was positively correlated with independent self-construal, PE was actually higher in participants of collectivist ethnocultural descent compared to those of individualist ethnocultural descent, even after controlling for demographic variables. PE was also higher in Asian Canadians compared to White European Canadians. The same pattern was found with AE, where AE was higher in participants of collectivist descent than those of individualist descent, and higher in Asian Canadians than White European Canadians. These results and other recent studies show that entitlement is not likely just a "Western" phenomenon. Implications for research and practical intervention are discussed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my advisor, Dr. Kuo, for believing in my potential as a researcher and clinician, which has allowed me to embark on this graduate school journey. I would also like to thank him for his valuable advice and guidance that has helped me to explore my interests and turn them into a feasible research project. In addition, his own journey as an immigrant and a Chinese-Canadian psychologist and professor is an inspiration for me to explore my own background and ethnic identity, and to see their influences in my own research and clinical work.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Angell and Dr. Towson, for providing insightful feedback that helped improve and refine my thesis. Their sincere interest, support, and warmth helped me feel more confident about my project, which enabled me to look forward to my thesis defense with excitement to tell a friendly audience about my work. I would also like to thank Dr. Langton for his support through my first few experiences of academic entitlement as a teaching assistant.

There are so many people who have helped me get to where I am today: friends, colleagues, and professors at McMaster who cultivated my love of psychology and encouraged me to pursue clinical psychology when I felt that it was above me; my fellow clinical psychology students who weather the stresses and celebrate the triumphs together with me; Anna, who remained my patient, humorous, and supportive friend as we grew from starry-eyed grade schoolers to university graduates trying to be “adults”; Nicole, who showed the courage to dream and go after her dreams; Katherine, who radiates friendliness and squirrel-like joy, and Shayna, who always knows what to say and loves to provide tasty treats—both of whom gave me so much support and encouragement during my early graduate school days, but also

relentlessly challenged my erroneous beliefs and fascinated me with things like garlic powder and drive-throughs.

I would like to give a big thank-you to my partner, Justin, for being such a patient and caring companion. He is a world-class model of work-life balance—his ability to appreciate the simple beauties of life and to see things in perspective is above the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile. Trying to emulate him has helped me to discover new interests and re-discover old ones, and this has helped me to avoid many burnouts and to enjoy, time and time again, life outside of being a graduate student!

All of this would not have been possible without the courageousness and resilience of my parents, who left everything they had ever known to seek a better future here in Canada. The strength and willpower that they have shown in adapting to a completely new (and cold!) environment, learning a new language, and persisting through trying times give me the strength to go forward and keep believing in my dreams. They also modeled the importance of our Chinese heritage, which is integral in my continuing reflection on my self-identity and ethnic identity. Without the foundation they built over years and years of sacrifice and hard work, I would not have had this amazing privilege to pursue a career that I am passionate about.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Monkey King, my childhood hero who showed me the meaning of hope and strength during his own journey to the West.

敢问路在何方，路在脚下。  
The path you seek is underfoot.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Objectives of the Proposed Study

This study had four major objectives. First, this study aimed to examine the demographic, psychosocial, and cultural predictors of psychological entitlement (PE) and academic entitlement (AE), respectively. Importantly, this study simultaneously examined PE and AE to help discern and clarify the relationship between these two critical constructs. Second, the study aimed to offer a more nuanced conceptualization of PE and AE by viewing the two constructs as having self-focused and other-focused dimensions. Third, potential cultural variations in entitlement across varying levels of individualism and collectivism were explored among ethnically diverse undergraduate students. Fourth, the study explored the extent to which PE and AE affect psychological well-being in undergraduate students.

### Significance of the Study

The broad focus of this study was to improve the empirical understanding and conceptual grounding of PE and AE. Both PE and AE refer to an individual's sense of deservingness that may not be connected with actual effort or performance (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, & Bushman, 2004; Singleton-Jackson, 2011). PE refers to an individual's general sense of feeling more deserving than others (Campbell et al., 2004). AE, on the other hand, is a specific type of entitlement found within an academic setting. Importantly, both PE and AE have been linked to numerous negative social and psychological consequences, such as interpersonal aggression (Campbell et al., 2004), anger (Witte, Callahan, & Perez-Lopez, 2002), poorer academic performance in challenging courses (Anderson, Halberstadt, & Aitken, 2014), and lack of self-control (Raskin & Terry, 1988).

PE and AE are believed to be highly prevalent among young adults in North America

(Twenge, 2007). While these trends have not been empirically studied, research does show that narcissism, a related construct, has been increasing over the past few decades (Twenge & Foster, 2010). Accordingly, there has been an increased focus on PE and AE both in and outside of academia (Lessard, Greenberger, Chen, & Farruggia, 2011). According to a Web of Science search, between 1990 and 2006, approximately 1 to 5 papers on PE were published per year in psychology journals. However, between 2007 and 2017, 7 to 25 papers on PE were published per year. Related forms of entitlement, such as workplace entitlement (Jordan, Ramsay, & Westerlaken, 2017) and sexual entitlement (Widman & McNulty, 2014) have also been active fields of research within the last decade. In addition, many recent publications in popular media have implicated an apparent increase in entitlement among today's young adults. This is evident in the title of the book *Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled—and More Miserable Than Ever Before* (Twenge, 2007), and the front cover of the *Time* magazine in May 2013, titled "The Me Me Me Generation" (Stein, 2013). Despite the increased media interest and academic research, there are still several gaps in the PE and AE literature which this study aimed to address.

**Predicting PE and AE levels.** High levels of entitlement are concerning due to their associations with various negative consequences. This study aimed to integrate the correlates of entitlement from the literature with hypothesized predictors in estimating PE and AE in a young adult, student population. The resulting contribution to the understanding of the correlates of entitlement add to the theoretical foundation of PE and AE and help devise strategies and interventions to reduce entitlement and its impacts on students.

In addition, to the author's knowledge, no study has specifically examined and discussed the relationship between PE and AE, other than simply reporting the correlation between the two

constructs. Previous research that measured both PE and AE found that they are moderately correlated ( $r = .40$ ), suggesting that they are related but distinct constructs (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Comparing and contrasting the two constructs can help clarify whether PE and AE tend to coexist and influence each other, whether PE is a general sense of entitlement that tends to manifest across multiple settings, or whether AE is a sense of entitlement that can be exhibited in the academic setting specifically and independently from PE.

**Self-focused and other-focused predictors of entitlement.** The present study aimed to contribute to the theoretical foundation of the literature by generating a more nuanced understanding of PE and AE. Specifically, these constructs were conceptualized in terms of having self-focused and other-focused dimensions and by testing the corresponding predictors. Self-focused predictors are characteristics within individuals, such as self-esteem and self-efficacy, while other-focused predictors extend beyond the individual to include a role of others. By definition, PE involves a self-focused dimension (“feeling more deserving...”) and an other-focused dimension (“...than others”). An individual with high PE not only feels deserving, but also expects to receive more rewards and services in comparison with others. Although the definition of AE does not directly mention the role of others (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Singleton-Jackson, Jackson, & Reinhardt, 2010), feeling that one deserves extraordinary rewards and services may involve a comparison with what others are receiving.

**Cultural differences in entitlement.** There is limited cross-cultural research on entitlement. Researchers have cautioned against overgeneralizing the previously discussed trends in PE and AE, explaining that they may apply mostly to White European students and less to minority ethnocultural groups (e.g., ethnocultural minorities, multiracial individuals, LGBTQ populations) (Bonner, Marbley, & Howard-Hamilton, 2011). Given that research findings in the

current entitlement literature may not generalize beyond the ethnocultural majority and White European cultures in the U.S. and Canada, the current study aimed to explore potential cultural differences in PE and AE. This was done by recruiting an ethnoculturally diverse sample of undergraduate students in Canada. As described in the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* (Canadian Psychological Association, 2000), psychologists should be aware of cultural norms and how theories based on Western cultures may not generalize to ethnocultural minority groups. Further, given the diverse Canadian society and the increasing intersection of cultures, using an ethnoculturally diverse sample contributes to a more thorough understanding of the constructs and their patterns across different ethnocultural groups, and helps develop more culturally sensitive strategies to reduce entitlement.

Specifically, the current study hypothesized that the prevalence of PE and AE would vary across cultural groups, since entitlement appears to involve using other individuals as a comparison to determine whether one is being treated better or worse. Although within-group differences exist, different cultural values and practices may lead to differences between broad ethnocultural groups. Specifically, cultures vary in the degree to which individuals believe they are distinct from or similar to their social group (Hamamura, 2012). Collectivist societies promote working with and helping one's social groups; thus it would be expected that others would not be used as a comparison to ensure that one is receiving better treatment or awards. On the other hand, individualist societies promote values that appear to be more in line with entitlement, that is, seeing oneself as a distinct entity and achieving one's own goals irrespective of one's social group (Hamamura, 2012). Therefore, there may be potential variations in the prevalence of entitlement across different levels of individualism and collectivism, both between individuals and across broad cultural groups. However, it should be noted that the society in

which the individual lives in would affect his or her behaviour, such that a person from a collectivist culture may act more individualist in an individualist culture, and vice versa. As such, differences based on the broad individualist or collectivist cultural differences may be attenuated since the study recruitment occurred only in Canada.

**Entitlement and psychological well-being.** PE and AE are associated with a variety of negative consequences, including those that are interpersonal in nature (e.g., Anastasio & Rose, 2014; Anderson et al., 2014; Campbell et al., 2004; Witte et al., 2002). The quality of interpersonal relationships is an important contributor to psychological well-being (PWB) However, only a few studies have examined the relationship between entitlement and PWB. Dreiling (2015) found a negative relationship between PE and satisfaction with life. A study in Poland using the authors' own measure of PE found that the adaptive component of entitlement was positively correlated with PWB, while the revenge-oriented component of entitlement was negatively correlated with PWB (Zemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2013). However, both studies used brief rating scales of PWB that do not tap into its multidimensional nature. In terms of the link between AE and PWB, only one study has been conducted as far as the author is aware. This study found a negative relationship between AE and PWB, a positive correlation between AE and depression symptoms, and a positive correlation between AE and perceived stress in male participants (Barton & Hirsch, 2016). Therefore, research so far suggests that both PE and AE are related to lower PWB. To add to this literature, the present study examined whether PE and AE are related to PWB using a comprehensive multi-dimensional measure of PWB.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews relevant literature on the key variables that will be examined in this study. Research studies on PE, AE, individualism-collectivism, self-construal, and relevant demographics and psychosocial variables will be reviewed. Given the relationship between entitlement and narcissism (Campbell et al., 2004; Chowning & Campbell, 2009), relevant literature from narcissism research will also be discussed.

### **Psychological entitlement**

PE is defined as a stable and pervasive sense of feeling more deserving of rewards and services compared to others (Campbell et al., 2004). PE is a global sense of deservingness that persists across a multitude of situations but does not correspond to one's effort or performance. High PE has been linked to a variety of negative consequences, including aggression following a threat to self-esteem; selfishness in interpersonal relationships (Campbell et al., 2004); negative attitudes towards rival outgroups (Anastasio & Rose, 2014); poorer academic performance in challenging courses (Anderson et al., 2014); the need for more reassessments and remediation for poor academic performance in pharmacy students (Jeffres, Barclay, & Stolte, 2014); premature dropout from a parenting program (Snow, Kern, & Curlette, 2001); greater distrustfulness and less self-control (Raskin & Terry, 1988); anger (Witte et al., 2002); lower relationship satisfaction in romantic relationships (Curry, 2013); and Machiavellianism (McHoskey, 1995). PE is also negatively correlated with agreeableness and emotional stability (Campbell et al., 2004); a need for cognition (desire to understand and make sense of one's experiences) (Harvey & Martinko, 2009); forgiveness (Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell, & Finkel, 2004); and job satisfaction (Harvey & Martinko, 2009).

While most of the research has focused on the negative consequences of PE, one study

found a potential benefit in an experimental condition (Zitek & Vincent, 2015). In this study, undergraduate students and graduate MBA students had their state levels of PE temporarily increased by writing about why they should feel more entitled than others, or by being primed with messages about entitlement (e.g., “You can ask for more,” “You deserve a great vacation”). These participants were more creative in the subsequent tasks—they came up with more uses for a paperclip and were more imaginative in drawing an alien—compared to the control groups who did not have their state PE manipulated. The authors explained that increased PE led to a greater need to be unique, which then led to higher creativity. However, this connection to creativity was not found with trait PE, which, unlike state-induced PE, is long-term and constant. Specifically, chronically elevated levels of PE might be linked to a constant lack of motivation that contributes to poorer performance on tasks. As such, while a temporary increase in PE may increase creativity, a persistently elevated level of PE appears to be detrimental.

Until recently, PE has been measured as a facet of narcissism instead of as an independent construct (Rose & Anastasio, 2014). Indeed, narcissism and PE are moderately related, with a correlation of .36 (Rose & Anastasio, 2014) between the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES; Campbell et al., 2004) and the Narcissism Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Hall, 1979; Raskin & Terry, 1988). Narcissism is characterized by having a grandiose sense of self-importance, a belief of being better and more deserving than others, and a tendency to be self-centred and exploitative (Raskin & Hall, 1979). However, narcissism and PE are distinct in several aspects. Narcissism is a broader term that includes—in addition to a sense of entitlement—self-absorption, exhibitionism, grandiosity, and vanity (Raskin & Terry, 1988). In terms of interpersonal relations, narcissism has been found to be strongly negatively related to sociotropy (a need for positive interactions with others), but unrelated to autonomy (a need for



independence, achievement, and control) in a sample of 621 undergraduate students at a university in the U.S. (Rose & Anastasio, 2014). In the same study, PE was found to be positively related to both sociotropy and autonomy (Rose & Anastasio, 2014). Furthermore, examining PE as a standalone construct, rather than a facet of narcissism, deemphasizes the pathological nature of narcissistic entitlement (Campbell et al., 2004; Jordan et al., 2017). Importantly, it has been found that entitlement can exist independently of narcissism (Brown, Budzek, & Tamborski, 2009). Given these and other differences between PE and narcissism, the PE literature has continued to grow out of the literature on narcissism.

In the literature on entitlement, the PES and the entitlement or entitlement/exploitative subscales of the NPI are most commonly used to measure PE. However, unlike the NPI subscales, the PES was specifically designed to measure PE, and has been shown to have good reliability, validity, and internal consistency (Campbell et al., 2004). As PE is increasingly being recognized as conceptually and empirically distinct from narcissism, the PES is becoming the preferred and more widely used measure (Ackerman & Donnellan, 2013). Furthermore, factor analysis studies of the NPI have found inconsistent numbers of factors, ranging from two to seven across studies (Corry, Merritt, Mrug & Pamp, 2008; Emmons, 1987; Kurbarych et al., 2004; Raskin & Terry, 1988). These inconsistencies lead to different items loading across different NPI entitlement subscales and concerns about the construct validity of the NPI. Considering the above, this study adopted the PES to measure PE.

### **Academic entitlement**

AE is a construct that is rooted in the PE literature (Singleton-Jackson, 2011) and refers to a sense of entitlement that is specific to the academic context (Achacoso, 2002). AE is a relatively new construct; the first empirical study to address the subject was a dissertation by

Achacoso (2002). Not surprisingly, the exact definition of AE is still being debated. Chowning and Campbell (2009) conceptualized AE as having two components: externalized responsibility and entitled expectations. That is, AE means having expectations of academic success without taking personal responsibility for achieving that success. Greenberger et al. (2008) describe AE as the expectation of high grades with only moderate effort, and having a demanding attitude towards instructors. Additionally, Jackson, Singleton-Jackson, and Frey (2011) define AE as having three components: an entitled attitude for rewards that is unrelated to the student's performance, reduced personal responsibility for academic success, and unrealistic expectations for instructors and institutions. Common to all these definitions of AE is a sense of deservingness for rewards that is unrelated to the student's effort or performance in an academic setting.

AE has been linked to various negative outcomes, such as lower course self-efficacy (belief in one's ability to do well in a course; Boswell, 2012), lower self-regulation (Achacoso, 2002), and higher levels of psychopathic traits (Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015). A recent longitudinal study that followed 130 university students over two semesters found that AE, but not PE, was negatively correlated with term GPA (Oviatt, 2015). AE is also positively correlated with student incivility. Chowning and Campbell (2009) surveyed 386 undergraduate students at a U.S. university with a measure that described four academic situations (e.g., exams, homework policies, grades), each followed by five to nine student response options that were pre-rated by experienced faculty in terms of their appropriateness. An example of one of the vignette used is: "In one of your classes this semester, you check your grade and see that it is just below the cutoff for a higher grade". The response options include, "If I came to class every time and tried, I think I should get an A" and "I would deserve the grade I earned throughout the semester. I

could have tried harder to get a higher grade.” Not surprisingly, students with higher AE tended to choose the more entitled response options compared to students with lower AE. Participants with higher AE were also less likely to view uncivil student behaviours (e.g., arriving to class late, texting during class, sending rude emails) as inappropriate (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Similarly, Mellor (2011) recruited 82 college students and 31 faculty members at a U.S. university and asked them to read nine examples of student behaviours (e.g., disruptive behaviours, uncivil behaviours towards the faculty) and to rate the acceptability of each behaviour. Students with high AE were less likely than the faculty to view using technology during class (but not for class), talking to classmates during class, and leaving class early as inappropriate. Furthermore, Ciani, Summers, and Easter (2008) found that students with higher AE were more likely to confront faculty and teaching assistants to argue for a higher mark that they perceived they deserved. In addition, AE has been found to correlate with counterproductive research behaviour, such as not showing up for research studies and careless responding to questionnaires (Taylor, Bailey, & Barber, 2015). Overall, AE is linked to a variety of behaviours that have negative consequences in the academic setting for both the individuals and others around them.

Several media and anecdotal reports proclaim that AE is widespread in today’s young adults (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Twenge, 2007). However, across several research studies, the majority of students do not score high on AE scales. Andrey et al. (2012) found a moderate level of AE (an average score of 2.5 on a scale of 5) in a sample of undergraduate students at a large Canadian university. In another study on graduate students in a pharmacy program, only 10% of the students scored higher than the median of the total of possible points on the AE scale and were identified as academically entitled (Jeffres et al., 2014). Nonetheless, there remains a

significant proportion of students who did endorse high AE levels, which may be problematic given the various negative correlates of AE (e.g., Achacoso, 2002; Boswell, 2012) and the disproportionately large amount of time to handle entitled students (Lippmann, Bulanda, & Wagenaar, 2009). Furthermore, the “cutoff” for high entitlement is arbitrary and varies across studies, and students may still experience some of the negative impact of AE without endorsing the majority of items on the AE scales.

### **Trends in PE and AE**

In addition to claiming that PE and AE are particularly high in today’s young adults, media and anecdotal sources also claim that both PE and AE have been increasing over the past few decades (Alleyne, 2010; B. K. Miller, 2013; Stein, 2013; Twenge, 2007). However, these trends have yet to be examined empirically. Nonetheless, it has been found that narcissism, which is positively correlated with PE and AE (Campbell et al., 2004; Chowning & Campbell, 2009), has indeed increased in U.S. college students between 1982 and 2006 ( $d = .33$ ; Twenge & Foster, 2010; Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008). Additional hints that narcissism and entitlement may have increased come from the labels given to the recent generations. The baby boomer generation (born between 1946-1964) has been called the “Me” Generation in response to its focus on self-realization and self-fulfillment over social responsibility (Hughes & Angela, 2004). Similarly, the Millennial Generation (born between 1980-1999) who grew up with social media and abundant outlets for self-promotion (e.g., Facebook and Myspace) has been dubbed “Generation Me” (Stein, 2013; Twenge, 2003). Narcissism appears to be increasing in other countries as well. The front cover of the August 6, 2007 edition of the *Time* magazine featured an article on young adults in China, dubbed China’s “Me Generation” (Elegant, 2007). The purported rise in narcissism in China has been attributed

to increases in prosperity, the one-child policy, and the urbanization of populations (Cai, Kwan, & Sedikides, 2011). It appears that narcissism and entitlement may have increased over the past few decades in North America and other countries, even those (e.g., China) that are typically considered as collectivist cultures (Matsumoto, Yoo, Fontaine, & Anguas-Wong, 2008; Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998).

The potential rise in PE and AE is concerning because high entitlement affects both the entitled individuals and others around them, such as their colleagues in the workplace. AE is positively correlated with entitlement in the workplace after graduation (Peirone & Maticka-Tyndale, 2016). According to an article in the Maclean's, employers complain that entitled graduates expect promotions or high pay before they have put in sufficient time and effort (Dehaas, 2013). Similarly, the Millennial Generation has been described by their educators, employers, and co-workers to be more entitled than the previous generations (Stout, 2000; Twenge, 2007). Thus, it is important to study PE and AE given their numerous negative correlates on both individual and societal levels.

**Relationship between PE and AE.** It has been suggested that students with high AE may not necessarily have high PE, given that PE is a more general feeling of entitlement (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). It is unclear whether a global sense of entitlement would necessarily lead to entitlement in specific situations, and no study to date has directly addressed the relationship between PE and AE. The current study examined the relationship between PE and AE by comparing the prevalence and correlates of the two constructs.

### **Causal Factors Associated with Entitlement**

Even though research on entitlement is relatively new, a number of correlates and potential contributors have been noted. PE has been theoretically linked to a feeling of being

deprived and an expectation for others to “make up” for the deprivation (Achacoso, 2002). It has also been proposed that PE may be a result of perceiving that one is superior to others (Achacoso, 2002). In terms of AE, a consumer-oriented mindset has been posited to be a potential contributor (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). Students may come to view higher education as a product to be “purchased” rather than as an opportunity to learn. Consequently, students with high AE may see themselves as “customers” who pay for their education, and thus feel entitled to quality “customer service” irrespective of their efforts.

**Parenting style.** Permissive parenting is positively correlated with AE (Barton & Hirsche, 2016). Permissive parenting involves being overindulgent and setting few demands on children. These parents see their role as being a resource to their children, rather than teaching their children responsibilities and standards. Such a parenting style may teach the child to expect special treatment and to develop an external locus of control, which leads to a sense of entitlement upon arriving in an academic environment (Barton & Hirsche, 2016). Overparenting has also been linked to high PE (Segrin, Wozidlo, Givertz, Bauer, & Taylor Murphy, 2012). Overparenting is characterized by excessive involvement in and control of the child’s life that hinders the child’s development of autonomy and assumption of responsibility. These parents are sometimes referred to as “helicopter parents” who often attempt to solve the child’s problems. Overparenting behaviours lead the child to expect others to meet their needs regardless of the amount of effort required (Segrin et al., 2012). These studies suggest that a lack of responsibility and poor standard-setting by parents during childhood may contribute to a sense of entitlement as well as low personal responsibility.

**The educational system.** More broadly speaking, societal changes have also been identified as a potential contributor to high entitlement. Achacoso (2002) discussed that an

educational system that emphasizes fostering students' self-esteem, as is the case in the United States, may have led to a sense of entitlement in students irrespective of their actual achievement. Students are being given indiscriminate positive feedback and praise regardless of their effort and performance; consequently, students may learn that they do not have to meet particular standards to receive positive feedback. Stout (2000) criticized the U.S. educational system for failing to hold students up to standards and withholding negative feedback in the name of protecting self-esteem. In addition to excessive positive feedback, it has also been argued that the student-centered educational system and grade inflation in U.S. universities and colleges have further contributed to the rise in AE (Greenberger et al., 2008; Scanlan & Care, 2004). However, the link between the American educational system and AE has not yet been empirically examined, and it is not clear whether the link exists given that the education system in the U.S. is highly heterogeneous. Furthermore, it is unclear whether this criticism can also be generalized to the Canadian educational system. A recent study, however, found that Saudi Arabian students actually exhibited higher AE than students in the U.S. (Blincoe & Garris, 2017), providing some early evidence that the education system in the U.S. may not a necessary condition for high AE.

### **Predictors of Entitlement**

This section reviews the literature on empirically identified as well as conceptually hypothesized predictors of entitlement. As the present study conceptualizes PE and AE in terms of self-focused and other-focused dimensions, relevant predictors associated with these dimensions will also be reviewed.

**Demographic variables.** The following demographic variables have been found or theorized to be predictors of entitlement in previous research.

**Age.** Campbell et al. (2004) proposed that PE may decrease with age as individuals come to realize that they do not always receive what they feel entitled to. This is similar to the finding that narcissism decreases with age and is lower in members of earlier generations compared to members of later generations (Foster, Campbell, & Twenge, 2003). Further, Foster et al. (2003) employed an ethnically diverse sample (74% White, 7% Hispanic, 7% Asian, 6% Black; 74% residing in the US, 9% in Europe, 6% in Canada, 5% in Asia, 3% in the Middle East, 2% in Africa). Although there are limitations to broad ethnocultural groupings, these data provide some evidence which suggests that these trends might apply across cultural groups. Unfortunately, however, no ethnocultural comparisons were conducted in the Foster et al. (2003) study. Given that the current study will be using a primarily undergraduate sample, the age range present in the sample will likely be narrow. Boswell (2012) has found that AE was unrelated to the year in university. Therefore, unless there is a substantial age range in the sample, a correlation between age and entitlement is not anticipated.

**Socioeconomic status (SES).** Self-perceived socioeconomic status is positively correlated with PE (Piff, 2014). A series of studies involving ethnically diverse samples of undergraduate students and adult members of the general population found that self-reported SES (on the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status; Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000) was marginally positively correlated with PES scores,  $r = .19$ ,  $p = .059$ . Parents' level of education (a proxy for social status) was also positively correlated with PES scores ( $r = .22$ ). These results suggest that higher SES might be associated with higher level of entitlement.

**Gender.** Males have been found to score higher on both PE and AE compared to females (Boswell, 2012; Campbell et al., 2004; Ciani et al., 2008; Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015). This gender difference may be a result of gendered socialization expectations. For instance, males are



taught to value achievement more than females, which may lead to males feeling greater entitlement for success because it is more important to them (Boswell, 2012). Furthermore, women generally earn less than men in similar professions, and thus women may feel less entitled to rewards in the workplace. Accordingly, women reported feeling less entitlement for higher income than men do (Desmarais & Curtis, 2001). As such, different social norms and undervaluing of women's work may contribute to gender differences in entitlement. However, this gender difference is not always consistent. For example, Achacoso (2002) found the opposite pattern where females displayed higher AE than males.

***Immigration and generation status.*** As will be discussed later, the study proposes that entitlement is associated with Western, individualistic values. As such, immigration and generation statuses that are suggestive of greater acculturation are expected to be correlated with higher entitlement levels. That is, Canadian citizens and permanent residents are expected to show higher entitlement than international students (students from other countries who are residing in Canada temporarily to study), and individuals whose families have resided in Canada for several generations are expected to show more entitlement compared to more recent settlers in Canada.

***Employment status.*** This variable has not been examined in the literature in relation to entitlement. Given that entitlement is expected to decrease as life experiences challenge and weaken individuals' entitlement beliefs (Campbell et al., 2004), entitlement may also decrease with employment experience. However, it is also possible that students who are paying a greater amount for their own education (as opposed to receiving financial support from their parents) may feel more entitled due to a greater personal cost and potentially a stronger "customer" mindset. As such, employment status was included as an exploratory variable.

**Self-focused and other-focused dimensions of entitlement.** As mentioned previously, this study hypothesizes that PE has self-focused and other-focused dimensions. Specifically, the definition of PE involves a self-focused dimension (“feeling more deserving...”) and an other-focused dimension (“...than others”) (Campbell et al., 2004). The correlation between PE and narcissism (Anastasio & Rose, 2014) as well as autonomy (Rose & Anastasio, 2014) support the hypothesis that PE has a self-focused feature. Furthermore, the correlation between PE and sociotropy (Rose & Anastasio, 2014) suggests that others also play a role.

It is, however, less clear whether AE also has distinct self-focused and other-focused dimensions. Regardless, the definition of AE (expecting rewards and services regardless of one’s actual effort or performance in an academic setting) does seem to imply a self-focused element of grandiosity and an other-focused element as characterized by a tendency to engage in social comparison to measure whether one is getting better services and rewards than others.

The predictors of entitlement were conceptualized accordingly with the proposed self-focused and other-focused dimensions of entitlement. The self-focused dimension refers to characteristics within the individual such as self-efficacy and self-esteem. The other-focused, social dimension takes into account the role that others play in relation to an individual’s entitlement, and was represented by the variable of social comparison.

#### ***The self-focused feature of entitlement.***

*Self-esteem.* Self-esteem refers to one’s subjective evaluation of oneself (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach, & Rosenberg, 1995), which consists of both cognitive beliefs about oneself (e.g., “I am intelligent,” “I am incompetent”) and emotional reactions (e.g., pride, shame). Individuals with high self-esteem accept and respect themselves, but do not necessarily feel that they are better than others (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996). It has been contended

that entitlement may be a mechanism to boost or protect one's self-esteem (Boswell, 2002; Greenberger et al., 2008). For instance, AE may be a coping strategy which students use to protect their self-esteem after poor academic performance; it redirects the blame from oneself to others, such as professors or teaching assistants (Boswell, 2002; Greenberger et al., 2008). Similarly, high PE also appears to involve a need to protect the ego, since it has been linked to greater aggression after an ego threat (Campbell et al., 2004). PE is also correlated with a self-serving attributional style, specifically, attributing workplace successes to oneself and attributing failures to others (Harvey & Martinko, 2009). However, the relationship between self-esteem and entitlement is mixed. Campbell et al. (2004) found a small positive correlation between PE and self-esteem (Daddis & Brunell, 2015; Strelan, 2007). In contrast, other studies have found nonsignificant relationships between PE and self-esteem (Daddis & Brunell, 2015; Strelan, 2007). One study found that AE was negatively correlated with self-esteem, but did not explore the pattern (Greenberger et al., 2008). Given the mixed relations between self-esteem and entitlement in the existing literature, self-esteem was included in the present study as an exploratory variable.

There may be cultural differences in the relationship between entitlement and self-esteem, since cultures vary in their emphasis on self-esteem. Specifically, more individualistic cultures tend to place a higher value on fostering and maintaining self-esteem compared to more collectivistic cultures (Heine et al., 1999; Spencer-Rodgers, Wang, & Hou, 2004). As such, individuals with stronger collectivistic values may not have a strong need to use entitlement as a means to protect their self-esteem, and thus entitlement may be lower in collectivist cultures.

**General self-efficacy.** General self-efficacy (GSE) refers to a person's belief that one has the capability to cope with a variety of novel and challenging situations or tasks (Schwarzer &

Jerusalem, 2010). Individuals with high GSE are confident in their problem-solving skills and abilities in difficult situations. GSE is correlated with a variety of positive characteristics and behaviours, such as less negative affect and more adaptive coping in patients with cancer (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2010). Low GSE is associated with feelings of depression, anxiety, and hopelessness (Bandura, 1997). The link between entitlement and GSE has not yet been examined in the literature. However, higher self-efficacy has been found to be positively correlated with a more independent self-construal (Kiuchi, 2006), which the current study posits will be positively related to entitlement. As such, there may be a positive correlation between GSE and entitlement. The opposite pattern may also be found, however. Boswell (2012) examined a specific self-efficacy (one's belief that one has the capability to accomplish a particular task) and found that AE was linked to lower self-efficacy in being able to succeed in a university course. The author explained that since academically entitled students tend to hold others responsible for their academic success, they would have less confidence in their ability to succeed through their own efforts. Given the lack of research and the mixed findings, the current study included self-efficacy as an exploratory variable to clarify its relationship with PE and AE.

***The other-focused feature of entitlement.***

*Social comparison.* The definition of PE directly addresses an element of social comparison by which individuals look to others to determine whether they are receiving what they “deserve.” Therefore, social comparison may be a means for entitled individuals to determine if they are indeed getting better awards and services than others. However, this link between entitlement and social comparison has yet to be examined in the literature.

Social comparison refers to the act of learning about oneself by comparing oneself to others (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Social comparison is believed to be a universal desire, but the

degree of social comparison and how sensitive one is to social information varies across individuals. For instance, individuals who were mildly depressed and had high cognitive dysfunction (beliefs that contribute to the onset and maintenance of depression) engaged in more social comparison than mildly depressed individuals who had low cognitive dysfunction (Swallow & Kuiper, 1990). Further, individuals with higher narcissism tend to experience more extreme emotional reactions to social comparisons, that is, more positive affect from downward comparisons (comparing oneself to those who are perceived as less fortunate or capable) and more negative affect from upward comparisons (Bogart, Benotsch, & Pavlovic, 2004). As such, the frequency and effects of social comparison varies between individuals.

Social comparison is expected to be positively correlated with entitlement, given that social comparison is theorized to be a means to measure whether one is receiving better treatment and rewards than others. Both upward and downward comparison may contribute to feelings of entitlement. While engaging in downward comparison may help entitled individuals to maintain their sense of entitlement and superiority, upward comparisons may challenge their expectations and result in feelings of unfairness and deprivation that may further lead to feelings of entitlement (Achacoso, 2002).

### **Cultural Variations in Entitlement**

In the following section, potential cultural variations in entitlement are considered using the constructs of individualism-collectivism and independent-interdependent self-construals. Potential variations in the prevalence of exploitative and non-exploitative entitlement across cultures are also discussed.

**Individualism-collectivism.** Individualism-collectivism describes the degree to which the individual's self is viewed as separate from others (Matsumoto & Juang, 2008).

Individualism and collectivism are the most widely studied constructs in cross-cultural psychology research (Hamamura, 2012). In collectivist cultures, individuals value the goals of their social group more than the individuals' goals (Hamamura, 2012). Collectivists see themselves as an inseparable part of their social groups (e.g., their family, community, and country), and they are driven to connect with members of these groups. Conversely, in individualist cultures, individuals value their own goals above the goals of the group (Hamamura, 2012). Individualists view themselves as separate and distinct from their social groups, and they emphasize being rational and analytical rather than fitting in with others. Given that entitlement involves seeing the self as more special than others (Achacoso, 2002; Campbell et al., 2004), it is hypothesized that entitlement will be positively related to valuing the self as unique and distinct (individualism), and negatively related to valuing the self as part of a social group (collectivism).

In general, economically more developed countries occupied by Western Europeans or their descendants (so-called "Western" countries, e.g., Europe, North America, and Australia) tend to be more individualistic while economically less-developed non-Western European countries, e.g., Asia, Africa, and South America tend to be more collectivistic (Matsumoto et al., 2008; Suh et al., 1998; Triandis, 1989). For instance, cultural products (e.g., advertisements, text, media) in South Korea, Japan, and China tend to place a greater emphasis on relatedness and social groups, as compared to cultural products in the U.S., which place a greater focus on portraying individuals as unique and distinct from others (Morling & Lamoreaux, 2008). However, it is important to note that individualism and collectivism exist on two orthogonal dimensions, such that individuals can be high or low on both dimensions. Furthermore, while individuals may be higher on one measure than the other, they tend not to be clearly and neatly "categorized" as either collectivist or individualist, and there are large within-group differences.

Individualism appears to be increasing in both individualist societies such as the U.S. (Twenge et al., 2008) and Norway (Nafstad, Blakar, Carlquist, Phelps, & Rand-Hendriksen, 2007), and in collectivist societies such as Japan (Hamamura, 2012). Since 1984, the use of individualistic words (e.g., right, entitlement, freedom) has increased by 69% in Norwegian newspapers, along with a 32% decrease in the use of collectivistic words (e.g., common, shared, duty; Nafstad et al., 2007). Similarly, individualism has increased in Japan over the past few decades as the importance of following traditions has decreased and the emphasis on individual independence has increased (Hamamura, 2012). Interestingly, certain collectivist values, such as love for parents, friendship, and social harmony, have not seen a decline in Japan during the same period. Overall, it appears that individualistic values have been increasing in several countries in the last few decades.

**Cultural variations in entitlement and narcissism.** Since the fields of research on PE and AE are relatively new, cross-cultural studies focusing directly on these constructs are limited. Zemojtel-Piotrowska et al. (2015) measured PE with the Entitlement Attitudes Questionnaire (EAQ) with participants from 28 countries (mostly European). However, since the focus of the study was on validating the EAQ, the study did not report any statistical analyses of national differences in the EAQ. A glance at the mean EAQ scores reported for each country did not reveal any obvious national differences, but the sample did not include any East Asian countries. It is possible that a sample with greater cultural diversity, and in particular, one that includes participants from ethnocultural groups typically lower in individualism and higher in collectivism, might have revealed greater cultural variations in entitlement.

While there is more cross-cultural research on narcissism, the number of such studies is still small (Campbell & Miller, 2011). Narcissism has been found to be higher in individualistic

cultures than collectivistic cultures (Foster et al., 2003). Specifically, narcissism has been found to be highest in the US, moderate in Canada and European countries, and lowest in Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Narcissism has also been found to be positively related to individualistic values and negatively related to collectivist values (Foster et al., 2003). Moreover, narcissism has been shown to be positively related to agency, as defined by being individuated, dominant, and having power and control (Foster et al., 2003). Further, narcissism was found to be negatively related to communion, as defined by being connected, feeling loved, affiliation, and union (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002; Ruiz, Smith, & Rhodewalt, 2001; Wiggins, 2003). In addition, narcissism has been found to be positively correlated with individualism in a Chinese sample (Cai, Kwan, & Sedikides, 2011). Narcissism has also been found to be higher in Black individuals compared to White individuals in the United States (Zeigler-Hill & Wallace, 2011), which corresponds to the trend that Black Americans report a higher level of individualism than White Americans (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). However, in a study that examined 224 university students in Iran and 240 university students in the United States, narcissism was found to be uncorrelated with individualist values, though it was negatively correlated with collectivist values in both countries (Ghorbani, Watson, Krauss, Bing, & Dvison, 2004). Overall, research generally finds narcissism to be positively correlated with individualism, and there is some evidence of a negative relationship between narcissism and collectivism. Given the positive correlation between narcissism and entitlement, PE and AE may also show positive correlations with individualism and negative correlations with collectivism.

**Independent and interdependent self-construals.** Researchers have been cautioned against measuring individualism and collectivism when studying cultural differences. The broadness of the constructs can lead to research limitations, and there are also concerns about



their construct validity (Fiske, 2002). Furthermore, cross-cultural differences in individualism and collectivism are not always consistent. For instance, although European Americans have been found to be more individualistic and less collectivistic when compared to a combination of the other ethnocultural groups, Oyserman et al. (2002) found that European, African, and Latin Americans have similar levels of individualism, while European, Japanese, and Korean Americans are similar in collectivism. Moreover, although Whites have been found to be higher in individualism and lower in collectivism compared to Asians, Whites have also been found to be lower in collectivism but equivalent on individualism compared to Hispanics, and lower in individualism but equivalent on collectivism compared to Blacks (Oyserman et al., 2002).

Self-construal is a more specific measure of cultural traits that places an emphasis on an individual's self-identity, as opposed to individualism-collectivism, which encompasses a broad range of cultural values and beliefs. More specifically, individualism-collectivism is a societal-level construct, while self-construal is an individual-level construct. Self-construal represents one's construction about oneself in relation to others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). There are two orthogonal continuums of selves: independent and interdependent (Singelis, 1994). The independent self exhibits stable traits and behaviours over different social contexts. It stresses the importance of an individual's internal attributes, such as personality traits and intelligence, and regards oneself as unique and separate from others. Consequently, the independent self emphasizes promoting one's own goals and interests rather than those of the social groups. In contrast, the interdependent self is flexible and is embedded within the social context. The focus of the interdependent self is on being connected to and maintaining harmonious relationships with others, being attentive to others' needs, and behaving in a manner appropriate to one's social roles. These differences in self-construals lead to different meanings for social

relationships. For a person with an independent self-construal, social interactions may be viewed as a means to enhance one's own quality of life. In contrast, for a person with an interdependent self-construal, social interactions function to connect the individual to his or her community.

The interdependent self has been found to be more common in Asian collectivist cultures, whereas the independent self has been found to be more common in Western individualist cultures (Hamedani, Markus, & Fu, 2013; Singelis, 1994). The cultural pattern of self-construal approximates that of individualism and collectivism, with Western countries having higher independent self-construal, and Asian, African, and South American countries having higher interdependent self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Importantly, the two types of self-construals are orthogonal dimensions, and do coexist in individuals to varying degrees. While some have argued that identifying strongly with both types of selves can lead to intrapersonal conflict (Singelis, 1994), Cross & Markus (1991, as cited in Singelis, 1994) argued that having both types of selves can allow one to maneuver flexibly between cultures.

A study has found that narcissism is positively correlated to an independent self-construal and not correlated with an interdependent self-construal in a sample of 236 college students and community members (48% Caucasian, 36% Asian American) in the United States (Konrath, Bushman, & Grove, 2009). As such, given the positive relationship between entitlement and narcissism (Campbell et al., 2004), entitlement may also show a positive association with independent self-construal.

**PE and culture.** Given that PE is associated with narcissism (Campbell et al., 2004), which is positively correlated with individualism (Foster et al., 2003), PE is also expected to be positively correlated with independence. Furthermore, it has been suggested that PE may be lower in cultures with greater interdependence (Campbell et al., 2004), though this hypothesis

has not been formally tested. In partial support of this hypothesis, one study showed that manipulations that increased communal focus resulted in a decrease in state narcissism (Giacomin & Jordan, 2014). The first part of the study employed a sample of 209 non-Asian undergraduates (to ensure a higher baseline level of narcissism, given that Asian individuals tend to be lower on narcissism). Participants who were randomly assigned to the high empathy condition were asked to read an article describing a woman who had gotten into a car accident and the extensive injuries and traumas she suffered. They were asked to imagine how the incident affected the woman and how she felt. Participants who were assigned to the low empathy condition read the same article, but were asked to remain as detached and objective as possible. The second part of the study involved a sample of 181 non-Asian undergraduates. Participants were randomly assigned to two groups. Participants were asked to answer either an open-ended question that focused on interdependence (“What makes you similar to your friends and family?” and “What do they expect you to do in the future?”) or an open-ended question that focused on being independent (“What makes you different from your friends and family?” and “What do you expect yourself to do in the future?”). Across the two parts of the study, regardless of ethnicity, participants who were in the high empathy group and the interdependence-focused group scored significantly lower on the NPI compared to the participants in the low empathy group and the independence-focused group. This study suggests that an emphasis on interdependence may reduce levels of narcissism, and perhaps by association, entitlement.

In addition, there is some preliminary evidence suggesting that entitlement may be negatively associated with interdependence, as demonstrated through weak ingroup identification. Anastasio and Rose (2014) found that PE was related to more negative attitudes towards rival outgroups, but unrelated to levels of ingroup favouritism. In the study, students

were asked to rate how much they liked students from a rival university (the “outgroup”), as well as how much they liked students from their own university (the “ingroup”). Compared to participants with lower PE, participants with higher PE reported liking their outgroup less but without liking their ingroup more. If entitlement does involve a “me vs. them” rather than an “us vs. them” perspective as Anastasio and Rose (2014) suggested, then entitlement should be positively correlated with an independent self-construal and negatively correlated with an interdependent self-construal.

***Exploitative vs. non-exploitative entitlement.*** The conceptualization of PE as having exploitative and non-exploitative components (Lessard et al., 2011) is relevant to the exploration of potential cultural variations in PE. Although Campbell et al. (2004) concluded from their confirmatory factor analysis that the PES includes only one factor, Lessard et al. (2011) argued that the PES actually measures two distinct facets of PE: exploitative and non-exploitative entitlement. Exploitative entitlement (EE) refers to getting what one thinks one deserves by taking advantage of others (e.g., “If I am in a hurry, people should let me move ahead in line”). Non-exploitative entitlement (NEE) refers to a feeling of deservingness without being willing to exploit others (e.g., “I deserve the best things in life”). In other words, EE taps into a desire for special treatment at the expense of others, while NEE is based on a sense of getting equal treatment. Thus, it appears that other individuals play a greater role in EE, which specifically involves comparing oneself to others, as opposed to NEE, which does not involve a role of others in its definition.

To test this two-component model, Lessard et al. (2011) developed a measure of entitlement with two subscales: EE and NEE. A sample of 466 undergraduates from a large university in the U.S. was used to test its validity. The study revealed that both EE and NEE

were significantly correlated with the total PES scale ( $r = .51$  and  $r = .43$ , respectively); there was also a small but significant correlation between the two subscales ( $r = .26$ ).

Notable differences between EE and NEE were found (Lessard et al., 2011). NEE was much more prevalent than EE in this sample. Specifically, more than 70% of the participants responded with “slightly agree,” “agree,” or “strongly agree” to the NEE items, while only 17–43% of the participants endorsed the EE items. Furthermore, the two subscales were related to different sets of correlates. EE was linked to lower self-esteem, while NEE was linked to higher self-esteem. In addition, EE was positively correlated with neuroticism, anxiety, irresponsibility, and callousness, while NEE had no significant associations with these personality traits. EE was negatively associated with work orientation (i.e., being able to enjoy work and persist at challenging tasks) while NEE was positively associated with work orientation. However, the authors of the study warned against having an overly positive view of NEE, since the study only focused on the effects of this type of entitlement on the individual without assessing its impact at the social and interpersonal level. The distinction between EE and NEE helps to clarify the self-focused and other-focused dimensions of PE, since the two forms of entitlement differ in the degree to which others play a role in one’s sense of entitlement.

As previously discussed, PE is hypothesized to be positively correlated with independence and negatively correlated with interdependence. The pattern is expected to be stronger for EE, given that it is the specific component of PE that involves exploiting others for one’s own gains. In contrast, while NEE is also expected to be correlated with independence, it is not expected to be correlated with interdependence, given that others are not conceptualized to play a role in this component of PE.

**AE and culture.** The relationship between AE and independence-interdependence is less

clear. First, the literature on AE is sparse, and there is no consensus on the definition and measurement of AE. Given AE's relationship to personal achievement and the moderate correlation between AE and narcissism (Greenberger et al., 2008), AE may also be correlated with an independent self-construal. However, there is some evidence to the contrary. One study found a small but significant effect of ethnicity in AE (Greenberger et al., 2008). Specifically, Asian American students reported having higher AE than the Caucasian students (most of whom resided in the U.S.). The authors did not provide an explanation for this finding, but did note that higher AE was linked to greater academic expectations from the family. Indeed, other research has found that Asian and Asian American parents tend to exert greater academic pressure and have higher academic expectations for their children (Chao & Tseng, 2002). As such, it is possible that the link between AE and the Asian American interdependent culture is affected by academic expectations from the family.

Regardless, as previously discussed, entitlement is hypothesized to be correlated with a focus on seeing the self as more special than others, as opposed to seeing oneself as part of a larger social group. Therefore, it is hypothesized that AE, a specific form of entitlement, would also be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.

### **PE and AE Across Ethnocultural Groups**

As mentioned previously, cross-cultural research in PE and AE is lacking. However, given that ethnocultural groups vary on the aforementioned correlates of entitlement, entitlement is expected to vary across ethnocultural groups. This section will discuss some preliminary and exploratory predictions regarding entitlement levels across ethnocultural groups.

Entitlement is expected to vary with individualism-collectivism, which differs on a

general level across ethnocultural groups. Another reason for this hypothesis is that there are cultural differences in some of the variables that are posited to be correlates of entitlement. For instance, participants in the U.S., Europe, and Canada—typically considered individualist societies—tend to have higher narcissism (Foster et al., 2003) and place a greater emphasis on having and maintaining high self-esteem (Heine et al., 1999). Furthermore, White individuals in the U.S. also tend to have higher SES (LaVeist, 2005). Compared to the other ethnocultural groups, Asians in both Asian and non-Asian countries tend to be lower in narcissism (Foster et al., 2003), self-esteem (Twenge & Crocker, 2002), and place less value on maintaining self-esteem (Heine et al., 1999; Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2004).

There are also broad cultural differences among the other correlates of entitlement, such as self-esteem. Members of individualistic cultures (e.g., U.S., Canada, and most European countries) tend to report higher self-esteem than members of collectivist cultures (e.g., Asia; Heine et al., 1999). Children in Hong Kong, a collectivist society, reported significantly lower self-esteem compared to children in Britain, an individualist society (Chan, 2000). Even among ethnocultural groups in the United States, Blacks and Whites score similarly on self-esteem, but Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans scored significantly lower (Twenge & Crocker, 2002). The pattern of ethnocultural differences in self-esteem parallels differences in individualism. Individualistic cultures tend to place a higher emphasis on self-esteem and using self-enhancing strategies, while collectivist cultures tend to value modesty and self-criticism.

White and Lehman (2005) found that compared to European Canadians, Asian Canadians engage in more social comparison, but particularly upward social comparison. However, although Asian Canadians engaged in more social comparison overall, their primary goal of engaging in social comparison was for self-improvement, rather than seeking to enhance their

self-image—which is positively correlated with entitlement (Harvey & Martinko, 2009). The results of this study suggest that for Asian Canadians, instead of using social comparison as a means to ensure that they are being treated better than others, they may be trying to uncover where they are lacking and what to improve on. Therefore, the strength of the relationship between social comparison and entitlement may be weaker for Asian Canadians compared to that in European Canadians.

Regarding general self-efficacy (GSE), a study by Chen, Chan, Bond, and Stewart (2006) found that secondary school students in Hong Kong scored lower on GSE as compared to secondary school students in the United States. Similarly, Kiuchi (2006) found GSE to be highest among American college students, followed by Japanese students in the United States, and then Japanese students in Japan. These results mirror the trends in cultural differences in independent-interdependent self-construal, such that American college students identified most strongly with independent self-construal, followed by Japanese American students, and Japanese students. Indeed, there was a positive correlation between GSE and the independent self-construal.

Overall, there are variations across cultures on the hypothesized predictors of entitlement, which in turn may lead to broad differences in the prevalence of entitlement across individualist and collectivist cultural groups. However, the lack of research on cross-cultural differences with entitlement makes it difficult to formulate specific predictions about entitlement levels across ethnocultural groups. In particular, there are mixed findings regarding the relationships between entitlement with self-esteem and self-efficacy, and there is no research yet available on the relationship between entitlement and social comparison. However, taking into account the consistent positive relationship between narcissism and entitlement, and studies finding positive



relationships between narcissism and entitlement with individualism, it is hypothesized that individuals of individualist ethnocultural descent might have a higher sense of entitlement than those of collectivist ethnocultural descent. More specifically, these studies have primarily focused on Asians as representatives of collectivist cultures and individuals of European descent as representatives of individualist cultures. As such, it is also expected that entitlement would be lower among Asian individuals compared to White European participants in the current study.

**A cautionary note on ethnocultural groupings.** Although the current study employs broad ethnocultural groupings such as “Asian Canadian” or “White European Canadian”, it is important to note that there are issues and limitations in the usage of such groupings. Within social sciences research, ethnic groupings and their validity have long been a topic of debate (Nobles, 2000). It has been argued that ethnicity is unstable because it is associated with several aspects of self-identity, such as one’s relationships with others, and one’s religious views, all of which can change in different situations (Mateos, Singleton, & Longley, 2009). Aside from this instability, there is also a high degree of heterogeneity within cultures and societies that makes it difficult to draw accurate conclusions about large groups. For instance, although “Asian” is typically a group used to represent collectivist cultures, Asian countries differ widely from each other, and there are large variations even at the country level (Sandhu, 1997; Sue & Sue, 2003). Similarly, countries that are typically considered “individualist” and “Western”, such as the United States, Canada, and the European countries, are also highly heterogeneous and cannot be described neatly (Bhopal & Donaldson, 1998). On an even smaller level of analysis, residents of the same society differ from each other, which further adds to the heterogeneity within cultures and societies, and questions the validity of ethnocultural groupings (McSweeney, 2002). However, ethnocultural groupings are common in both research and governmental work for

several reasons—it is an easily usable way to standardize group comparisons, ethnocultural classifications are widely used and commonly accepted (Mateos et al., 2009), and it is practically difficult to recruit samples large enough to capture the nuances of individual differences. While the current study also employed these ethnocultural groupings, the measures of independent-interdependent self-construal was also included to examine whether the ethnocultural groups do differ on these cultural measures, rather than assuming that such differences exist. The foundation created by existing cross-cultural research based upon broad ethnocultural groupings may allow researchers to move towards more refined cultural comparisons, such as those that account for the instability and uncertainty in an individual's self-identity as well as environmental and contextual impacts.

### **Entitlement and Psychological Well-Being**

The link between PE and PWB is currently understudied. The various negative consequences associated with PE, however, suggest that PE would negatively impact PWB. Since PE is correlated with sociotropy (a need for positive interactions with others), the negative interpersonal correlates of PE (e.g., aggression, selfishness) may impair the quality of interpersonal relationships for individuals with high PE, and consequently, PWB, since these individuals value social interactions.

Recently, trait PE has been conceptualized as a cognitive-personality vulnerability to experiencing psychological distress (Grubbs & Exline, 2016). Entitlement is linked to a sense of deservingness and elevated expectations for rewards. Indeed, entitled individuals have been found to want more rewards, whether physical (e.g., food, sex) or emotional (e.g., praise) compared to less entitled individuals (Bushman, Moeller, & Crocker, 2011). Importantly, entitled individuals also exhibit a greater desire for rewards compared to how much they actually

like those rewards. That is, these individuals do not like their rewards as much as they thought they would. These chronically elevated expectations set entitled individuals up for continual disappointment as those expectations are perpetually unmet. These individuals then respond with anger, disappointment, and psychological distress. In response to these feelings, defense mechanisms are mounted to reinforce their entitled beliefs, resulting in a vicious negative feedback cycle. Indeed, it has been found in schema therapy work that an entitled cognitive schema is linked to depression (Halvorsen, Wang, Eisemann, & Waterloo, 2014), anxiety (Muris, 2006), and psychosomatic symptoms (Welburn, Coristine, Dagg, Pontefract, & Jordan, 2002). Published case studies of individuals with narcissistic traits also suggest a link between entitlement and dissatisfaction and disappointment in outcomes (Pincus, Cain, & Wright, 2014). Overall, evidence points to a potential link between PE and poorer PWB.

The review discussed above also included AE as one of the facets of entitlement, suggesting that the model may also apply to AE and academic environments, leading to a negative relationship between AE and PWB. In addition, however, AE is correlated with an external locus of control (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Research has shown that an external locus of control is linked among undergraduate students to negative consequences such as experiencing more stress from academic stressors (Abouserie, 1994) and poorer academic and interpersonal outcomes (Feldman, Saletsky, Sullivan, & Theiss, 1983). Furthermore, AE was negatively correlated with the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS; Ryff, 1988) in both male and female undergraduate students (Barton & Hirsch, 2016). However, the authors did not explain this link, and the relationship has yet to be examined in an ethnically diverse sample. For the current study, a negative relationship between AE and PWB is expected.

To examine how PE and AE affect PWB, the current study included the PWB scale (Ryff

& Keyes, 1995), a comprehensive multi-dimensional measure, in a sample of ethnically diverse undergraduate students. In addition, the brief 9-item Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) to measure depression (Kroenke, Spitzer, & Williams, 2001) and the Generalized Anxiety Scale (GAD-7) (Spitzer, Kroenke, Williams, & Lo, 2016) were also included since they capture more clinical and symptom-focused psychological outcomes. The two scales were chosen because of their brevity, excellent reliability and validity, and their popularity within the literature as well as with medical samples. The inclusion of the PWB, PHQ-9, and GAD-7 provide a more thorough evaluation of the participants' emotional and psychological condition in relation to entitlement.

### **The Present Study**

This study had four major objectives. First, the demographic, psychosocial, and cultural predictors of PE and AE were examined using multiple regression analyses (MRA). Second, the study conceptualized entitlement as having self-focused and other-focused dimensions and integrated the relevant predictors of PE and AE accordingly. Third, the study aimed to contribute to the understanding of entitlement across cultures by examining the correlation of entitlement with independent-interdependent self-construals in the current sample of ethnoculturally diverse undergraduates, and addressing potential differences in the prevalence of entitlement across broad ethnocultural groups. Fourth, the study examined how PE and AE affect PWB.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the demographic, psychosocial, and cultural predictors of PE and AE, respectively, among ethnoculturally diverse undergraduate students?
2. What are PE's relationships with interdependent self construal and independent self-construal, respectively? What are AE's relationships with interdependent self construal and independent self-construal, respectively?

3. What are PE's and AE's relationships to psychological well-being in the current sample of undergraduate students?

### **Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis #1a:** Sex, age, employment status, immigration status, generation status, SES, self-esteem, GSE, social comparison, and independent-interdependent self-construal will significantly predict PE.

**Hypothesis #1b:** Sex, age, employment status, immigration status, generation status, SES, self-esteem, GSE, social comparison, and independent-interdependent self-construal will significantly predict AE.

**Hypothesis #2a:** PE will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.

**Hypothesis #2b:** AE will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.

**Hypothesis #3a:** Exploitative entitlement will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.

**Hypothesis #3b:** Non-exploitative entitlement will be positively correlated with independent self-construal but not correlated with interdependent self-construal.

**Hypothesis #4a:** PE will be significantly higher in participants from individualist cultures compared to participants from collectivist cultures.

**Hypothesis #4b:** AE will be significantly higher in participants from individualist cultures compared to participants from collectivist cultures.

**Hypothesis #5a:** PE will be negatively correlated with psychological well-being.

**Hypothesis #5b:** AE will be negatively correlated with psychological well-being.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

### Recruitment of Participants

Participants were primarily recruited through the University of Windsor Psychology Participant Pool from November 2016 to March 2017. After obtaining approval from the Research Ethics Board, the study was advertised on the participant pool website. Although the study did not restrict participation based on ethnocultural group, participants of minority ethnocultural descent were encouraged to participate. Individuals who decided to participate were directed to the study on FluidSurvey, where they were shown the informed consent form. After obtaining informed consent, participants were asked to complete a series of demographic questions and questionnaires. Then, participants were provided an online debriefing form explaining the purpose and the hypotheses of the study. Participants were awarded one bonus point towards their psychology course for completing the study.

In addition to recruiting from the Psychology Participant Pool, participants were also recruited from ethnocultural groups on campus. The researcher advertised the study by contacting and sending emails to ethnocultural clubs and the international student email system that 1) provided a brief description of the objectives of the study, 2) requested participation in a 60-minute online survey, 3) informed participants that they would be entered into a draw for one of six \$30 gift cards for selected retail stores for their participation.

In February 2017, ethics approval was additionally sought and obtained to extend recruitment to Facebook to recruit ethnocultural participants. The Facebook flyer provided the same information as the email, and interested individuals were prompted to email the researcher to participate. The snowballing approach was also employed whereby participants were requested to invite their friends, particularly those of ethnocultural minorities, to join the study.

## Power Analysis

Studies that have analyzed differences in entitlement and narcissism across ethnocultural groups generally find small to medium effect sizes (Cohen's  $d$  ranging from .27 to .42) (e.g., Foster et al., 2003; Greenberger et al., 2008; Zemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2015). Correlations between entitlement and some of the predictor variables included in the study are generally small to medium (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .13 to .28) according to Cohen's guidelines (e.g., Boswell, 2012; Campbell et al., 2004). As far as the author is aware, only one study (Greenberger et al., 2008) has used MRA to predict AE levels, and no study has conducted multiple regression analysis to predict PE levels. Although Greenberger et al. (2008) had an MRA model with a large effect size ( $R^2 = .31$ ) according to Cohen's guidelines, the study was a scale development and validation study, and as such, four of the eight predictor variables (i.e., PE, EE, NEE, narcissism) were previously established correlates of AE. Given the lack of effect size estimates specific to the kind of MRAs used in the current study, a small-to-medium effect size was assumed.

*A priori* power analyses were conducted using G\*Power to estimate the number of participants required given an alpha level of .05 and a power of .80. For the MRAs used in the current study, each two-level MRA involved one criterion variable (PE or AE) and eleven predictor variables (see hypotheses #1a and 1b). Of these predictors, six were treated as control variables (i.e., sex, age, SES, employment status, immigration status, generation status), and the remaining five were treated as the primary predictors. Assuming a small-to-medium effect size, a sample size of at least 151 was required.

The study also conducted an MRA to compare participants from collectivist groups and participants from individualist groups using dummy coding. Specifically, block 1 included the

same demographic predictors, but block 2 only included ethnocultural group (i.e., collectivist vs. individualist) as the predictor. Assuming a small-to-medium effect size, a sample of at least 127 was required. Taking into consideration practicality of data collection and potential unusable data, the target sample size was 170 for this study.

## Measures

**Demographic Questionnaire.** The demographic questionnaire (Appendix A) includes questions about the participant's age, sex, years lived in Canada, immigration status, generational status, ethnocultural background, annual family income, and parents' levels of education. Items were presented in a short-answer or multiple-choice format.

**Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES).** The PES (Campbell et al., 2004) is the most commonly used self-report questionnaire to measure PE (Appendix B). The scale includes nine items rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strong disagreement*) to 7 (*strong agreement*). The PES captures elements of deservingness and entitlement as well as seeing oneself as more special or more important than others. Examples of items include "I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others," and "If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the *first* lifeboat!". The scale has good internal and external validity, with a test-retest reliability of  $r = .72$  over 1 month and  $r = .70$  over 2 months, and Cronbach's alpha greater than .80 in two samples (Campbell et al., 2004). The PES was validated in a series of 9 studies on several independent samples of undergraduate students from two large American universities. In the current study, the Cronbach's alphas for PES was .87.

**Exploitative and Non-Exploitative Entitlement Scale (ENES).** The ENES (Lessard et al., 2011) was used to assess PE as compartmentalized into exploitative and non-exploitative entitlement (Appendix C). The scale includes a 5-item Non-Exploitative Entitlement (NEE)



subscale ( $\alpha = .76$ ) and a 7-item Exploitative Entitlement (EE) subscale ( $\alpha = .75$ ). The two subscales are moderately correlated with each other ( $r = .26$ ). The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). Example items include “I am willing to admit that I feel I am due more in life than other people,” and “I am entitled to get into the career that I want.” The scale was validated on an ethnically diverse sample (46.4% East or Southeast Asians, 18.9% White European descent, 10.7% Latino, 6.2% Middle Eastern individuals, and 17.7% others) of 466 undergraduates at a large American university. The ethnocultural diversity of the sample makes the scale particularly appropriate for the current study. Cronbach’s alphas for the ENES in the current study were .82 for the EE subscale and .72–.74 (there is a range of values since multiple imputation was used) for the NEE subscale.

**Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES).** The RSES (Rosenberg, 1965) is a 10-item scale (Appendix D) where each item is rated from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). Example items include “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself,” and “I feel I do not have much to be proud of.” The RSES is one of the most commonly used scales to measure self-esteem. It has established face validity (Rosenberg, 1965), test-retest reliability ranging from .72 to .84 over two weeks (Hojat & Lyons, 1998; Salyers et al., 2001), and concurrent validity with other global self-esteem scales (Swenson, 2003). The RSES also has strong internal consistency. The Cronbach’s alpha was .86 in a sample of 1,443 Canadian university students (Swenson, 2003), .91 in a sample of 702 adults in the United States (Sinclair et al., 2010), and ranged from .85–.90 in a sample of 2,108 high school students in Alberta (Bagley, Bolitho, & Bertrand, 1997). Cronbach’s alpha for the RSES in the current study was .89.

**General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES).** The GSES (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2013) is a 10-item scale (Appendix E) where items are rated from 1 (*Not at all true*) to 4 (*Exactly true*).

Example items include “I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough” and “I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.” The GSES has been used by many studies, and shows good internal validity with Cronbach’s alpha values typically ranging from .75 to .91 (Scholz, Dona, Sud, & Schwarzer, 2002). Construct validity has also been demonstrated through correlations (e.g., with anxiety, depression, optimism) in the hypothesized directions (Scholz et al., 2002). The GSE has also been validated outside of North America, for instance, in Germany, Poland, and South Korea (Luszczynska, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2005). In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha for the GSE were .89.

**Singelis Self-Construal Scale (SSCS).** The SSCS (Singelis, 1994) is a 24-item questionnaire (Appendix F) where items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). There are two subscales, each with 12 items: The Independent subscale (e.g., “I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects”) and the Interdependent subscale (e.g., “I feel my fate is intertwined with the fate of those around me”). The scale was validated in a sample of 364 students from a large American university. The scale has been shown to have face validity and construct validity (e.g., Singelis, 1994; Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gefland, 1995). Cronbach’s alphas are .69 and .73 for the Independent and Interdependent subscales, respectively. In the current study, Cronbach’s alpha was .80 for the Independent subscale, and .72 for the Interdependent subscale.

**Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ).** The AEQ (Kopp, Zinn, Finney, & Jurich, 2011) is an 8-item scale (Appendix G) that was developed to address the flaws in the existing scales for AE, based on integrating prior research and theory in the AE literature. Each item is rated on a 7-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Example items include, “If I don’t do well on a test, the professor should make tests easier or curve grades” and “It is the

professor's responsibility to make it easy for me to succeed." The AEQ was validated with a sample of 1,045 undergraduate students at a mid-sized university in the United States. The AEQ has demonstrated construct validity; for instance, AEQ scores were positively correlated with PE and an external locus of control as hypothesized (Kopp et al., 2011). The scale also has good internal validity, with a Cronbach's alpha of .81 in the sample. The Cronbach's alphas were similar at .82–.83 in the current study.

**Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS).** The medium form of the PWBS (Ryff, 1989) is an 84-item scale derived from the full 120-item scale. The PWBS measures six areas of psychological well-being: Autonomy (confidence in one's opinions), Environmental Mastery (degree of control over one's life), Personal Growth (perceiving importance in having new experiences), Positive Relations with Others (establishing ties with others), Purpose in Life (finding purpose) and Self-Acceptance (acceptance of one's personality). Each statement is rated on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Example items include "In general, I feel I am in charge of the situations in which I live" and "I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities." The Cronbach's alphas for each subscale range from .83 to .91 (Ryff, 2016). The 84-item PWBS is strongly correlated with the full 120-item PWBS, with subscale correlations ranging from .97 to .99. The Cronbach's alphas for the PWBS in the current study ranged from .79 to .85 (

Table 2).

**Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9).** The PHQ-9 (Kroenke, Spitzer, & Williams, 2001) is a 9-item scale that screens for symptoms of depression over the previous two weeks

(Appendix H). Participants were asked “Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?”, and participants subsequently rated each symptom on a 4-point scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 3 (*nearly every day*). Example symptoms include “little interest or pleasure in doing things,” and “poor appetite or overeating.” The PHQ-9 has shown excellent internal consistency in both clinical and general populations. Kroenke et al. (2001) found Cronbach’s alphas of .89 in a sample of 3,000 primary care patients, and .86 in a sample of 3,000 obstetrics-gynecology patients. Young, Fang and Zisook (2010) found a Cronbach’s alpha of .87 in an ethnoculturally diverse sample of 1,837 undergraduate students at a large university in the United States. In the current study, the Cronbach’s alpha was .90 for the PHQ-9.

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7).** The GAD-7 (Spitzer et al., 2016) is a 7-item screener for symptoms of anxiety and worrying over the past two weeks (Appendix I).

Participants are asked “Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?”. Each problem is rated on a 4-point scale from 0 (*Not at all*) to 3 (*Nearly every day*). Example items include “feeling nervous, anxious or on edge” and “trouble relaxing.” If the participant endorses at least one problem, he or she is asked to rate how difficult the problems have made it to work and get along with other people, from 0 (*Not difficult at all*) to 3 (*Extremely difficult*). The scale was developed and validated on a sample of 2,739 primary care patients. Convergent validity was established through a positive correlation with other commonly used scales to assess anxiety. The scale also has excellent internal validity with a Cronbach’s alpha of .92 in the sample of primary care patients (Spitzer et al., 2016) and .89 in a sample of 5,030 individuals from the general population in Germany (Lowe et al., 2008). The Cronbach’s alpha was .90 in the current study.

**Iowa-Netherlands Social Comparison Scale (INCOM).** The INCOM (Gibbons &

Buunk, 1999) is an 11-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*I disagree strongly*) to 5 (*I agree strongly*) (Appendix J). Example items include “I often compare myself with others with respect to what I have accomplished in life” and “I often compare how I am doing socially (e.g., social skills, popularity) with other people”. The scale has good internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s alpha of .83, and established construct validity (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha was .78.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

All analyses were conducted using the IBM Statistics for the Social Sciences software.

### Data Preparation

The final sample included 304 participants, of whom 159 completed all the scales in the study. The researcher discovered midway through data collection that the social comparison scale had been left out of the online survey. Ethics approval was sought and obtained to continue data collection to achieve the sample size required for the statistical procedures based on the power analyses. As a result, for data analyses that do not require the social comparison questionnaire, all 304 participants' data was used. For data analyses that did include the social comparison scale, only the subset of 159 participants was used.

To account for the use of the two data sets for different data analyses, two separate missing values analyses (MVAs) were conducted in SPSS. The first MVA included all participants' data but excluded the social comparison scale. This subset of the data was used to test all hypotheses except 1a and 1b, which involved MRAs using social comparison as one of the predictor variables. Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test was not significant, showing that data is missing completely at random in these questionnaires. A second MVA was conducted for the social comparison scale scores for participants 144 to 304 (who had completed the scale). Little's MCAR test was significant,  $\chi^2(26) = 140.064, p < .001$ , showing that the data was not missing completely at random. However, only .6% to 2.5% of the data for each item on the INCOM scale was missing, which is not problematic because the proportion does not exceed 5% (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Furthermore, given that the missing values were dispersed throughout multiple variables, deleting cases with missing values would result in a substantial loss of data. In addition, the method used to estimate the missing data, multiple imputation, does

not require MCAR (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Subsequently, two multiple imputations were conducted to estimate missing data. The first multiple imputation included all participants, but not the social comparison scale. The second multiple imputation used participants 144 to 304 for the social comparison scale only. Each multiple imputation created five datasets with imputed missing values, and the average of the five imputations was used to estimate the missing data values. Demographic characteristics for the full sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Demographic characteristics of the full sample*

Variable	<i>N</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Sex				
Male	59	19.9		
Female	237	80.1		
Age	294		21.10	2.908
Ethnicity				
White European	179	60.5		
Asian	53	17.9		
Middle Eastern	15	5.1		
African	8	2.7		
Other	16	5.4		
Multiethnic	23	7.8		
Employment status				
Employed	205	69.3		
Not employed	90	30.4		

#### Immigration status

Canadian citizen	211	71.3
Permanent resident	3	1.0
International student	25	8.4

#### Generation status

1 <sup>st</sup> generation	28	9.5
1.5 <sup>th</sup> generation	33	11.1
2 <sup>nd</sup> generation	71	24.0
3 <sup>rd</sup> generation or beyond	148	50.0

#### Annual family income

\$0-10,000	18	6.1
\$10,000-25,000	20	6.8
\$25,000-50,000	51	17.2
\$50,000-75,000	71	24.0
\$75,000-100,000	57	19.3
\$100,000 and above	79	26.7

#### Parent 1 education level

No schooling or elementary school incomplete	1	.3
Elementary or middle school	9	3.0
Some high school	17	5.7
High school	59	19.9
Some college or university	34	11.5
College diploma	65	22.0



University degree	59	19.9
Graduate or professional degree	41	13.9
Parent 2 education level		
No schooling or elementary school incomplete	0	0.0
Elementary or middle school	6	2.0
Some high school	12	4.1
High school	41	13.9
Some college or university	46	15.5
College diploma	73	24.7
University degree	86	29.1
Graduate or professional degree	28	9.5

*Note. Participants were asked to specify whom parent 1 and parent 2 corresponded to. However, some participants did not provide this clarification. Responses are tabulated such that parent 1 generally corresponded to the father and parent 2 generally corresponded to the mother.*

Each scale was scored according to the authors' recommended instructions. The SES composite was an equally weighted combination of the ranked values for annual family income and parents' levels of education. Descriptive statistics for the full sample is presented in

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha values are also reported for each scale. Almost all of the Cronbach's alpha values were between .70 and .90, showing that the reliabilities of the measures used range from acceptable to excellent (DeVellis, 2012).

Table 2

*Questionnaire descriptives for the full sample*

Questionnaire	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	Range of possible scores	Cronbach's alpha
PES	3.17	1.10	1.00	5.78	1-7	.87
ENES (EE)	2.41	.82	1.00	4.57	1-6	.82
ENES (NEE)	3.95	.92	1.99	6.00	1-6	.72-.74
RSES	2.92	.54	1.10	4.00	1-4	.89
GSES	3.02	.46	1.00	4.00	1-4	.88-.89
AEQ	2.84	1.03	1.00	6.43	1-7	.81-.83
GAD-7	1.18	.79	.00	3.00	0-3	.90
PHQ-9	1.01	.71	.00	3.00	0-3	.90
SSCS (Independent)	4.80	.75	2.67	6.93	1-7	.80
SSCS (Interdependent)	4.84	.62	2.93	6.47	1-7	.72
PWB (Positive Relations with Others)	4.32	.80	1.93	6.00	1-6	.85
PWB (Autonomy)	3.89	.67	2.00	5.64	1-6	.78
PWB (Environmental Mastery)	3.92	.75	1.50	5.86	1-6	.86
PWB (Personal Growth)	4.71	.68	3.00	6.00	1-6	.85
PWB (Purpose in Life)	4.41	.79	1.86	6.00	1-6	.87
PWB (Self-Acceptance)	4.06	.96	1.14	5.93	1-6	.92

*Note. N = 278–292; PES = Psychological Entitlement Scale; ENES = Exploitative and Non-Exploitative Entitlement Scale; RSES = Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; GSES = General Self-Efficacy Scale; AEQ = Academic Entitlement Questionnaire; GAD-7 = General Anxiety Disorder-7; PHQ-9 = Patient Health Questionnaire-9, PWB = Psychological Well-Being Scale; INCOM = Iowa-Netherlands Social Comparison Scale. There is a range of Cronbach's alpha values due to multiple imputation having been used to estimate missing data values.*

### **Checking the Assumptions**

**MRA assumptions.** The sample size for the hierarchical MRAs was 153. With eleven predictor variables per MRA, this results in approximately 13 cases per predictor, which meets the recommended 10–15 cases per predictor variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In addition, the sample size meets the minimum size of 151 recommended by the power analyses.

Twelve potential outliers were identified. Each case was examined individually to avoid removing cases indiscriminately. Cases 193, 197, 231, 237, and 304 were highlighted as potential outliers through the studentized residuals (i.e., standardized deleted residuals), and an examination shows a pattern of inconsistent responses suggestive of careless responding. Similarly, cases 203 and 274 were removed since they had high Mahalanobis distances and a pattern of inconsistent responding. In total, seven cases were removed and excluded from subsequent data analyses. The other five cases were retained in the dataset since they did not seem to be the results of careless responding.

Normality of all the predictor and outcome variables was examined using histograms and the Shapiro-Wilks test. With the exception of self-esteem, independent and interdependent self-construals, PE, and the PWB subscales, all other distributions showed significant non-normality. However, with MRAs, it is more important for the residuals of the outcome variable to have a

normal distribution, rather than ensuring normality of the predictor and outcome variables themselves. In addition, the MRA is fairly robust to violations of normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The standardized residual versus predicted residual plots for PE and AE were examined, which showed that the residuals of the outcome variables (i.e., PE and AE) were approximately normally distributed.

Moreover, independence of observations is expected to be preserved in the data; participants were recruited online and submitted their responses anonymously, without access to other participants' responses. Thus, participants should not have influenced one another.

To examine whether there were linear relationships between each pair of DVs and IVs, Bivariate scatterplots between each outcome variable (PE and AE) and each predictor variable were visually examined. SPSS curve estimation tests showed that there were significant linear relationships between all the pairs of predictor and outcome variables. However, there were no best-fit lines for some of the pairs (e.g., AE with interdependent self-construal) that were not correlated. These variables were not removed from subsequent data analyses since they are theoretically meaningful and were included in the *a priori* analyses. Homoscedasticity was examined using plots of standardized residuals against predicted residuals. A visual examination did not reveal any violations of homoscedasticity. Multicollinearity was examined using variance inflation factors (VIF) calculated in SPSS. No cases exceeded the cutoff of 10.

**Assumptions for other analyses.** For the bivariate correlations and comparisons of group means, the entire dataset was used since the social comparison scale was not a part of these analyses. A total of 304 participant responses were available for these analyses.

Boxplots, histograms, and the Shapiro-Wilks test were used to examine for the presence of outliers. The value for age for case 197 was removed since the participant had mistakenly

entered “3”. Case 131 was removed since the participant entered “55” for age, which exceeded the age criteria for the current study. No problematic outliers were identified. As for normality, in general, the data showed significant non-normality. As such, the ANOVA was replaced with its nonparametric analog, the Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test. Similarly, follow-up  $t$ -tests were replaced with their nonparametric analog, the Mann-Whitney  $U$  test. Homogeneity of variance was examined using Levene’s test, and was not significant for either PE or AE.

**Correlations.** Bivariate correlations between important study variables are presented in Table 3. As expected, there were significant positive correlations among PE, EE, NEE, and AE ( $r$  ranging from .36 to .66).

Table 3  
*Intercorrelations among theoretically meaningful study variables*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. PES	1											
2. EE	.66**	1										
3. NEE	.56**	.36**	1									
4. AEQ	.50**	.46**	.33**	1								
5. RSES	.07	-.13*	.19**	-.08	1							
6. GSES	.02	-.11	.14*	-.14*	.57**	1						
7. GAD-7	.00	.07	-.05	.01	-.40**	-.21**	1					
8. PHQ-9	-.04	.03	-.11	-.04	-.54**	-.27**	-.71**	1				
9. PWB	-.07	-.24**	.09	-.21**	.76**	.61**	-.36**	-.52**	1			
10. INCOM	-.08	.00	.07	-.00	-.02	.07	.14	-.06	-.04	1		
11. IND	.15*	-.06	.22**	.01	.45**	.51**	-.19**	-.20**	.62**	-.15	1	
12. INT	-.01	-.07	.08	.04	.01	.15*	.02	.03	.11	.19*	.16**	1

*Note. N = 278–292; PES = Psychological Entitlement; EE = Exploitative Entitlement; NEE = Non-Exploitative Entitlement; AEQ = Academic Entitlement Questionnaire; RSES = Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; GSES = General Self-Efficacy; AEQ = Academic Entitlement Questionnaire; GAD-7 = Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7; PHQ-9 = Patient Health Questionnaire-9, PWB = Psychological Well-Being Scale (aggregate scores for all the subscales were used so that the values fit in the table); INCOM = Iowa-Netherlands Social Comparison Scale; IND = independent self-construal; INT = interdependent self-construal. \* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ .*

## Testing the Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1a.** A hierarchical MRA was conducted in SPSS to test hypothesis 1a, stating that sex, age, immigration status, generation status, employment status, SES, self-esteem, GSE, social comparison, and independent-interdependent self-construal will significantly predict PE. The results are shown in Table 4. Overall, the model explained 20.7% of the variance in PE. The addition of the theoretically meaningful variables in block 2 increased the amount of variance in PE explained from 13.7% to 20.7%.

Although, the change in  $R^2$  was not significant, Block 1 was significant,  $F(6, 106) = 2.65$ ,  $p = .020$ , as well as block 2,  $F(11, 106) = 2.25$ ,  $p = .017$ . An analysis of the beta values showed that the only significant predictor was employment status ( $\beta = -.308$ ), showing that participants who were unemployed were more likely to report higher PE. According to the suggestions by Courville and Thompson (2008), structure coefficients ( $r_s$ ) were calculated and interpreted along with the beta weights. A comparison of the structure coefficients and the beta weights showed that sex was acting as a suppressor variable, such that it had a non-zero beta weight but a structure coefficient that was near zero. That is, it was improving  $R^2$  through enhancing the predictive power of the other predictors, but sex itself was not correlated with PE. In contrast, age, generation status, and social comparison all had near-zero beta weights but sizeable non-zero structure coefficients. These variables were correlated with PE, but their predictive power overlapped with those of other variables, and SPSS had arbitrarily assigned predictive credit to the other variables. As such, despite the negligible beta weights, it is important to note that age had a positive correlation with PE, while generation status and social comparison had negative correlations with PE.



Table 4

*Results of hierarchical MRA for variables predicting PE*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	$r_s$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1					.137	.085	.137*
Sex	-.394	.257	-.156	-.019			
Age	.018	.037	.057	.308			
SES	.004	.008	.047	.054			
Employment status	-.630	.217	-.289**	-.773			
Immigration status	.265	.166	.205	.619			
Generation status	.006	.111	.007	-.441			
Step 2					.207	.115	.070
Sex	-.434	.259	-.171	-.015			
Age	.022	.037	.069	.251			
SES	.004	.008	.051	.044			
Employment status	-.671	.223	-.308**	-.629			
Immigration status	.234	.169	.181	.503			
Generation status	.021		.024	-.358			
Self-esteem	.259	.214	.133	.290			
General self-efficacy	-.212	.325	-.079	.145			
Independent self	.283	.151	.216	.514			
Interdependent self	-.013	.165	-.008	-.004			
Social comparison	-.100	.200	-.050	-.367			

*Note.*  $N = 107$ ; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

**Hypothesis 1b.** A hierarchical MRA was conducted to test hypothesis 1b, stating that sex, age, immigration status, generation status, employment status, SES, self-esteem, GSE, social comparison, and independent-interdependent self-construal will significantly predict AE. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5. The percentage of variance explained in AE increased from 13.6% for block 1 to 24.9% in block 2 with the inclusion of the variables of interest (i.e., self-esteem, self-efficacy, independent-interdependent self-construal, social comparison). The change in  $R^2$  was significant,  $F(5,95) = 2.857, p = .019$ , showing that the inclusion of these variables contributed significantly to predicting AE. Both steps of the model were significant,  $F(6,106) = 2.625, p = .021$  for step 1, and  $F(11, 106) = 2.863, p = .003$  for step 2. Younger age, more recent generation status, and lower self-efficacy were significant predictors of AE. A comparison of the beta weights and the structure coefficients showed that independent self-construal was acting as a suppressor variable, and that self-esteem had a near-zero beta weight but a sizeable negative correlation with AE.

Table 5

*Results of hierarchical MRA for variables predicting AE*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	$r_s$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1					.136	.084	.136*
Sex	-.119	.241	-.050	-.092			
Age	-.087	.035	-.286*	-.564			
SES	-.008	.007	-.099	-.157			
Employment status	-.446	.203	-.218*	-.591			
Immigration status	-.135	.155	-.112	-.154			
Generation status	-.195	.104	-.238	-.173			
Step 2					.249	.162	.113*
Sex	-.030	.236	-.013	-.068			
Age	-.098	.034	-.323**	-.417			
SES	-.001	.007	-.013	-.116			
Employment status	-.322	.204	-.158	-.437			
Immigration status	-.168	.154	-.139	-.114			
Generation status	-.227	.103	-.277*	-.128			
Self-esteem	-.115	.195	-.063	-.291			
Self-efficacy	-.937	.297	-.372**	-.511			
Independent self	.265	.138	.216	.056			
Interdependent self	.196	.151	.123	.154			
Social comparison	-.135	.183	-.072	-.028			

Note.  $N = 107$ ; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , † = .070

**Hypothesis 2a.** Pearson's  $r$  was calculated to examine the hypothesis that PE will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal. For the bivariate correlations, the sample size was 297 after the removal of seven outliers as described above. Reported  $p$ -values are one-tailed since the *a priori* hypotheses had specified the expected directions. As predicted, there was a positive correlation between PE and independent self-construal,  $r = .15$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) = .008. In contrast, there was no correlation between PE and interdependent self-construal,  $r = -.01$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) = .408.

**Hypothesis 2b.** Pearson's  $r$  was again used to test the hypothesis that AE will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal. Contrary to predictions, there was no relationship between AE with either independent self-construal,  $r = .01$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) = .458, or interdependent self-construal,  $r = .04$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) = .264.

**Hypothesis 3a.** Pearson's  $r$  was calculated to test the hypothesis that EE (Exploitative Entitlement) will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal. Surprisingly, EE was not correlated with either independent ( $r = -.06$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) = .156) or interdependent self-construal ( $r = -.07$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) = .141).

**Hypothesis 3b.** To test the hypothesis that NEE (Non-Exploitative Entitlement) will be positively correlated with independent self-construal but not correlated with interdependent self-construal, Pearson's  $r$  was calculated. As predicted, NEE was positively correlated with independent self-construal,  $r = .22$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) < .001 and there was indeed no correlation between NEE and interdependent self-construal,  $r = .08$ ,

$p$  (one-tailed) = .089.

**Hypothesis 4a.** It was hypothesized that PE would be significantly higher in participants from individualist cultures compared to those from collectivist cultures. To test this hypothesis, the data was dummy coded for individualist or collectivist ethnocultural descent. After consulting general patterns of findings in the literature, participants who reported being from Asian (Matsumoto, Yoo, Fontaine, & Anguas-Wong, 2008; Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998), South American (Taras, Piers, & Kirkman, 2012; Triandis, 1989), Central American (Taras et al., 2012), Middle Eastern (Oyserman, 1993) and Caribbean (Taras et al., 2012) ethnicities were classified as being of collectivist descent, while participants who reported European and North American ethnicities (Matsumoto, Yoo, Fontaine, & Anguas-Wong, 2008; Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998) were categorized as being of individualist descent. Participants of African descent were excluded from the analyses since there was evidence that these participants scored higher on both individualism and collectivism than White European Americans (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman et al., 2002; Twenge & Crocker, 2002). That is, African cultures show a combination of individualist and collectivist traits. Participants who endorsed both individualist and collectivistic ethnicities (i.e., mixed ethnicity) were also excluded from this analysis. The final sample size was 268, and included 175 participants of individualist origin and 93 participants of collectivist origin.

The individualist/collectivist variable was included as a predictor in block 2 of an MRA model. Specifically, block 1 of the MRA included the demographic variables (i.e., sex, age, immigration status, generation status, employment status, SES), while block 2 included the ethnocultural variable. The results of the MRA are presented in Table 6. The

first step of the model explained 8.1% of the variance in PE. The addition of the Individualist/Collectivist variable raised the percentage of variance explained to 9.1%, though this change was not significant. Surprisingly, none of the predictors were significant, except for employment status, which was a marginally significant negative predictor. ANOVA results show that step 1 of the model was significant,  $F(6, 191) = 2.81$ ,  $p = .012$ , as well as step 2 of the model,  $F(7, 190) = 2.72$ ,  $p = .010$ . A comparison of the beta weights and the structure coefficients suggested that several of the predictor variables were related to each other, such that age has a positive structure coefficient but a near-zero beta weight, while SES and generation status have negative structure coefficients but near-zero beta weights. While Individualist/Collectivist was not a significant predictor of PE, it is interesting to note that it had a sizeable positive structure coefficient, suggesting that higher PE was actually associated with collectivist descent. However, given that the addition of the Individualist/Collectivist variable only explained an additional 1% of the variance, this variable may not have a large enough impact on PE to be meaningful. Indeed, the mean PE for the individualist group was 3.00 with a standard deviation of 1.06, while the mean PE for the collectivist group was 3.46 with a standard deviation of 1.12, showing that the difference is fairly small.

Table 6

*Results of hierarchical MRA for PE between collectivist and individualist groups*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	$r_s$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1					.081	.052	.081*
Sex	-.102	.195	-.038	.105			
Age	-.010	.028	-.028	.288			
SES	-.003	.006	-.035	-.168			
Employment status	-.319	.160	-.143*	-.628			
Immigration status	.216	.140	.137	.768			
Generation status	-.123	.083	-.128	-.744			
Step 2					.091	.058	.010
Sex	-.118	.194	-.044	.099			
Age	-.013	.028	-.036	.272			
SES	-.003	.006	-.032	-.159			
Employment status	-.290	.161	-.131 <sup>†</sup>	-.593			
Immigration status	.235	.140	.149	.725			
Generation status	-.032	.104	-.033	-.702			
Individualist or collectivist culture	.295	.203	.139	.738			

*Note.*  $N = 215$ ; \*  $p < .05$ , <sup>†</sup> = .074

To obtain a more fine-grained ethnocultural comparison, the two largest ethnocultural groups in the sample were also compared to each other. Specifically, the Mann-Whitney test was used to compare Asians ( $n = 51$ ) with White European Canadians ( $n = 173$ ) in terms of PE. Given that it was hypothesized that members of individualistic cultures would score higher on PE than members of collectivist cultures, it was expected that PE would be higher in White Europeans compared to the Asians. The result was significant,  $U = 2935$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, unexpectedly, PE was actually significantly higher in Asians ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ) compared to the White European Canadians ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ).

**Hypothesis 4b.** It was hypothesized that AE would be higher in participants from individualist cultures compared to collectivist cultures. Again, an MRA was conducted with the demographic variables in block 1, and the Individualist/Collectivist variable entered in block 2. Results are presented in Table 7. The first step of the model explained 11.0% of the variance in AE. Adding the Individualist/Collectivist variable resulted in a non-significant increase to 11.9%, showing that individualist/collectivist ethnocultural descent may be negligible in predicting AE levels. Employment status was a significant predictor of AE where being unemployed was associated with higher AE. In addition, SES and age were also significant negative predictors. ANOVA results showed that step 1 of the model was significant,  $F(6, 192) = 3.96$ ,  $p = .001$ . Step 2 of the model was also significant,  $F(7, 191) = 3.70$ ,  $p = .001$ . Here, although Individualist/Collectivist culture was not a significant predictor, again, it had a positive structure coefficient, showing that higher AE was associated with collectivism. However, the addition of the Individualist/Collectivist only increased the variance explained by .9%, which limits the



meaningfulness of the variable in terms of its impact on AE. The mean AE for the individualist group was 2.71 with a standard deviation of .99, while for the collectivist group the mean was 3.02 with a standard deviation of 1.01, again showing a fairly small difference.

Table 7

*Results of hierarchical MRA for AE between collectivist and individualist groups*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	$r_s$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1					.110	.082	.110*
Sex	-.006	.177	-.002	-.003			
Age	-.057	.025	-.178*	-.349			
SES	-.014	.005	-.179*	-.443			
Employment status	-.361	.145	-.177*	-.536			
Immigration status	-.212	.127	-.146	-.117			
Generation status	-.206	.077	-.179*	-.337			
Step 2					.119	.087	.009
Sex	-.021	.176	-.008	-.003			
Age	-.059	.025	-.185*	-.335			
SES	-.014	.005	-.174*	-.425			
Employment status	-.333	.146	-.163*	-.514			
Immigration status	-.194	.128	-.133	-.113			
Generation status	-.126	.095	-.174*	-.324			
Individualist or collectivist	.258	.181	.133	.483			

*Note. N = 217; \* p < .05*

Similarly, a comparison between the Asian group ( $n = 51$ ) and the White European group ( $n = 173$ ) was also conducted. It was expected that the Asian group would have lower AE, in keeping with hypothesis #4b. The Mann-Whitney  $U$  test was significant,  $U = 3540.5$ ,  $p = .032$ . The mean AE level for the White European Canadian group was 2.74 with a standard deviation of 1.01, while the mean AE level for the Asian group was 3.01 with a standard deviation of .97. Again, the results are opposite of what is expected, with AE being significantly higher in Asians compared to White Europeans.

**Hypothesis 5a.** To test the hypothesis that PE is negatively correlated with PWB, bivariate correlations were calculated. Contrary to predictions, there were no correlations between PE and any of the six PWB subscales. The Pearson's  $r$  value with the greatest magnitude is -.092, showing that the correlations were essentially zero. PE was also not correlated with either anxiety or depression symptoms.

**Hypothesis 5b.** It was hypothesized that AE is negatively correlated with PWB. Bivariate correlations showed support for the hypothesis. Five of the PWB subscales had significant negative correlations with AE, including: Personal Growth,  $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .001$ , Purpose in Life,  $r = -.24$ ,  $p < .001$ , Autonomy,  $r = -.13$ ,  $p = .034$ , Environmental Mastery,  $r = -.20$ ,  $p = .001$ , and Positive Relations with Others,  $r = -.15$ ,  $p = .013$ . Self-Acceptance had a marginally significant relationship,  $r = -.11$ ,  $p = .062$ . The direction of these correlations were as expected. However, despite these negative correlations with PWB, AE was also not correlated with either anxiety or depression symptoms.

### ***Post Hoc Exploratory Analyses***

The following section describes exploratory analyses conducted to clarify

surprising findings uncovered while testing the main hypotheses. For these analyses, the  $p$ -value was adjusted to .025. The adjustment is fairly small to account for the exploratory nature of these analyses such that minimizing type II error is a higher priority.

**Comparing self-construal between individualist and collectivist ethnocultural groups.** Tests of normality determined that all the distributions being compared were normally distributed.  $t$ -test results show no significant differences in levels of interdependent self-construal,  $t(253) = -.69, p = .493$  between the individualist and collectivist groups. However, the difference between the individualist and collectivist participants on independent self-construal was marginally significant,  $t(255) = -2.02, p = .045$ . Surprisingly, however, the collectivist group was actually higher in independent self-construal ( $M = 4.924$ ) compared to the individualist group ( $M = 4.724$ ). Therefore, although it is contrary to expectations that the collectivist group did not differ in terms of interdependent self-construal compared to the individualist group, there is some tentative evidence that the participants of collectivist cultural descent may actually be higher on independent self-construal compared to participants from individualist ethnocultural groups. One possible explanation is that the ethnocultural participants in this sample were highly acculturated, such that they were more similar to their ethnocultural majority peers in Canada in terms of their general cultural orientation. In addition, it is plausible that people who choose to emigrate from a collectivist society to an individualist society identify more with individualist values than the members of collectivist cultures who do not emigrate. The implications of these results will be elaborated on in the discussion.

**Comparing self-construal between Asians and White Europeans.** Tests of normality showed that the distribution of independent self-construal scores were normal

for the Asian and White European groups. For interdependent self-construal, the White European group had a normal distribution, but the Asian group had a negative skew.

The *t*-test comparing independent self-construal between Asians and White Europeans was not significant,  $t(219) = -.78, p = .438$ . For interdependent self-construal, the test was also not significant,  $U = 3493, p = .071$ . As such, these results show that the Asians and White Europeans did not differ significantly on self-construal levels, contrary to predictions. This provides further support that the participants in the current sample may be highly acculturated. Implications will also be expanded upon in the discussion.

**PE across all ethnocultural groups.** The Kruskal-Wallis *H* test was used to compare PE levels across all the ethnocultural groups in the study, i.e., White European ( $n = 173$ ), Asian ( $n = 51$ ), Middle Eastern ( $n = 14$ ), African ( $n = 8$ ), Other ( $n = 16$ ), and Multiethnic ( $n = 21$ ). The “Other” group was primarily composed of individuals from Caribbean and South American countries. The result was significant,  $\chi^2(5, N = 283) = 19.22, p = .002$ . Specific follow-up tests for the two larger ethnocultural minority groups showed that PE was significantly higher for Asians compared to Middle Easterners,  $U = 180.5, p = .005$ . PE levels were similar between those of White European and Middle Eastern descent,  $U = 1017.5, p = .320$ .

**AE across all ethnocultural groups.** The Kruskal-Wallis *H* test was also used to compare AE levels across the six ethnocultural groups in the study. There was no significant difference in AE across the ethnocultural groups,  $\chi^2(5, N = 285) = 8.482, p = .132$ . As such, no additional analyses were conducted.

**PWB with exploitative entitlement.** Pearson’s *r* was calculated for each pair of the PWB scales and EE. Results show a significant negative correlation between EE and

all six of the PWB subscales, Self-Acceptance ( $r = -.169, p = .005$ ), Personal Growth ( $r = -.254, p < .001$ ), Purpose in Life ( $r = -.215, p < .001$ ), Autonomy ( $r = -.183, p = .002$ ), Environmental Mastery ( $r = -.198, p = .001$ ), and Positive Relations with Others ( $r = -.181, p = .002$ ). It appears that unlike PE, EE has negative impacts on several important domains of PWB.

**PWB with non-exploitative entitlement.** Pearson's  $r$  values were also calculated between NEE and each of the PWB subscales. In contrast to the relationship between PWB and EE, there were no significant relationships between NEE and any of the PWB subscales. Interestingly, there was actually a marginally significant relationship with Self-Acceptance, but it was in the positive direction,  $r = .117, p = .053$ . Moreover, although none of the relationships were significant, they were all in the positive direction. Similar to the findings of Lessard et al. (2011), this shows that there are distinct differences between NEE and EE.

**Summary of findings.** Table 8 provides a summary of the findings of the current study, discussed with reference to the original hypotheses.

Table 8  
*Summary of hypotheses and findings*

Study hypothesis	Outcome	Findings/Results
<b>1a:</b> Sex, age, immigration status, generation status, employment status, SES, self-esteem, GSE, social comparison, and	Partially supported	Model explained 20.7% of the variance in PE. Higher PE was correlated with older age, being unemployed, more recent generation status, and engaging in less social

independent-interdependent self-construal will significantly predict PE.		comparison.
<b>1b:</b> Sex, age, immigration status, generation status, employment status, SES, self-esteem, GSE, social comparison, and independent-interdependent self-construal will significantly predict AE.	Partially supported	Model explained 24.9% of the variance in AE. Higher AE was correlated with younger age, more recent generation status, lower self-esteem, and lower GSE.
<b>2a:</b> PE will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.	Partially supported	PE was positively correlated with independent self-construal, but not correlated with interdependent self-construal.
<b>2b:</b> AE will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.	Not supported	AE was not correlated with either independent or interdependent self-construal.

<p><b>3a:</b> Exploitative entitlement will be positively correlated with independent self-construal and negatively correlated with interdependent self-construal.</p>	<p>Not supported</p>	<p>Exploitative entitlement was not correlated with either independent or interdependent self-construal.</p>
<p><b>3b:</b> Non-exploitative entitlement will be positively correlated with independent self-construal but not correlated with interdependent self-construal.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>Non-exploitative entitlement was positively correlated with independent self-construal and not correlated with interdependent self-construal.</p>
<p><b>4a:</b> PE will be significantly higher in participants from individualist cultures compared to participants from collectivist cultures.</p>	<p>Not supported</p>	<p>There is some tentative evidence that PE was higher in participants of collectivist cultures compared to those of individualist cultures. PE was also higher in Asian Canadians, compared to White European Canadians. Unexpectedly, interdependent self-construal did not differ between the ethnocultural</p>

<p><b>4b:</b> AE will be significantly higher in participants from individualist cultures compared to participants from collectivist cultures.</p>	<p>Not supported</p>	<p>groups, and there is tentative evidence that the collectivist group was actually higher in independent self-construal.</p>
<p><b>5a:</b> PE will be negatively correlated with psychological well-being.</p>	<p>Not supported</p>	<p>There is some tentative evidence that AE was higher in participants of individualist descent than those of collectivist descent. Additionally, AE was higher in Asian Canadians, compared to White European Canadians.</p>
<p><b>5b:</b> AE will be negatively correlated with psychological well-being.</p>	<p>Partially supported</p>	<p>PE was not correlated with psychological well-being, or with anxiety and depressive symptoms. However, exploitative entitlement, but not non-exploitative entitlement, was negatively correlated with psychological well-being.</p> <p>AE was negatively correlated with five of the six psychological well-being subscales, but had no correlations with anxiety or depressive symptoms.</p>



## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### **Purpose of the study**

This study had four primary goals. First, the study examined demographic, psychosocial, and cultural predictors of PE and AE. Second, PE and AE were conceptualized and tested as having self-focused and other-focused features. Third, the relationship between entitlement and independent-interdependent self-construal was examined. Fourth, the study analyzed the association between entitlement and psychological well-being (PWB). The overall purpose of the study was to contribute to understudied areas in the entitlement literature by clarifying the correlates of entitlement, the relationship between PE and AE, and potential cultural variations.

### **Demographic, Psychosocial, and Cultural Predictors of Entitlement**

This study examined the demographic, psychosocial, and cultural predictors of PE and AE, respectively. The MRA model for PE explained 20.7% of the variance, while the MRA model for AE explained 24.9% of the variance. Specific associations with each predictor will be discussed.

**Demographic predictors.** As expected, the sample had a fairly limited age distribution. Although the range was from 18 to 33 years old, 81.6% of the sample was composed of participants from ages 18 to 23—the typical ages of undergraduate students. However, age was associated with both forms of entitlement in this sample. Interestingly, age was positively associated with PE but negatively related to AE. It is unclear why age would have opposite relationships with the two types of entitlement. Particularly surprising is that Campbell et al. (2004) had actually proposed that PE should decrease with age, as life experiences challenge individuals' entitled beliefs. Further studies with a

broader age range may be better suited to explaining these relationships.

SES was not correlated with either PE or AE, contrary to the prediction of a positive relationship. Previously, Piff (2014) had found that PE was positively correlated with participants' self-perceived SES. However, the discrepancy in the results may be partially due to measurement differences. In the Piff (2014) study, participants rated their SES by placing themselves on an appropriate rung on a "ladder of SES," and SES was additionally measured through parents' education levels. In the current study, SES was an equally-weighted composite of the participant's annual family income while growing up and their parents' education levels. As such, the current study employed a measure of SES that is less reliant on self perception. The distribution of SES in this sample did not appear to have problems with floor or ceiling effects. As such, it appears that entitlement levels did not vary significantly with SES in the present undergraduate sample.

Sex had no correlation with either PE or AE. This is contrary to most previous findings that males tend to score higher than females (Boswell, 2012; Campbell et al., 2004; Ciani et al., 2008; Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015), though Achacoso (2002) found that AE was higher in females. However, this study employed a sample of Canadian students, as opposed to American students that were included in the aforementioned studies. Although Jackson, Singleton-Jackson, and Frey (2011) had also used a sample of undergraduate students at the University of Windsor, the gender differences were not reported.

It was expected that immigration status and generation statuses that suggest greater acculturation (e.g., Canadian citizen versus international student) would be related to greater entitlement levels, given the hypothesis that entitlement would be higher in

more individualistic cultures. However, immigration status was not related to either PE or AE. In contrast, generation status was negatively related to both PE and AE, such that entitlement was actually higher in individuals with more recent generation status (e.g., first generation compared to second generation). As will be discussed later, although this result is unexpected, it aligns with the pattern where Asian Canadians had higher PE and AE compared to White European Canadians in this sample, providing further evidence that lower acculturation seems to be correlated with higher entitlement.

Employment status was a significant predictor of PE, where being unemployed was associated with higher PE. One possible explanation is that employment provides the opportunity for individuals to gain experiences that challenge their entitlement beliefs. Gradually, this decreases the strength of those beliefs, similar to the mechanism that Campbell et al. (2004) proposed for PE decreasing with age. However, this theory was not tested in the current study and remains to be clarified. Further, employment status was not correlated with AE, despite its association with PE.

### **Psychosocial predictors of entitlement.**

*Self-focused and other-focused dimensions of entitlement.* This study conceptualized PE and AE as having self-focused (i.e., “I am more deserving”) and other-focused (“...than others”) components. This conceptualization was proposed to better understand entitlement through both intrapersonal and interpersonal perspectives.

The self-focused components were measured by general self-efficacy (GSE) and self-esteem. In terms of AE, GSE was a significant negative predictor, such that the higher an individual’s GSE, the lower their levels of AE. This is in line with a previous study that found a negative relationship between students’ self-efficacy for a course and

their AE levels (Boswell, 2012). The results of the current study thus extend the findings of Boswell (2012) by generalizing a specific self-efficacy to GSE. One explanation for this pattern is that students with higher GSE may feel more capable of academic success, and thus, they attribute less responsibility to others in helping them to succeed. In contrast, there was no relationship between PE and GSE. This finding was corroborated in a recent study on grade 10 to 12 students in the United States (Shalka, 2015), and in a sample of university students (Givertz & Segrin, 2014). Shalka (2015) had predicted that there would be a negative relationship, and to explain the null results, she posited that high GSE may not necessarily preclude entitled behaviour. That is, individuals could believe that they can handle challenges through entitlement—expecting others to solve their problems for them. Follow-up analyses in the current study provide some tentative clarification. Although GSE was not correlated with EE, it did have a significant but positive correlation with NEE ( $r = .139, p = .020$ ). As such, it appears that higher GSE is associated with the facet of PE that aligns closer with autonomy, rather than the exploitative component of PE.

Self-esteem was included as an exploratory variable. Previous research found a negative relationship between AE and self-esteem in American students (Greenberger et al., 2008) and in male Saudi Arabian students (Blincoe & Garris, 2017). This relationship was replicated in the current study. As previously discussed, one possible explanation is that AE is a defense mechanism for individuals with low self-esteem which enables them to externalize the responsibility for academic success onto others (Boswell, 2002; Greenberger et al., 2008). However, evidence is mixed for the relationship between PE and self-esteem. Campbell et al. (2004) found a small positive correlation between PE

and self-esteem, while other studies have not found any relationships (e.g., Daddis & Brunell, 2015; Strelan, 2007). In the current study, self-esteem was not a significant predictor of PE. Perhaps the null finding could be clarified if PE were analyzed in terms of its components. In the narcissism literature, it has been found that grandiose narcissism, as shown through grandiosity, aggression and dominance, is correlated with higher self-esteem (Miller et al., 2010), while vulnerable narcissism, characterized by grandiosity that is used to cover feelings of insecurity and incompetence (Miller et al., 2010), is associated with lower self-esteem (Miller & Campbell, 2008; Pincus et al., 2009). As such, although it is not yet common practice in the PE literature, the relationship between PE and self-esteem may also be better explained if PE were analyzed separately in terms of its components. *Post hoc* analyses were conducted to evaluate the bivariate correlations between self-esteem with EE and NEE, respectively. The results showed a negative correlation between EE and self-esteem ( $r = -.132, p = .028$ ), but a positive correlation between NEE and self-esteem ( $r = .186, p = .002$ ). Therefore, similar to findings in the narcissism literature, it appears that the more maladaptive component of PE is correlated with lower self-esteem, while the less maladaptive component is correlated with higher self-esteem.

The other-focused components were measured via social comparison. A positive relationship was expected since social comparison was expected to act as a means by which entitled individuals ensure that they are getting the treatment they “deserve.” Social comparison was not related to AE, however. Surprisingly, there was actually a negative relationship between PE and social comparison. Perhaps this finding suggests that entitlement is a self-centric construct that does not involve the role of others. That is,

individuals higher in PE may not use comparisons with others in maintaining their self-image and entitlement beliefs. This interpretation is supported by the significant relationship between PE and independent self-construal, along with the lack of a correlation between PE and interdependent self-construal. However, there is some counter-evidence to this interpretation. In a recent study, Foley, Ngo, and Loi (2016) found that PE was positively correlated with downward social comparison (but not upward social comparison) in a sample of 237 employees in China. They explained that entitled individuals may compare themselves with people who are in poorer situations to maintain their elevated self-image. Similarly, Moeller, Crocker, and Bushman (2009) proposed another mechanism by which PE leads to downward social comparison. Specifically, PE involves a distortion in self-image that causes individuals to be perpetually disappointed by the difference between their self-perceived capability and rewards from others. This discrepancy leads these individuals to doubt their capabilities, and then to try to restore their self-image by engaging in downward social comparisons (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). As such, it may be that the relationship between entitlement and social comparison is specific to downward social comparison, such that these individuals engage in less upward comparison but more downward comparison. This distinction would not have been captured by the scale used in the current study, which measured social comparison as a unidimensional construct.

**Cultural predictors of entitlement.** In terms of the relationships between self-construal and entitlement, the expected positive correlation between AE and independent self-construal was found. This provides support for the view that entitlement may have a component of emphasizing oneself over others. However, there was no correlation

between PE and interdependent self-construal. This may suggest that beliefs about other individuals do not play a significant role in PE.

Follow-up analyses show that EE was not correlated with either of the self-construals, while NEE was positively correlated with independent self-construal and uncorrelated with interdependent self-construal. This result is exactly opposite to the predictions; it was predicted that a sense of feeling more deserving than others, compared to simply feeling deserving, would be correlated with individualistic values that put one's own goals above those of others. This provides evidence that individualism may in fact align closer with feeling a sense of equality and less with feeling and expecting to be treated as special. Specifically, it seems that NEE involves the expectation that one will get what one feels entitled to, which is linked to the sense of efficacy in individualism (Hamamura, 2012). Indeed, self-efficacy has been found to be positively correlated with independent self-construal (Kiuchi, 2006). Importantly, individualism does not promote taking advantage of others, which is a core component of EE. Given that NEE is correlated with a variety of positive factors, such as work orientation (Lessard et al., 2011), as well as GSE and self-esteem found in this study, a higher level of NEE could actually be beneficial. However, as Lessard et al. (2011) cautioned, it is not yet clear what the consequences of NEE on others are.

Unexpectedly, there were no correlations between AE and either independent or interdependent self-construal. One possible explanation is that AE applies to a fairly specific situation—academic settings. As such, participants' beliefs regarding academic settings may not be significantly influenced by self-construal, which is a broader construct that includes values and beliefs that apply in life in general. Nonetheless, this

challenges the common perception that AE is a consequence of the purportedly self-centered nature of the educational philosophy of individualistic societies.

**Summary.** Higher PE was associated with being unemployed, older age, more recent generation status, and less social comparison. AE appeared to be higher in individuals who are younger, have more recent generation statuses, lower self-esteem, and lower GSE. In addition, PE and NEE had significant positive correlations with independent self-construal. Analyses with EE and NEE clarifies some of the null relationships between PE and psychosocial constructs. Specifically, NEE was positively related to GSE and self-esteem, while EE had no relationship with GSE and a negative relationship with self-esteem.

### **Entitlement and Ethnocultural Groups**

The primary analyses compared PE and AE between participants of collectivist and individualist ethnocultural descent, and between Asian Canadians and White European Canadians. The former analyses controlled for the demographic variables, while the latter analyses did not, since the focus was on comparing two ethnocultural groups which are expected to differ on some of the demographic variables (e.g., immigration and generation statuses). Surprisingly, there was a correlation with individualist/collectivist culture, but one where PE appeared higher in participants of collectivist descent. Similarly, the Asian Canadians had a significantly higher level of PE compared to the White European Canadians. Parallel results are obtained for AE, where AE was higher in participants from collectivist cultures than those from individualist cultures, and Asian Canadians showed a significantly higher level of AE compared to White European Canadians. However, the reader should be cautioned that for both cases,



the addition of the Individualist/Collectivist variable increased the variance explained by a statistically insignificant .9 to 1%, which may suggest that it has a fairly limited role in terms of its impact on entitlement.

Nonetheless, the pattern with AE is in line with the Greenberger et al. (2008) study which found that Asian American students had higher AE than Caucasian American students. The explanation that Greenberger et al. (2008) proposed was that higher academic expectations are linked to higher AE, and Asian American students tend to experience more academic expectations from the family compared to Caucasian Americans (Chao & Tseng, 2002). For this study specifically, another possible explanation is that a greater proportion of the Asian students were international students (35.8%) compared to the White European students (2.3%), and they may differ in important ways (e.g., tuition cost) that affect their AE levels that were not measured by this study. However, the results with PE was unexpected given that entitlement was hypothesized to be more in line with individualist values, and thus was expected to be higher in individualist cultures.

It was hypothesized that participants from collectivist cultures and Asian Canadians would show lower entitlement since these groups should be higher on interdependent self-construal and lower on independent self-construal compared to participants from individualist cultures or the White European Canadians. However, follow-up analyses revealed that the Asian and White European Canadian groups actually had comparable levels of independent and interdependent self-construals. The broad individualist and collectivist groups were also similar on interdependent self-construal. More importantly, although the result was only marginally significant, there was some

tentative evidence that independent self-construal was actually higher in the “collectivist” group (composed primarily of Asian, along with South American, Central American, Caribbean, and Middle Eastern groups) compared to the “individualist” group (White European groups). This discrepancy may help explain the surprising finding of higher entitlement in the groups of collectivist ethnocultural descent. In addition, these results challenge the view that entitlement is associated with cultures typically identified as individualistic.

More recent studies in AE provide further evidence that entitlement is not just a product of Western societies. A study examining students’ beliefs about grading practices showed that White students were less likely than Asian or Hispanic students to believe that the degree of effort should be considered in determining the grade, and White students were also less likely to endorse engaging in unethical behaviour to obtain the grade they want (Witsman & Burdsal, 2013). Similarly, participants born in the U.S. showed less AE regarding grading practices compared to their foreign-born counterparts. Additional support comes from a recent study on AE in Saudi Arabia and the United States. Blincoe and Garris (2017) compared 409 undergraduate participants from the United States with 304 male and 137 female university students in Saudi Arabia. This study is notable because the groups being compared were students living in different countries, rather than individuals of different ethnocultural descent living in the same country. Contrary to their predictions, AE was higher in the Saudi Arabian students than the American students. This was true for both subscales of the AES (Chowning & Campbell, 2009), which were entitled expectations and externalized responsibility. The average score for the Saudi Arabian students represented general agreement with having

entitled expectations. Although this was true for the American sample as well, the average was about .5 to 1 point lower on a 7-point scale. To explain these results, Blincoe and Garris (2017) hypothesized that entitlement may have a social component that is influenced by the collectivist social norms. Specifically, the focus on social harmony and obligations to others may result in entitlement as students to expect “help” to get good grades. In addition, due to secondary schooling being free in Saudi Arabia, the students may develop entitled expectations because their education is paid for by the country.

It is noteworthy that AE was found to be higher in Saudi Arabia, given the differences between the American and Saudi Arabian education systems. The graduation rate is less than 25% in Saudi Arabia (OECD, 2012), compared to 59% in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). In addition, in Saudi Arabia, 20-31% of the course load involves religious instruction (Allam, 2011), classes are separated by sex, and memorization is emphasized over critical thinking (Unruh & Obeidat, 2015). Furthermore, in the Saudi Arabian sample, there was no correlation between independent self-construal and AE, similar to the findings of this study.

There is also evidence of AE in Japan. A study of 20 teachers and 400 university students in Japan revealed that both groups expect students to be rewarded with good grades if they put in the effort, regardless of their actual performance (Quinn & Matsuura, 2010). As such, not only do students have entitled expectations, their teachers’ behaviours are reinforcing the students’ entitled expectations as well.

Furthermore, a recent dissertation by (Mateescu, 2015) found that African American students scored higher on AE than White or Hispanic students. Overall, results from the current study and from recent cultural studies in entitlement challenge the

perception that entitlement is a “Western”, individualistic phenomenon. In fact, there is evidence in the opposite direction, where participants from more collectivist cultures actually show higher levels of both PE and AE compared to White Europeans. Of note, it cannot be assumed that participants from collectivist cultures actually have lower independent self-construal and higher interdependent self-construal than participants from individualist cultures. Nonetheless, it appears that entitlement is not limited to cultures that have been traditionally categorized as “individualistic,” and entitlement may also have a component that is affected by collectivist values. An explanation that future studies can explore is that ethnocultural differences in AE may be more heavily determined by the culture’s emphasis on academic achievement or academic excellence, rather than differences in individualist-collectivist values.

### **Entitlement and Psychological Well-Being**

Contrary to predictions, PE was not associated with any of the six PWB subscales, nor with anxiety or depression symptoms. In fact, most of the correlations were near zero. This is surprising given that PE is associated with a variety of negative outcomes, such as aggression and selfishness (Campbell et al., 2004), poorer academic performance (e.g., Anderson et al., 2014; Jeffres et al., 2014), and lower emotional stability (Campbell et al., 2004). Follow-up analyses found that EE had significant negative correlations with all six of the PWB subscales, while NEE was not correlated with any of the PWB subscales. Furthermore, although none of the relationships were significant, they were all non-zero and in the positive direction. This provides further evidence for the distinction between exploitative and non-exploitative entitlement, where EE had wide-ranging negative correlations with PWB, while NEE had no negative associations on PWB. This pattern is

in line with findings from Lessard et al. (2011) where EE had problematic correlations that were absent with NEE.

That aside, there are several possible explanations for the null results with PE that may be the focus of future studies. First, as mentioned previously, it has been proposed that PE as measured by the PES capture a more normative form of PE, compared to maladaptive narcissistic entitlement (Campbell et al., 2004; Jordan et al., 2017). Second, it is possible that the consequences of an entitled individual's actions are borne by others, so a self-report measure limits the understanding how PE impacts PWB.

AE was negatively correlated with five of the PWB subscales: Personal Growth, Purpose in Life, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, and Positive Relations with Others. There was a marginally significant negative relationship between AE and Self-Acceptance. This generally replicates the findings of the Barton and Hirsch (2015) study, which found negative correlations with all six PWB subscales. The results of the current study show that this pattern holds in a Canadian as well as a more ethnoculturally diverse sample. Specifically, these results suggest that higher AE is associated with a variety of negative consequences in terms of PWB, specifically, perceiving less importance in having new experiences or finding purpose in life, having less confidence in one's opinions, feeling less control over one's life, experiencing less connection with others, and perhaps also less acceptance of one's personality. However, AE was not associated with anxiety or depression symptoms, despite these negative correlations with PWB.

It is noteworthy that PE had no relationships with PWB, but there were consistent negative relationships between AE and PWB. In particular, these results are intriguing since the mean value of participant responses was actually lower on the AE scale ( $M =$

2.839,  $SD = 1.032$ ) as compared to the PE scale ( $M = 3.173$ ,  $SD = 1.095$ ), with both scales having a maximum score of 7. That is, most participants actually had lower scores on AE compared to scores on PE. Perhaps this is due to the current sample being mostly composed of university students, such that attitudes and beliefs about academic endeavours has a strong impact on daily life. Alternatively, it could be that AE as measured by the AEQ captures a more maladaptive side of entitlement compared to PE as measured by the PES. This view is supported by the finding that EE, but not NEE, is negatively correlated with all of the PWB subscales.

It is important to note, however, that the study did not establish a causal relationship between AE and PWB. Considering the conceptualization of entitlement as a vulnerability to psychological distress (Grubbs & Exline, 2016), it is possible that a bidirectional relationship exists between AE and PWB. Specifically, a student with low PWB may use AE as a coping strategy to deal with distress in the academic situation, and when those entitled expectations are not met, PWB further declines, and AE is again engaged, leading to a vicious cycle. Future studies are needed to clarify the directionality of the relationship between AE and PWB.

### **Implications**

This study adds to the literature on entitlement by exploring psychosocial and cultural correlates of entitlement, clarifying the differences between the exploitative and non-exploitative components of PE, and clarifying differences between PE and AE.

First, PE as measured by the PES (Psychological Entitlement Scale) appears to be a more normative form of entitlement compared to narcissistic entitlement. This idea has been proposed in previous studies (Campbell et al., 2004; Jordan et al., 2017). In the

current study, PE was not associated with any of the psychosocial variables, aside from lower social comparison. Furthermore, there were no correlations between PE and any of the PWB scales, or with anxiety or depression. Indeed, it has been found that compared to the Entitlement subscale of the NPI, the PES has weaker negative correlations with agreeableness, warmth, and positive affect, and weaker positive associations with schizoid and borderline personality disorders (Pryor, Miller, & Gaughan, 2008). In line with the assertion that the PES may be measuring a less maladaptive form of PE, the current study also found that EE had significant negative correlations with all six PWB subscales, while PE and NEE did not have any correlations with the PWB subscales. As such, these results may be showing that PE as measured by the PES is more similar to the more functional NEE, rather than the more maladaptive EE. If this interpretation is correct, then the choice of the questionnaire used to measure PE should be considered in future studies, such that the PES is used when the researcher is more concerned with normative PE, while other measures should be used if the primary concern is maladaptive narcissistic PE.

Second, there are important distinctions between PE and AE. There was a significant moderate correlation between PE and AE,  $r = .50, p < .001$ , similar to the correlation of  $r = .40$  reported by Chowning and Campbell (2009). However, there are some differences between the two constructs. While 20% of participants gave ratings that were, on average, higher than neutral (i.e., 4 on a scale of 7) for the PE items, the corresponding number was 12% for AE. Put another way, 3.5% of the participants indicated at least “slight agreement” on average to the PE items, while only 1.7% indicated “slightly agree” or more to the AE items. The smaller percentage of participants

who agree with the AE items suggests that AE may be less common than PE, at least according to self-report. Further analyses provide preliminary evidence that PE and AE can exist independently of each other. Specifically, among participants whose average score was higher than “neutral” (i.e., leaning towards agreement with the entitlement items) for either PE or AE, only 15 had more than neutral scores on both PE and AE. Thirty-nine participants leaned towards agreement for PE items but not AE items, and 17 participants had greater than neutral responses for AE but not PE items. As such, PE and AE do not always co-exist, and individuals can score higher on one form of entitlement without scoring similarly on the other. This pattern of results suggests that PE and AE are indeed related but distinct constructs.

Furthermore, comparing the patterns of results between PE and AE shows that AE may be a more problematic form of entitlement than PE (at least as measured by the PES). AE is negatively correlated with GSE, self-esteem, and multiple aspects of PWB, while PE was only negatively associated with social comparison and appeared to have no negative correlates with PWB. As such, it is important to address high AE in particular given its various negative correlates.

Third, the results of this present study supplement Lessard et al.’s (2011) argument that there are two distinct factors of PE. In the current study, EE was negatively correlated with all six PWB scales, while there were no significant correlations for NEE. Furthermore, NEE was positively correlated with self-esteem, while EE was negatively correlated with self-esteem. In addition, only NEE had positive correlations with independent self-construal and GSE, while EE was not correlated with these variables. As such, EE and NEE have clearly different patterns of correlates. In this study, the PES had



moderate correlations with both exploitative and non-exploitative entitlement, similar to previous findings by Lessard et al. (2011). This supports Lessard et al. (2011)'s argument that there appears to be two distinct facets that are compounded together by the PES, and further highlights the potential problem with using the PES, particularly when it is currently the most widely used scale to measure PE. Ackerman and Donnellan (2013) further emphasize the importance of distinguishing between the two forms of PE through their investigation of the association of EE and NEE with personality factors.

Interestingly, it appears that NEE is associated with various positive correlates. In the current study, NEE was positively associated with self-esteem and GSE, and had a marginally significant positive relationship with self-acceptance. Similarly, Ackerman and Donnellan (2013) found that NEE, but not EE, was positively correlated with friendliness and excitement in an undergraduate sample. Perhaps NEE is associated with a healthy sense of entitlement where the individual feels confident, capable, and deserving. However, again, none of these studies have measured the impact of NEE on other people, so it is possible that if negative impacts do exist, they are imposed on individuals around them.

Fourth, this study has several implications in terms of the cultural piece of entitlement. Entitlement does not appear to be a "Western" phenomenon. While PE did have a positive relationship with independent self-construal, AE did not. Furthermore, although the relationship is weak and needs to be replicated, PE and AE may both be higher in individuals of collectivist ethnocultural descent rather than individualist descent after controlling for demographic variables. In addition, both PE and AE were higher in Asian Canadians compared to White European Canadians. As such, these results suggest

that entitlement may not entirely be the result of an individualistic society or the North American educational philosophy that focuses on cultivating high self-esteem in students.

In addition, in this study, the levels of independent and interdependent self-construal did not actually differ between Asian Canadians and White European Canadians. Similarly, the broad individualist and collectivist groups did not differ on interdependent self-construal. More surprisingly is that the “collectivist” group may actually be higher on independent self-construal compared to the “individualist” group, though this pattern was only marginally significant. These results suggest that categorizing individuals as “individualist” or “collectivist” based simply on their self-reported ethnic background provides little empirical value in terms of measuring their cultural values, and in terms of comparing ethnocultural groups. As such, the difference in PE and AE between the Asian and White European Canadian groups may be due to factors other than self-construal.

This finding also challenges research that uses Asian Canadians or Asian Americans as exemplars of collectivistic groups. Indeed, many studies have referenced the seminal work by Hofstede (1980) that classified countries in terms of individualism and collectivism. However, given that the study was conducted almost four decades ago, important societal and economic changes have likely led to changes in these classifications (Carlson & Stepina, 1997). For instance, it may be that Asians living in North American societies have acculturated and adopted different cultural values compared to Asians living in Asian countries. Nevertheless, even if the collectivist groups were lower in independent self-construal, it cannot be assumed that the correlates of individualism would be lower in less individualistic cultures. Specifically, a study

found that narcissism was actually higher in Iranian students compared to American students (Ghorbani et al., 2004), which is unexpected given the positive correlation between narcissism and independent self-construal (Konrath, Bushman, & Grove, 2009). That is, even if the Asian Canadians were less individualistic, entitlement may not necessarily be lower.

Fifth, the fact that only the PES and NEE are related to independent self-construal suggest that individualism may not necessarily lead to higher entitlement and its associated problems. That is, NEE appears to be linked to individualistic values because NEE and individualism share the focus on the individual as being capable and self-sufficient. It does not necessarily imply that the individual should or does succeed at the expense of others. Therefore, again, this result cautions against blaming individualism or Western societies for entitled behaviours.

Sixth, in terms of the proposed self-focused and other-focused conceptualization of entitlement, it appears that this may not apply to either form of entitlement. PE as measured by the PES did not correlate with any of the self-focused variables. Although PE was correlated with social comparison, there was actually a negative relationship, which may suggest a weaker interpersonal component. While AE has stronger relationships with self-focused variables (i.e., self-esteem, GSE), it had no relationship with social comparison. As such, the results of this study do not support the conceptualization of PE or AE as having self-focused and other-focused components. In fact, both PE and AE appear to be self-focused constructs without a strong role for others.

**Implications for counselling and intervention.** First, in both counselling and intervention work, it would be important to distinguish between the two components of

PE, given that they have different patterns of correlates, in particular that EE was associated with poorer PWB while NEE was not correlated with PWB. It appears that the non-exploitative component of PE may be more related to assertiveness and autonomy. However, the exploitative component of PE appears to be much more maladaptive. Importantly, this distinction may not be revealed if only the Psychological Entitlement Scale is used, and so, an alternate scale (such as the Exploitative and Non-Exploitative Entitlement Scale) or direct questioning about whether exploitativeness exists in the individual should be employed.

In an educational setting, increasing students' sense of GSE and self-esteem may serve to alleviate AE levels. Although this study did not establish causal relationships, GSE has long been known to be related to variables important in academic success such as a higher level of engagement in class (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003), more academic help-seeking (Ryan & Pintrich, 1997), higher grade point average in university (Kirsten & Schweitzer, 2001), and greater effort and persistence (Bandura, 1997). Similarly, self-esteem is correlated with lower levels of depression and better adjustment in first-year undergraduate students (Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007), higher grade point average (Richardson, Abraham, & Bond, 2012), lower aggression and less delinquency (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2005), and lower anxiety (Sowislo & Orth, 2013). Clearly, both self-efficacy and self-esteem are correlated with variables important to mental health and academic success.

In terms of concrete interventions, Bresó, Schaufeli, and Salanova (2011) found that a workshop aimed at preparing university students for exams by teaching them to cope with anxiety was effective in increasing students' levels of self-efficacy,

engagement, and academic performance, as well as decreasing burnout. The intervention involved four 2-hour one-on-one sessions based on cognitive behavioural techniques used to treat anxiety (e.g., learning to recognize anxious thoughts, finding alternative thoughts, and testing these alternatives). Another study using a sample of female engineering students was able to increase their level of self-efficacy in “realistic activities” involved in engineering (e.g., using tools, operating machinery). The intervention employed the four components of Bandura’s (1997) model of self-efficacy by having students watch professors completing the tasks (vicarious learning), completing the tasks themselves, being given encouragement, and being taught anxiety-management skills. In terms of self-esteem, there is some preliminary evidence that exercise improves self-esteem in adults (Spence, McGannon, & Poon, 2005). As such, interventions promoting physical exercise and anxiety management may pave the way for future research analyzing whether increasing GSE and self-esteem may decrease AE and its negative correlates.

Further, this study provides some preliminary evidence that PE and AE may actually be higher in individuals of collectivist descent, compared to those of individualist descent. This finding is counterintuitive given that PE has also been found to be correlated with higher independent self-construal in this study. Consequently, counselors and educators should keep in mind that high entitlement may also be an issue in ethnic minority students from collectivist cultures, and that different social and cultural norms may be at play in contributing to higher entitlement in these individuals.

In addition, this study provides further evidence that PE and AE are distinct constructs. As such, students who present with high PE may not necessarily have high AE, and vice versa. Thus, counsellors and educators who encounter an academically

entitled student should not jump to the conclusion that they are an entitled person overall. Rather, it may be more fruitful to explore the reasons why that student has high AE (e.g., inadvertent positive reinforcement from instructors who raise the student's grades) and collaborate to find more adaptive ways to react to those reinforcers (e.g., helping the student to understand instructors' reactions to students asking for a higher grade).

**Implications for education.** The results of the current study show, surprisingly, that 88.3% of students do not agree with or are neutral about the items on the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire. This may suggest that students are not as academically entitled as is commonly believed, or that they do not perceive their actions and beliefs to be representative of academic entitlement. In light of this finding, it may be beneficial for instructors to be aware of this statistic, such that they are not biased to misinterpret student behaviour as academic entitlement. For instance, a student who is quite assertive and persistent in seeking help or a student who is genuinely curious about an unexpected low grade could be mistakenly perceived as academically entitled. Instructors should be particularly sensitive to cultural and contextual factors that may influence the students' behaviour. For instance, members of marginalized groups may have learned to be particularly persistent when soliciting for help, which may then be interpreted as AE. Importantly, there is a clear power differential between instructors and their students.

In addition, it would be fruitful for the institution to educate students about academic entitlement, its associated beliefs and behaviours, and its impact on other students and instructors. In particular, new students may not know how to communicate with instructors, and are used to the speed and convenience of electronic communication that they carry similar expectations for their instructors. Teaching students how to write

emails to their instructors, helping them to understand the wait time for emails, and explaining the instructors' other duties (e.g., research) may help students to have more realistic expectations and achieve their goals in a more constructive manner. Given the negative association between AE and PWB found in the current study, this would likely be beneficial for the students.

On the institutional level, it should be emphasized that higher education is an opportunity to learn and develop, rather than a means to an end (e.g., a high-paying job). The amount of marketing directed at prospective students understandably lead some students to have a consumer-oriented mindset, and consequently, these students may feel entitled to "quality services" (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). A strategy proposed by Lippmann et al. (2009) to counter AE may work to reduce the chance of the student being a passive learner and "consumer". Specifically, emphasizing intellectual engagement and encouraging communication between instructors and students would help the student become an active learner and be less focused on obtaining good grades.

Instructors' beliefs about and reactions to AE are also important. As Lippmann et al. (2009) explained, the increase in part-time faculty members has created pressure for these instructors to please their students to obtain good reviews so they can keep their jobs. To address this issue, the institution and tenured professors who do not face these pressures should aim to support these part-time faculty members in the face of AE, and encourage instructor behaviours that promote academic integrity rather than the student-as-consumer experience.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

It is surprising that many of the psychosocial variables had no correlation with

either PE or AE. As mentioned previously, this may suggest that PE, as measured by the PES, captures a more normative phenomenon, and therefore, does not have strong correlations with psychosocial variables. With AE, it may only be relevant or activated when the individual is in an academic settings and therefore does not correlate strongly with psychosocial variables that are broader in scope, such as the self-construals. Furthermore, in the MRA models, the variance explained by the demographic variables in block 1 may have resulted in little variance left for the predictors in block 2. In particular, the self-construals may have correlated substantially with some of the demographic variables (i.e., generation status, immigration status).

There may have been a limitation in the variance in PE and AE since the distributions of PE and AE scores both had a strong positive skew, such that the majority of the participants scored in the low range. In the full sample of 288 participants, 80% were neutral about the PE statements or disagreed. Only 3.5% had an average of 5 (on a scale from 1–7), indicating an average of “slight agreement” with the statements. In terms of AE, 88.3% of the participants had, on average, responses that disagreed with or were neutral about the AE scale items. Only 1.7% had responses that averaged as “slightly agree.” Although previous research shows that most student participants do not score high on entitlement and that the average score corresponds to neutrality (e.g., Andrey et al., 2012; Greenberger et al., 2008; Jeffres et al., 2014), the percentages in this study are particularly low. Even though Andrey et al. (2012) also used a sample of Canadian undergraduate students, they found that 23% of the sample scored higher than 3 out of a scale of 5. Part of the difference may be due to measurement differences, since they used their own measure of AE. Nonetheless, the average PE and AE in this sample actually



correspond to disagreement, with the average of PE being 3.17 on a scale of 7, and AE being even lower at 2.84 on a scale of 7. The positive skew of this data restricts the strength and validity of the conclusions that can be drawn about individuals with high entitlement levels, due to the lack of representation at the higher end of entitlement.

These low rates of entitlement are puzzling compared to anecdotal evidence (B. K. Miller, 2013; Twenge, 2007) and the media focus on entitlement in today's young adults (e.g., Elegant, 2007; Stein, 2013). Perhaps the levels of PE and AE are much lower than is commonly expected, particularly in a Canadian student sample. Alternatively, there may be a difference in self- and other-perceptions of entitlement, such that self-report results in lower numbers compared to other-reports. Future studies may look to assess whether this pattern can be replicated outside of the University of Windsor, and whether there is in fact a difference between self- and other-reports of entitlement.

An additional avenue of research in AE may be to evaluate the stability of AE over time and across different instructors. Although the current study and most studies in assume that AE is a trait, much like PE, some factors may lead AE to be less stable than PE. First, as far as the author is aware, no study has established AE as a stable trait. Second, particular characteristics of instructors or a specific academic situation may lead to academically entitled behaviour in a student who typically does not act entitled. For example, some instructors may have a reputation of being an "easy grader", leading to disproportionately high amounts of solicitations for higher grades from students. Or, a student may generally act in a non-academically entitled manner, but asks for higher grades or better treatment from instructors in particular instances where the student feels that they did not receive what they perceived they deserved. This may help to explain the

low rate of agreement with the items on the AE measures in this study. If AE is more of a “state” rather than a “trait”, then interventions may be developed to address the contextual factors that are promoting academically entitled behaviours.

In addition, although this sample revealed that Asian Canadians exhibited higher PE and AE than White European Canadians, there are limitations to the ethnocultural analyses in this study. Due to difficulties with recruiting ethnocultural minority groups, the sample size is lacking for groups other than Asian or White European Canadians. Here, the results of exploratory analyses will be discussed, but the reader should keep in mind the relatively low degree of power and generalizability due to small sample sizes. The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test showed that PE differed across the White European ( $n = 173$ ), Asian ( $n = 51$ ), Middle Eastern ( $n = 14$ ), African ( $n = 8$ ), Other Ethnicity ( $n = 16$ ), and Multiethnic ( $n = 21$ ) groups. Selected follow-up analyses show that PE was significantly higher in Asians compared to the Middle Eastern group, but that the White European and Middle Eastern groups were comparable. No other comparisons were conducted due to extremely small sample sizes. These results show that PE varies even within collectivist cultures, and further studies are needed to elucidate these differences. In terms of AE, however, the *post hoc* analyses show that there was no significant difference across the six ethnocultural group included. Again, the patterns of results are different between PE and AE, and do not support the hypothesis that entitlement is higher in more individualistic cultures.

Further, as mentioned previously in the introduction, there are issues with comparing broad ethnocultural groups. Although the Asian Canadian group had a sufficient sample size for the analyses, it is not optimal to aggregate Asian groups

together due to the high degree of variability between the Asian ethnocultural groups. In this study, Asian Canadian group included both East and Southeast Asian countries, primarily China and India. However, there are significant cultural differences among the Asian countries (Sandhu, 1997; Sue & Sue, 2003). In addition, the analyses of self-construals across the Asian and White European groups show that they were similar on both independent and interdependent self-construals. As such, this challenges the validity of drawing conclusions about individualism and collectivism based on comparing the two ethnocultural groups. Future studies with a larger sample of ethnocultural minority participants, and ideally, involving participants living in different countries with distinct cultures, would help to further clarify the relationship between culture and entitlement.

The various negative relationships between AE and PWB highlight its problematic nature. However, these relationships may also help to shape potential interventions to reduce AE. For instance, self-esteem and GSE may be increased through teaching students about resources available on campus, helping them to gain study skills, or increasing their confidence in their abilities in general. In turn, this may help to reduce AE. Of course, the relationship is correlational, so it is not possible to conclude that targeting self-esteem and GSE would necessarily reduce AE.

As this study shows, there appears to be more than one component of PE. Recent studies have been discussing more fine-grained conceptualizations of PE. It has been suggested that the PES measures two variants of PE: an emotionally stable variant and an emotionally vulnerable variant where individuals are more prone to experiencing negative emotions (Grubbs & Exline, 2016). Cluster analysis revealed differences between these two forms of PE (Crowe, Lopilato, Campbell, & Miller, 2016). Both

groups of individuals were more antagonistic, Machiavellian, and narcissistic compared to individuals who were low in PE. However, individuals with emotionally stable PE group had high self-esteem, emotional stability, more positive affect, and antisocial behaviour. In contrast, participants with emotionally vulnerable PE had low self-esteem, and scored high on neuroticism, negative affect, and psychopathy.

Researchers in Europe have taken a similar approach to understanding PE.

Zemajtzel-piotrowska, Piotrowski, and Clinton (2016) conceptualized PE as having three dimensions: active, revenge, and passive entitlement. A person with active entitlement is interested in promoting his or her own rights, but not violating the rights of others. With passive entitlement, the individual has passive expectations that others will help them achieve what they are entitled to. With revenge entitlement, the individual has difficulty forgiving past transgressions and insists on obtaining revenge. Active entitlement is seen as a healthy, adaptive form, while passive entitlement is conceptually more similar to narcissistic entitlement. Indeed, active entitlement was positively correlated with higher self-esteem (Zemajtzel-Piotrowska et al., 2013), psychological well-being (Piotrowski & Zemajtzel-Piotrowska, 2009), and an internal locus of control (Piotrowski & Zemajtzel-Piotrowska, 2009). In contrast, passive entitlement was correlated with lower self-esteem and a more external locus of control (Piotrowski & Zemajtzel-Piotrowska, 2009). Revenge entitlement was not correlated with either self-esteem or locus of control (Piotrowski & Zemajtzel-Piotrowska, 2009), but was negatively correlated with PWB (Zemajtzel-Piotrowska et al., 2013). In essence, these three forms of PE all share a common self-interest, but have different impacts on interpersonal relations (Zemajtzel-Piotrowska et al., 2016). Zemajtzel-Piotrowska et al. (2016) also highlighted how passive entitlement

emphasizes the communal component of PE, as typical examinations of PE tend to neglect the communal component and focus on the self only. Indeed, the authors have examined patterns between PE and agency and communion. Active entitlement was only positively correlated with agency, showing that this represents a focus on one's own goals. Passive entitlement was positively associated with communion, but negatively correlated with agency. This pattern shows that such individuals tend to be passive in realizing their goals, and expect others to help them achieve their goals. Revenge entitlement was positively correlated with agency and negatively associated with communion, and the authors explained it to involve an excessive focus on one's own goals. The different patterns of correlations suggest that perhaps this three-dimensional model would be helpful in clarifying the relationship between PE and cultural variables.

The fields of PE and AE continue to grow as the two constructs and their correlates are clarified. This study contributes to the understanding of these constructs by clarifying their patterns of correlates and how they differ between PE and AE, the cultural component of entitlement, entitlement's relation to psychological well-being, and the different patterns of associations between exploitative and non-exploitative entitlement. The implications of the results in terms of counselling and intervention were discussed. It is hoped that future studies will help explain the questions that were raised by the current study and continue to improve our understanding of entitlement and its nature and consequences.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Demographics Questionnaire

Sex:

Age: \_\_\_\_

Country of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Canada: \_\_\_\_

Number of years in other countries if applicable (please list country name and years spent in each country):

---

Immigration status (e.g., Canadian citizen, permanent resident, international student):

---

What is your generation status in Canada?

- a) 1<sup>st</sup> generation (born outside of Canada, immigrated before age 12)
- b) 1.5 generation (born outside of Canada, immigrated after age 12)
- c) 2<sup>nd</sup> generation (born in Canada, at least one parent is born outside of Canada)
- d) 3<sup>rd</sup> generation and beyond

What is your heritage culture (e.g., Chinese, Italian)?

---

What culture do you most identify with?

---

Language(s) spoken at home (please list in order of frequency):

---

Annual combined family income when you were growing up:

- a) \$0-10,000
- b) \$10,000-25,000
- c) \$25,000-50,000
- d) \$50,000-75,000
- e) 75,000-100,000
- f) 100,000 and above

Parent 1 (father / mother [please circle])'s occupation when you were growing up: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 1's highest level of education:

- a) No schooling or did not complete elementary school
- b) Elementary school or middle school
- c) Some high school
- d) High school diploma
- e) Some college or university education
- f) College diploma
- g) University degree
- h) Graduate or professional degree

Parent 2 (father / mother [please circle])'s occupation when you were growing up: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 2's highest level of education:

- a) No schooling or did not complete elementary school
- b) Elementary school or middle school
- c) Some high school
- d) High school diploma

- e) Some college or university education
- f) College diploma
- g) University degree
- h) Graduate or professional degree



## Appendix B: Psychological Entitlement Scale

Please respond to the following items using the number that best reflects your own beliefs.

Please use the following 7-point scale:

1 = strong disagreement.

5 = slight agreement.

2 = moderate disagreement.

6 = moderate agreement.

3 = slight disagreement.

7 = strong agreement.

4 = neither agreement nor disagreement.

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 C: Exploitative and Non-Exploitative Entitlement Scale

Please read the following statements and indicate the number that best corresponds to your level of agreement with the statement.

1 = strongly disagree

4 = slightly agree

2 = disagree

5 = agree

3 = slightly disagree

6 = strongly agree

1. I deserve more success in my life than others who have had it easy.
2. I am willing to admit that I feel I am due more in life than other people.
3. I shouldn't have to work as hard as others to get what I deserve.
4. I shouldn't have to work harder than others to have the finer things in life.
5. Because of the things I have been through personally, others should cut me a break in life.
6. If I am a frequent customer in a restaurant, they should be willing to seat me ahead of some other people.
7. If I am in a hurry, people should let me move ahead in a line
8. I deserve to be treated with respect by everyone.
9. I expect to be treated with respect, even by those who are rich and famous.
10. I deserve the best things in life.
11. I am entitled to get into the career that I want.
12. I am entitled to have the best things in life.

## Appendix D: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1 = strongly disagree

3 = agree

2 = disagree

4 = strongly agree

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

## Appendix E: General Self-Efficacy Scale

Please read the following statements and indicate the number that best corresponds to your level of agreement with the statement.

1 = not at all true

3 = moderately true

2 = hardly true

4 = exactly true

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

## Appendix F: Singelis Self-Construal Scale

Instructions: This is a questionnaire that measures a variety of feelings and behaviors in various situations. Listed below are a number of statements. Read each one as if it referred to you. Beside each statement write the number that best matches your agreement or disagreement. Please respond to every statement. Thank you.

1 = strongly disagree

5 = agree somewhat

2 = disagree

6 = agree

3 = somewhat disagree

7 = strongly agree

4 = don't agree

1. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects.
2. I can talk openly with a person who I meet for the first time, even when this person is much older than I am.
3. Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.
4. I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact.
5. I do my own thing, regardless of what others think.
6. I respect people who are modest about themselves.
7. I feel it is important for me to act as an independent person.
8. I will sacrifice my self interest for the benefit of the group I am in.
9. I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood.
10. Having a lively imagination is important to me.
11. I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career

plans.

12. I feel my fate is intertwined with the fate of those around me.
13. I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met.
14. I feel good when I cooperate with others.
15. I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards.
16. If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible.
17. I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments.
18. Speaking up during a class (or a meeting) is not a problem for me.
19. I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor (or my boss).
20. I act the same way no matter who I am with.
21. My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me.
22. I value being in good health above everything.
23. I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I am not happy with the group.
24. I try to do what is best for me, regardless of how that might affect others.
25. Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.
26. It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group.
27. My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.
28. It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.
29. I act the same way at home that I do at school (or work).
30. I usually go along with what others want to do, even when I would rather do something different.

## Appendix G: Academic Entitlement Questionnaire

The following items ask about your personal attitudes about your university experience. Not all students feel the same way or are expected to feel the same way. Please indicate the number that best corresponds to your level of agreement with each statement using the scale below:

1 = strongly disagree

5 = slightly agree

2 = disagree

6 = agree

3 = slightly disagree

7 = strongly agree

4 = neither agree nor disagree

1. If I don't do well on a test, the professor should make tests easier or curve grades.
2. Professors should only lecture on material covered in the textbook and assigned readings.
3. Because I pay tuition, I deserve passing grades.
4. If I am struggling in a class, the professor should approach me and offer to help.
5. If I cannot learn the material for a class from lecture alone, then it is the professor's fault when I fail the test.
6. I should be given the opportunity to make up a test, regardless of the reason for the absence.
7. I am a product of my environment. Therefore, if I do poorly in class, it is not my fault.
8. It is the professor's responsibility to make it easy for me to succeed.

## Appendix H: Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

0 = not at all

2 = more than half the days

1 = several days

3 = nearly every day

1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things.
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much
4. Feeling tired or having little energy.
5. Poor appetite or overeating.
6. Feeling bad about yourself—or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down.
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television.
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual.
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way.



Appendix I: Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

0 = not at all

2 = more than half the days

1 = several days

3 = nearly every day

1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge.
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying.
3. Worrying too much about different things.
4. Trouble relaxing.
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still.
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable.
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen.

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult

Somewhat

Very

Extremely

at all

difficult

difficult

difficult

## Appendix J: Iowa-Netherlands Social Comparison Orientation (INCOM)

Most people compare themselves from time to time with others. For example, they may compare the way they feel, their opinions, their abilities, and/or their situation with those of other people. There is nothing particularly 'good' or 'bad' about this type of comparison, and some people do it more than others. We would like to find out how often you compare yourself with other people. To do that we would like to ask you to indicate how much you agree with each statement below.

1 = I disagree strongly

2 = I disagree

3 = I neither agree nor disagree

4 = I agree

5 = I agree strongly

1. I often compare myself with others with respect to what I have accomplished in life
2. If I want to learn more about something, I try to find out what others think about it
3. I always pay a lot of attention to how I do things compared with how others do things
4. I often compare how my loved ones (boy or girlfriend, family members, etc.) are doing with how others are doing
5. I always like to know what others in a similar situation would do
6. I am not the type of person who compares often with others
7. If I want to find out how well I have done something, I compare what I have done with how others have done

8. I often try to find out what others think who face similar problems as I face
9. I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences
10. I never consider my situation in life relative to that of other people
11. I often compare how I am doing socially (e.g., social skills, popularity) with other people

## VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Siqi Huang

PLACE OF BIRTH: Zhuhai, China

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1993

EDUCATION: Dr. Norman Bethune Collegiate Institute,  
Toronto, ON

McMaster University, Hamilton, ON  
Honours BSc in Biology and Psychology, 2015