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Defining Imaginary Audience Scores Via Gender Attributes Versus Biological Gender

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Defining Imaginary Audience Scores Via
Gender Attributes Versus Biological Gender

by

George M. Freeman

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

Imaginary audience scores for males and females have not demonstrated consistent differences in the literature. In this study, scores on the Imaginary Audience Scale (IAS) and on the Imaginary Audience subscale of the Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism scale (AES) were compared to self-rating of gender attributes on the Personality Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ). Results for 64 females and 32 males surveyed at a southeastern university indicate that one's self-rating of gender attributes correlates with imaginary audience scores while biological gender does not. As masculine attribute scores increase, IAS scores and Abiding Self subscale scores decrease. As masculine-feminine attribute scores (traits favored by both sexes) increase, imaginary audience scores increase on all measures.

Defining Imaginary Audience Scores Via Gender Attributes Versus Biological Gender

One common trait among adolescents is egocentrism, which can be defined as “an inadequate differentiation between one's own thoughts and feelings and those of others” (Atwater, 1992, p. 84). This inability to differentiate one's own perspectives from those of others may lead adolescents to become more self-centered and self-conscious. One of the ways that this self-centeredness is manifested is the *imaginary audience*, which is characterized by the feeling that one is the focus of others' attention (e.g., everyone is looking at me, is interested in what I have to say, knows about me).

Review of Literature

Lapsley, Fitzgerald, Rice, and Jackson (1989) describe three phases in researching adolescent egocentrism. During the first phase, the term *imaginary audience* was operationalized and the effects of age and sex, as well as other correlates, were determined. During the second phase, researchers tested the idea that adolescent egocentrism correlates with formal operational thought. The third and current phase has resulted in redefining the imaginary audience construct in light of social cognitive development.

The initial thrust toward studying adolescent egocentrism began with David Elkind in 1967. Elkind defined the imaginary audience as a construct of adolescent egocentrism. Adolescents are consumed with their own appearance and behavior and believe that others are equally interested. The feeling of being the focus of others' attention can lead adolescents to project their feelings onto their imaginary audience. If they are critical of

themselves, then naturally, the audience onto which they project their feelings will also be critical. With the many physical changes occurring in their bodies during adolescence, this is frequently the case. Adolescents often feel that some aspect of their body is not normal and that everyone else notices it. An adolescent displaying behavior associated with the imaginary audience is aptly described by Shakespeare as "a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage" (Macbeth, Act V, Scene v, lines 24-25). The imaginary audience can also be favorable or admiring. A good example of an admiring audience is adolescents' fantasies about how others will react to their death (realizing, too late, how wonderful the adolescent really was). The imaginary audience, in fact, accounts for a variety of remarkable adolescent behaviors, as described by Lapsley (1993):

The imaginary audience is invoked to explain a variety of phenomena, e.g., heightened adolescent self-consciousness, flamboyant behavior and faddish dress, great need for privacy and reluctance for self-disclosure, concern with shame, shyness, and embarrassment - - all of which are reactions that reflect the feeling of constantly being evaluated, watched, and judged by peers. (p. 563)

Elkind (1967) described imaginary audience behavior as a developmental process. His idea of egocentrism came from the work of Piaget (1962). Piaget believed that egocentrism is strongest at the beginning of a stage (where the child applies a new set of concepts in a very personal way) and that the child gradually "decenters" (is able to apply these concepts in more and varied situations) as the stage progresses. Elkind explained imaginary audience behavior in much the same way. The construct begins as a "series of hypotheses - - which the adolescent tests against reality" (Elkind 1967, p. 1032).

Through repeated testing of hypotheses comes the realization that differences exist between the adolescent's own preoccupations and those of others. Subsequently, adolescents modify beliefs about their perceived audience in the direction of the reactions of the real audience. Thus, they begin to see themselves "in a more realistic light" and learn that they are a lot like other people (e.g., "others have felt the same as I have"). Elkind's conceptualization of the imaginary audience construct sparked a new field of research.

A Scale is Born

In 1979 Elkind and Bowen published the Imaginary Audience Scale (IAS) for measuring the imaginary audience construct. The scale consists of two components, the Abiding Self and the Transient Self subscales. The *Abiding Self* (AS) subscale measures willingness to reveal one's permanent characteristics (e.g., abilities, personality traits, who you really are). It is also referred to as the "enduring self." The AS subscale describes six situations in which one's permanent characteristics are called into question (e.g., "When someone watches me work..." - "I get very nervous/I don't mind at all/I get a little nervous"). The *Transient Self* (TS) subscale measures willingness to reveal one's temporary characteristics (present hairstyle, clothing, immediate behavior). It is also referred to as the "outward self." The TS subscale describes six situations in which one's temporary characteristics are called into question (e.g., "Suppose you went to a party that you thought was a costume party but when you got there you were the only person wearing a costume. You'd like to stay and have fun with your friends, but your costume is very noticeable. Would you stay or go home?" - "Go home/Stay and have fun joking

about your costume/Stay, but try to borrow some clothes to wear”). Adolescents respond to each question on the IAS by indicating how willing they would be to participate in each situation, given the circumstances. Higher scores on either subscale indicate more concern about revealing that aspect of one’s personality.

Elkind and Bowen (1979) tested the scale on 697 participants in the 4th-, 6th-, 8th-, and 12th-grades and found that “both children and adolescents demonstrate relatively independent transient and abiding concepts of self” (p. 44). However, young adolescents were less likely to reveal either the abiding or transient self to an audience as compared to children and older adolescents. In addition, young adolescents were slightly more self-conscious about their abiding self as compared to their transient selves. In the pilot study, Elkind and Bowen, found that many young adolescents described ways to hide their temporary flaws from the audience. Thus, it is possible that young adolescents are just as concerned about the TS, but are able to conceal it. Later research would confirm that imaginary audience scores peak in early adolescence and decrease with age (Enright, Shukla, & Lapsley, 1980; Hauck, Martens, & Wetzel, 1986; and Lapsley, Fitzgerald, Rice, & Jackson, 1989).

Gender differences were also demonstrated (Elkind & Bowen, 1979). Specifically, girls scored higher on the AS and the TS subscales at all grade levels compared to boys. The authors attributed this to girls being more self-conscious than boys. For many years the IAS was the primary means of measuring imaginary audience behavior. Adapted versions of the IAS have also been used successfully by researchers (Holmbeck, Crossman, Wandrei, & Gasiewski, 1994).

The Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism Scale

The Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism Scale (AES) was developed by Enright, Lapsley, and Shukla (1979). This scale measures three aspects of adolescent egocentrism: the personal fable, the imaginary audience, and self-focus. In their pilot study, they found that imaginary audience scores for young adolescents were higher compared to scores for late adolescents and college students. Enright, Shukla, and Lapsley (1980) used the scale in a later study and found that imaginary audience scores decreased with age, lending support to Elkind's theory.

The Gender Controversy

Other researchers have confirmed Elkind and Bowen's finding that females demonstrate higher imaginary audience scores compared to males across age-groups. For example, Enright, Shukla, and Lapsley (1980) found that adolescent and college females scored higher than males on the Imaginary Audience portion of the AES. Riley, Adams, and Nielsen (1984) found that young adolescent females scored higher on the AS subscale and on the IAS total score compared to males. Hauck, Martens, and Wetzel (1986) found that early and late adolescent females scored higher on the IAS than did males. Ryan and Kuczkowski (1994) found that female adolescents scored higher on the TS subscale compared to males.

Other researchers have also presented conflicting results for male and female imaginary audience scores. For example, Anolik (1981) found that female adolescents scored lower on the TS subscale compared to adolescent males. Buis and Thompson (1989), in reviewing the literature, note that conflicting results for males and females

abound. Jahnke and Blanchard-Fields (1993) found no gender differences on the IAS for adolescents and university students. Likewise, Holmbeck, Crossman, Wandrei, and Gasiewski (1994) using the New Imaginary Audience Scale (NIAS) found no gender differences for high school students and college freshmen. The gender controversy has led several researchers to look more closely at what determines imaginary audience scores.

Gender and Socialization

Enright, Shukla, and Lapsley (1980) attribute the sex difference in their study to middle class socialization. They explain that “females in our middle class culture are encouraged to seek approval from others and to take into account other’s thoughts and feelings in decision making” (p. 112). In contrast, they surmise that children who are socialized in reality testing or taught to be internally motivated could demonstrate less concern with what others think during adolescence. Anolik (1981) suggests that socialization, peer relations and one’s social network might account for differences in imaginary audience scores. He theorized that urban teenagers may experience more pressure to conform to group norms than rural teenagers. He attributed this to urban teenagers encountering a greater social network on a daily basis. Riley, Adams, and Nielsen (1984) list factors from several studies that may account for differences in egocentrism, e.g., “different school environments... racial heritage and the social context surrounding race...attitudes toward sex roles, peer relations, and feelings about changing looks during adolescence...parent-child relations...parenting styles” (p. 403).

It is also possible that a cohort effect exists. For instance, one generation of adolescents may respond to imaginary audience measures in ways that are consistently

different compared to other generations. Imaginary audience behavior could also be indirectly affected by other variables such as the media's focus on the transient aspects of the female and the male body. As it stands, the gender controversy over imaginary audience scores has not been clearly resolved.

Favorable Versus Unfavorable Audiences

Another aspect of the imaginary audience that has generated discussion in recent years is the issue of a favorable versus an unfavorable imaginary audience. Since the imaginary audience is of the adolescent's own construction, a favorable audience should indicate less stress for the young person compared to one that is critical.

Adams, Abraham, and Markstrom (1987) examined the relationship between *identity status* and degree of self-referencing and self-focusing behaviors. Marcia (1966) explains that one's identity status falls within four categories: identity diffused, identity foreclosed, moratorium and identity achieved. These categories are based on whether the individual has experienced an identity crisis and whether or not a commitment has been made to a particular identity. They are described as follows: *identity diffused* indicates that an identity crisis has not been experienced (or is not yet resolved) and a commitment to an identity has not occurred; *identity foreclosed* indicates that an identity crisis has not occurred, however a commitment has been made to an identity; in *moratorium*, an identity crisis has occurred, but a commitment has not been made to an identity; and being *identity achieved* indicates that an individual has both experienced an identity crisis and made a commitment to an identity.

Using Marcia's categories, the researchers hypothesized that identity achieved

adolescents should perceive themselves as more self-assured and others as more favorable toward them. As a result, they should be more willing to reveal themselves to others as compared to those who were diffused, foreclosed, or moratorium. Their hypothesis was confirmed. Being identity-achieved was associated with greater willingness to reveal one's abiding self and transient self to others on the Imaginary Audience Scale (IAS). They concluded that the identity process was crucial in developing "a sense of self that is highly self-satisfying, that engenders an anticipation of approval by others, and that minimizes anxiety or emotional uneasiness at being the focus of attention in potentially embarrassing or self-revealing situations." (p. 294)

Baron (1986) found that egocentrism declines with age if associated with positive views of self and others. Ryan and Kuczkowski (1994) criticized the ability of the IAS to measure a positive or favorable imaginary audience. They claimed that the audience measured by the IAS is evaluative, critical, and even threatening.

Testing the Formal Operations Link

From the beginning, Elkind (1967) linked adolescent egocentrism with formal operational thought. He stated that "Formal operational thought not only enables the adolescent to conceptualize his thought, it also permits him to conceptualize the thought of other people" (p. 1029). This suggests that there can be no imaginary audience construct without the presence of formal operational thought. He further explained that egocentrism diminishes as formal operations becomes firmly established at age 15 or 16.

Riley, Adams, and Nielsen (1984) examined the literature on adolescent egocentrism and did not find consistent evidence for the formal operations link. They

explain that “It is possible that adolescent egocentrism is not directly associated with cognitive development but rather is the by-product of social experiences that parallel cognitive maturation but are not caused by it” (p. 403). They administered the IAS and formal operations tasks to seventh graders and did find support for the formal operations link to imaginary audience scores. They concluded that the increased ability to problem solve in formal operations would reduce feelings of self-consciousness in social situations for the adolescent, especially for the social aspects of the transient self. A few years later, however, O’Connor and Nikolic (1990) found that there was no significant relationship between egocentrism and the emergence of formal operations. Jahnke and Blanchard-Fields (1993) also noted the inconsistencies in the literature regarding egocentrism’s relation to emerging formal operational thought. The results of their study did not find formal operations to be a significant predictor of imaginary audience scores.

The Question of Which Scale to Use

The two most popular scales used to address adolescent egocentrism are the AES and the IAS. Some researchers have questioned whether the two scales are actually measuring the same construct (Cohn et al. 1988; Jahnke & Blanchard-Fields, 1993; and O’Connor, 1995). Cohn et al. (1988) claimed that the two scales measured “distinctly different phenomenon.” They explain the difference as follows:

Enright’s AES attempts to measure the defining aspect of egocentrism, that is, the failure to distinguish one’s own mental contents from those attributed to other people. In contrast, Elkind’s IAS scale is designed to measure a by-product of egocentrism: self-consciousness. (P. 219)

Jahnke and Blanchard-Fields (1993) made similar observations. In their study, the only relationship between the two measures was “a low positive correlation $r = .23$) between the IAS and the Imaginary Audience subscale of the AES” (p. 320).

O'Connor (1995) contrasted the profiles of high scorers on both scales.

Individuals scoring high on the IAS would be self-conscious with low self-esteem and those scoring high on the AES would be self-conscious and feel unique (regardless of self-esteem). He concludes that the two scales are not strongly correlated and that the AES is a better measure of adolescent egocentrism. The IAS, on the other hand, relates more to self-esteem.

Interpersonal Understanding Versus Egocentrism

Lapsley and Murphy (1985) began to look at the imaginary audience construct as a component of interpersonal understanding. This was in contrast to Elkind's (1967) idea that adolescent egocentrism diminished when formal operations became firmly established. They argued that egocentrism at each stage diminishes with the cognitive skills of the next stage, not with the current stage becoming firmly established. They further argued that egocentrism alone can not explain the behavior associated with the imaginary audience construct. Lapsley and Murphy (1985) advocate a social cognitive developmental approach instead and examined imaginary audience behavior in light of levels of role taking in adolescence.

They used Selman's (1980) levels of interpersonal understanding as a basis for social cognitive development. Selman's role taking sequence consists of 5 stages (0-4) that are governed by social role-taking capabilities. The following is a brief description of

Selman's levels from Lapsley and Murphy (1985): *Level 0* relates to a young child who cannot decipher between internal and external states; *Level 1* relates to the child who can understand inner and outer states, but cannot see self through another's eyes; *Level 2* relates to a child who can see self through others' eyes and modify behavior; *Level 3*, relates to an early adolescent who can take on a third-party perspective (at this level, the adolescents have a self-awareness of their own self-awareness, thus self-consciousness); and *Level 4* relates to an adolescent who can integrate all possible third-party interactions.

Lapsley and Murphy (1985) explain that "imaginary audience constructions emerge from the wedding of two emergent social-cognitive skills, the ability to think hypothetically (formal operations) and the ability to mentally step outside dyadic relations and reflect on self-other interactions (Level 3 perspective taking)" (p. 212). They conclude that imaginary audience and self-consciousness are both characteristic of Selman's Level 3 perspective taking and that they diminish with the onset of Level 4. Jahnke and Blanchard-Fields (1993) hypothesized that interpersonal understanding would be a better predictor of imaginary audience scores than formal operations. Instead, they found that neither were significant predictors for the IAS nor for the Imaginary Audience subscale of the AES.

Lapsley, Fitzgerald, Rice, and Jackson (1989) state that the imaginary audience is an ideation pattern that advances adolescent ego development. These patterns happen as a result of the separation-individuation process whereby adolescents "de-idealize" their parents and no longer depend on them for self-esteem. This loss of support is compensated for by private fantasies that allow the adolescent to maintain an imagined

sense of interpersonal connectedness with others (Lapsley, 1993).

Imaginary Audience as a Coping Mechanism

Lapsley (1993) further examined the imaginary audience construct in light of normal development and adolescent coping. What was previously seen as a negative part of adolescence was now hailed as a positive outcome. He explained that:

...this new look suggests that these ideations are not merely unfortunate and lamentable features of adolescent development, but are, in fact, important coping mechanisms that contribute to the resilience of adolescents as they face the travails of growing up. (p. 567)

He called them normative, adaptive “illusions” and “positive features” (p. 567) that are not restricted to adolescence, but might extend into post adolescence - later noting that “they serve broad adaptational and coping functions” (p. 570).

Peterson and Roscoe (1991) surveyed female college freshmen and found that their IAS scores approximated those of 6th-graders in Elkind and Bowen’s (1979) study. They explained that the increase in imaginary audience behavior is an expected coping strategy that represents a normal adjustment pattern for females entering college. They also suggested that additional research might focus on whether imaginary audience behavior occurred at “times of transition” throughout the lifespan, where “times of transition” implies adaptation to new situations. In an earlier study, Peterson (1982) found no evidence that imaginary audience behavior was restricted to adolescence. If the imaginary audience is not confined to adolescence, then it is certainly possible that it may reappear whenever new situations are encountered throughout the lifespan.

The Parent-Child Relationship

Several researchers agree that imaginary audience scores diminish in late adolescence in the presence of secure parental relationships (Anolik, 1981; Lapsley, 1993; Riley, Adams, & Nielsen, 1984; and Ryan & Kuczkowski, 1994). Anolik (1981) suggested that limited parental support in the family may make it difficult for an adolescent to appreciate the realistic views of others, resulting in increased states of egocentrism in social situations. He found that imaginary audience behavior persisted longer for delinquent compared to nondelinquent males. Delinquent males were especially concerned about short embarrassing situations (TS) and Anolik attributed this to low parental support. He explained that the low support was a result of delinquents rejecting their fathers.

Adams and Jones (1982) found that rejection-control by parents “was associated with increased imaginary audience behavior, while physical affection was negatively related to self-consciousness” (p. 25). In their study, rejection-control by parents was the most important predictor of self-consciousness for boys and high physical affection from parents was the best predictor for girls. Companionship with parents was found to increase self-consciousness for both boys and girls. The authors explain that adolescents may feel embarrassed about being seen with their parents, especially when it is a mother-son relationship.

Riley, Adams, and Nielsen (1984) determined that emotionally supportive parents decrease the likelihood of high states of self-consciousness during early adolescence and that perceived parental rejection predicted heightened self-conscious behavior. They also

found that perceived paternal physical affection decreased self-consciousness for boys and that it increased self-consciousness for girls.

In summary, parental support appears to be crucial in modulating imaginary audience behavior in adolescents, since both companionship and rejection-control styles of parenting are correlated with increases in imaginary audience scores. For boys, parental physical affection is associated with decreases in imaginary audience scores, while the results for girls are mixed.

Thesis Statement

The purpose of this study is to clarify part of the puzzle concerning the biological gender differences that have been found in imaginary audience behavior. As shown in the literature review, a number of variables have been studied in relation to these gender differences (e.g., self-consciousness, socialization, peer relations, geographical location, identity achievement, social cognitive development, interpersonal understanding, coping mechanisms, parenting styles, and parent-child relations). It is possible that socialization affects one's preferences for gender attributes and that one's gender attributes, in turn, influences one's imaginary audience scores. Thus, persons rating themselves as having a high degree of feminine attributes, regardless of sex, could demonstrate different imaginary audience scores as compared to persons rating themselves as having a high degree of masculine attributes. In the current study imaginary audience scores are examined for females and males in relation to self-rating of gender attributes. In addition, the effects of age and other demographic variables on imaginary audience scores will be explored. Specifically, the following hypotheses are proposed: (a) Imaginary audience

scores will demonstrate a stronger relationship with self-rating of gender attributes on the Personality Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) as compared to biological gender; (b) As self-rating of masculine attributes on the PAQ increases, imaginary audience scores will decrease; (c) As self-rating of feminine attributes on the PAQ increases, imaginary audience scores will increase; (d) As age increases, imaginary audience scores will decrease.

Method

Participants

Students at a southeastern university were given the opportunity to earn extra credit by participating in research during a Spring semester. Ninety-six students chose to participate in this study (see Table 1 for demographic information).

Table 1

Demographic Information

Category	Gender	
	Men	Women
<i>N</i>	32	64
Age in Years		
<i>M</i>	25.2	27.6
<i>SD</i>	5.2	10.0
Range	19.0 - 40.4	15.2 - 53.9
Racial-Ethnic Origin		
African American	0	7
Asian	0	3
Caucasian	27	49
Hispanic	3	2
Other	2	3

Table 1 (Continued)

Category	Gender	
	Men	Women
Grade		
Freshman	1	3
Sophomore	2	8
Junior	18	37
Senior	9	12
Post-Baccalaureate	2	4
Marital Status		
Single	19	38
Married	9	18
Cohabiting	4	2
Separated	0	2
Divorced	0	4

Instruments

Demographics. A brief questionnaire was generated to obtain demographic information from participants (see Appendix A for a sample questionnaire).

Imaginary Audience Scale (IAS). The IAS, designed and published by Elkind and Bowen (1979), was one of the measures used to examine imaginary audience behavior in this study. The IAS is a 12-item questionnaire divided into two subscales: the Abiding-Self (AS) subscale and the Transient-Self (TS) subscale. The AS subscale measures situations involving one's inward or more enduring characteristics (e.g., abilities, talents) and the TS subscale measures situations involving one's outward or temporary characteristics (e.g., clothes, hairstyle). Items within each subscale measure respondents' willingness to participate in potentially embarrassing situations. Each item describes a

potentially embarrassing situation and includes three types of responses (willing to participate; uncomfortable, but willing to participate; and unwilling to participate). Being unwilling to participate results in a higher score, indicating greater concern about one's own imaginary audience. The IAS has been widely accepted as a valid and reliable measure (Elkind & Bowen, 1979; Riley, Adams, & Nielsen, 1984; Cohn et al. 1988; and Ryan & Kuczkowski, 1994).

The IAS was originally designed by Elkind and Bowen (1979) for use with 4th-through 12th-grades. In the present study, the IAS was modified to make it more appropriate for a college-aged population. Terms such as “adult visitors”, “school”, “teacher”, and “kids” were replaced with “visitors”, “class”, “professor”, and “people” respectively (see Appendix B for a sample IAS).

Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism Scale (AES). The AES designed and published by Enright, Shukla, and Lapsley (1980) was also used to examine imaginary audience behavior (see Appendix C for sample AES). The AES is a 15-item questionnaire that is divided into three subscales: egocentrism (also termed personal fable), sociocentrism (also termed imaginary audience, and of particular interest to this study), and nonsocial (also termed self-focus). Each subscale is measured by 5 statements that are responded to on a 5-point Likert scale based on the degree of importance each holds for the respondent (1= no importance to 5 = great importance).

The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ). The 24-Item PAQ designed by Spence and Helmreich (1978, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991) was used to examine participants' self-ratings of gender attributes. The PAQ consists of 24 bi-

polar adjectives on a 5-point Likert scale. Specifically, it lists personality traits that are stereotypically masculine (self-assertive - instrumental traits), feminine (interpersonal - expressive traits), or masculine-feminine (traits that vary favored by both sexes).

Respondents choose where they fall on the scale for each bipolar pair. In this manner, the PAQ is able to provide independent assessments of self-perceived masculinity, femininity, and masculinity-femininity (see Appendix D for a sample PAQ).

Procedure

Participants were surveyed on a walk-in basis over a two-week period during the middle of the Spring semester. Due to the method of administration, some participants were surveyed individually while others were surveyed in small groups. The instruments were counterbalanced to prevent priming effects and took approximately 30-minutes to complete.

Results

Five items on the demographic questionnaire were of interest to this study: age, biological gender, race, current status at school, and marital status (see Table 1 for details, p. 15). Preliminary analyses of variance revealed that, of the five, only age demonstrated a relationship with imaginary audience scores.

A correlation matrix between imaginary audience scores, age and scores on the PAQ can be found in Table 2 (p. 19). Age demonstrated a negative relationship with the IAS, the TS subscale, and the IAAES. Masculine attributes on the PAQ demonstrated negative relationships with the IAS and the AS subscale. Finally, Masculine-Feminine attributes on the PAQ (attributes favored by both sexes) demonstrated significant positive

Table 2

Correlation Matrix for Age and Measures

	AS	TS	IAAES	FPAQ	M-FPAQ	MPAQ	Age
IAS							
<i>r</i>	.839	.806	.314	.009	.343	-.323	-.249
<i>p</i>	***	***	**	.	***	***	**
AS							
<i>r</i>		.354	.176	-.027	.318	-.427	-.185
<i>p</i>		***	.	.	**	***	.
TS							
<i>r</i>			.348	.044	.244	-.091	-.227
<i>p</i>			***	.	*	.	*
IAAES							
<i>r</i>				.053	.354	-.058	-.357
<i>p</i>				.	***	.	***
FPAQ							
<i>r</i>					.250	-.026	.039
<i>p</i>					*	.	.
M-FPAQ							
<i>r</i>						-.047	-.126
<i>p</i>						.	.
MPAQ							
<i>r</i>							-.171
<i>p</i>							.

Note. IAS = Imaginary Audience Scale Score, AS = Abiding Self Subscale Score of the IAS, TS = Transient Self Subscale Score of the IAS, IAAES = Score for Imaginary Audience Portion of the Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism Scale, FPAQ = Self-rated scores for feminine attributes on the Personality Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ), MPAQ = Self-rated scores for masculine attributes on the PAQ, M-FPAQ = Self rated scores for attributes favored by both sexes on the PAQ. Correlations reaching significance are indicated with asterisks. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

relationships with scores on all of the imaginary audience measures. Interestingly, Feminine attributes on the PAQ did not significantly correlate with any of the imaginary audience measures.

A series of Step-wise Regression analyses were performed for each of the imaginary audience measures (IAS, AS, TS, IAAES) using the following as predictors: each of the PAQ subscales, biological gender, interactions between each of the PAQ subscales and biological gender, and age. All significant effects are presented in Table 3 (see page 21). Beta values indicate the direction of each relationship and the changes in Adjusted R-Square indicate the importance of each variable in predicting scores. Note that biological gender, interactions between biological gender and each subscale on the PAQ, as well as FPAQ were left out of all final equations. An examination of the changes in Adjusted R-Square reveal that scores on the MPAQ were the strongest predictor for scores on the AS subscale. Scores on the M-FPAQ were the strongest predictor for scores on the IAS and the TS subscale, while Age was the greatest predictor for scores on the IAAES. Two variables appeared to demonstrate a consistent relationship with all of the imaginary audience measures: scores on the M-FPAQ demonstrated a positive relationship with scores on all of the imaginary audience measures, whereas Age demonstrated a negative relationship. Scores on the PAQ were better predictors for scores on the IAS and its subscales as compared to age.

Table 3

Step-Wise Regressions Predicting Imaginary Audience Scores from Age and Scores on the Personality Attributes Questionnaire

	IAS	AS	TS	IAAES
MPAQ				
Beta	-.36	-.45	.	.
Adj. R^2 <i>change</i>	.09 (step 2)	.17 (step 1)	.	.
FPAQ				
M-FPAQ				
Beta	.29	.27	.22	.31
Adj. R^2 <i>change</i>	.11 (step 1)	.08 (step 2)	.05 (step 1)	.09 (step 2)
Age				
Beta	-.27	-.23	-.20	-.32
Adj. R^2 <i>change</i>	.06 (step 3)	.04 (step 3)	.03 (step 2)	.12 (step 1)
Final F	12.12	14.51	5.07	13.14
(df)	(3, 92)	(3, 92)	(2, 93)	(2, 91)
p	***	***	**	***

Note. Only significant results are reported. Each column represents a stepwise regression for a specific dependent measure. Beta weights reflect values during the final step and Changes in Adjusted R-Square scores reflect increases in R-Square value for each step. IAS = Imaginary Audience Scale Score, AS = Abiding Self Subscale Score of the IAS, TS = Transient Self Subscale Score of the IAS, IAAES = Score for Imaginary Audience Portion of the Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism Scale, FPAQ = Self-rated scores for feminine attributes on the Personality Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ), MPAQ = Self-rated scores for masculine attributes on the PAQ, M-FPAQ = Self rated scores for attributes favored by both sexes on the PAQ. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

Hypothesis (a) predicted that imaginary audience scores would demonstrate a stronger relationship with self-rating of gender attributes on the PAQ than with biological gender. This was confirmed; while PAQ-defined gender predicted imaginary audience scores, biological gender did not. Hypothesis (b) predicted that imaginary audience scores would decrease as self-rating of masculine attributes on the PAQ increased. This was confirmed for two of the imaginary audience measures (IAS & AS). Hypothesis (c) predicted that imaginary audience scores would increase as self-rating of feminine attributes on the PAQ increased. This was not supported, in that self-rating of feminine attributes did not demonstrate a relationship with any of the imaginary audience measures. Instead, it was found that scores on all imaginary audience measures increase as self-rating of attributes favored by both males and females increases. Finally, Hypothesis (d) predicted that imaginary audience scores would decrease with age. This was confirmed for all of the imaginary audience measures and particularly true of the IAAES.

The data from this study confirm the negative relationship between imaginary audience scores and age. However, whether this finding accurately portrays a change in one's perceived audience has been questioned by Vartanian (2000). Vartanian recognized the possibility that as people age, they may gain the ability to mask their imaginary audience with superior cognitive abilities (p. 651). Thus, one could outwardly demonstrate less concern with an imaginary audience (via IA measures and observed behavior) and inwardly experience great discomfort from the perceived imaginary audience. This issue is addressed in the current study by surveying a college-aged

population. Certainly their cognitive and social-cognitive abilities should be more advanced compared to early and middle adolescents. In addition, it would be expected that they would be more adept at presenting themselves in a favorable light. Regardless of these greater abilities, the negative relationship between imaginary audience scores and age continues. It would be interesting to compare scores from adolescents with scores from college students within the same study to determine whether a linear relationship exists.

Historically, the relationship between imaginary audience scores and biological gender have demonstrated mixed results. Vartanian (2000), in her very thorough summary of the research, questioned these results and expressed the need for “a more complete examination of gender patterns” in imaginary audience behavior. The findings in the present study suggest that imaginary audience scores and biological gender are not closely related, at least in this context. Instead, one’s self-rating of gender attributes as measured by the Personality Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) better accounts for differences in imaginary audience scores. Specifically, those scoring higher on masculine attributes are less concerned about revealing enduring characteristics (e.g., abilities, personality traits, who you really are) about themselves and have a lower overall imaginary audience score. In contrast, those scoring higher in attributes favored by both males and females are more concerned about revealing enduring and transient (e.g., present hairstyle, clothing, immediate behavior) characteristics about themselves and may be more self-conscious.

Researchers have suggested several reasons for imaginary audience behavior: self-

consciousness (Elkind & Bowen, 1979), middle class socialization (Enright, Shukla & Lapsley, 1980), one's social network based on geographic location (Anolik, 1981), parent-child relations and attitudes toward sex roles (Riley, Adams & Nielsen, 1984), social cognitive development (Lapsley & Murphy, 1985), adaptation during times of transition (Peterson & Roscoe, 1991), and adolescent coping (Lapsley, 1993). There is some agreement that socialization is a determining factor in imaginary audience scores for both males and females (Anolik, 1981; Enright, Shukla, & Lapsley, 1980; and Riley, Adams, & Nielsen, 1984). Considering that boys and girls may experience an array of gender-related influences while forming their identity, it is possible that the attributes one adopts, or views oneself as possessing, may influence gender style in adolescence or adulthood. The findings in this study are an indication that gender style (based on self-rating of gender attributes) may have a greater influence than biological gender - - at least where imaginary audience behavior is concerned.

The idea of self-rating of gender attributes superceding biological gender is not new. Bem (1975) used self-ratings of gender attributes on the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) to define three unique sex roles: masculine, feminine, and androgynous. Bem's androgynous sex role "represents the equal endorsement of both masculine and feminine attributes" (p. 636). The idea is that the androgynous individual would have the best of both worlds (e.g., responding in a masculine or feminine manner based on the needs of a given situation). Bem, Martyna, and Watson (1976) noted that the androgynous individual could even "blend these complementary modalities into a single act" (p. 1016).

Recently, the Personality Attributes Questionnaire and the Imaginary Audience

Scale have come under scrutiny. Todt-Stockman (2000) looked at the differences in PAQ scores between college students in 1973 and college students/alumni in 1997. She found that female students had increased in instrumentality (masculine traits) and had decreased in expressiveness (feminine traits), while the same traits for males remained consistent. This observation led Todt-Stockman to question the construct validity of the PAQ and to consider the possibility of changes in society related to sex-role theory. Vartanian (2000) questioned the ability of the IAS to measure the universal aspects of social-cognitive development, stating that it may better reflect issues that applied three or four decades ago (p. 656).

It is clear, examining the results of this study, that a relationship between self-rated gender attributes and imaginary audience scores is present. How far this relationship can be generalized by individuals and how stable it is over time remains to be seen.

Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

Please circle the term that applies to you:

1. Male Female
2. African-American Asian Caucasian Hispanic Indian Other
3. Current status at school:
Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate Post-Baccalaureate
4. Single Married Divorced Separated Cohabiting

Please fill in the blanks:

5. If Married, Divorced, Separated, or Cohabiting:
How long (years/months)? {if single, put NA} _____
6. How long (years/months) have you lived with the person(s) with whom you are currently living? _____
7. How many (years/months) have you lived in the Jacksonville area? {includes surrounding cities} _____
8. Approximately how long (years / months) have you attended the University of North Florida? _____
9. How many friends do you have at UNF? _____
10. How many close friends do you have at UNF? _____
11. How many courses have you taken in the field of psychology? _____
12. How old are you (years/months)? _____
13. What is your current G.P.A.? _____
14. What do you expect the level of difficulty to be for this term?
 1. very easy _____
 2. somewhat easy _____
 3. neutral _____
 4. somewhat difficult _____
 5. very difficult _____

Appendix B

Modification of Elkind and Bowen's (1979) Imaginary Audience Scale

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Appendix B (Continued)

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Appendix B (Continued)

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Appendix C

Adolescent Egocentrism-Sociocentrism Scale (Enright, Shukla, & Lapsley, 1979)

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Appendix C (Continued)

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Appendix D

Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974, 1975)

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

Appendix D (Continued)

Survey instrument deleted, paper copy available upon request.

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