6-1976

Relationships Between the Fear of Appearing Incompetent, Self-Estimated IQ, Obtained IQ and GPA

Cheryl Bateman

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FEAR OF APPEARING INCOMPETENT, SELF-ESTIMATED IQ, OBTAINED IQ, AND GPA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Cheryl Bateman
June 1976
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FEAR OF APPEARING INCOMPETENT, SELF-ESTIMATED IQ, OBTAINED IQ, AND GPA

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Acknowledgements

I want to extend my sincerest thanks to the students who made this study possible. Some served as participants, and others gathered data for me. These anonymous individuals are to be commended for their unselfish cooperation and assistance.

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Harry Robe, Dr. Robert Simpson, and Dr. Lynn Fred Clark for their invaluable personal assistance. I am especially grateful to Dr. Harry Robe whose insight and perseverance were extra-ordinary.

The following persons were also very supportive and influential in the completion of the study: S. Lamic, M. de Pietz, G. Seng, and O. Saing. I shall always be indebted to them for their warmth, affection, and cheerfulness.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pearsonian Correlations Between Major Variables</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tests of Significant Differences Between Means</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Percentages by Type of Estimator</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FEAR OF APPEARING
INCOMPETENT, SELF-ESTIMATED IQ, OBTAINED IQ, AND GPA

Cheryl Bateman
June 1976
31 pages

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The present study deals with the fear of appearing incompetent
as delineated by White, Goffman, and Adler. The fear of appearing
incompetent is an aspect of competence that may threaten self-esteem.
The fear of appearing incompetent can purportedly be measured by the
Fear of Appearing Incompetent Scale (FAIS).

It was found that the fear of appearing incompetent correlated
positively with self-estimated IQ, but correlated negatively with ob-
tained IQ. The fear of appearing incompetent had no significant re-
lationship to GPA. The fear of appearing incompetent in participants
who over-estimated their IQs did not differ significantly from the
fear of appearing incompetent in participants who under-estimated
their IQs. There was also no significant difference between the mean
self-estimated IQ and the mean obtained IQ. Out of a total of 68
participants 44% accurately estimated their IQs, 22% over-estimated
their IQs, and 34% under-estimated their IQs.
Introduction

The literature has suggested that an individual's perception of his intelligence, or his self-estimated IQ, is important to a number of personality variables. Among these variables are competence, the fear of appearing incompetent, and self-esteem. The relationship of these personality variables to self-estimated IQ has been discussed by White, Goffman, and Adler. These theorists believe that competence, or successful coping with the environment is important to the maintenance of self-esteem. Persons who have a low regard for their intelligence may develop a fear of appearing incompetent and de-value their self-esteem. These persons may doubt their ability to appear, be, and feel competent (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964; Goffman, 1955, 1959, 1967; White, 1966, 1972).

Studies dealing with self-estimated IQ have focused primarily on relationships between scores on IQ tests (obtained IQs), grade-point average (GPA), "ideal" IQ, and the type of friends with whom persons choose to associate (Bailey, Finney, and Bailey, 1974; Brim, 1954). The present study focuses on the fear of appearing incompetent and its relationship to self-estimated IQ, obtained IQ, accuracy of self-estimated IQ, and GPA.

Purportedly, the fear of appearing incompetent can be measured by the Fear of Appearing Incompetent Scale (FAIS). The FAIS was based on Goffman's face-work theory. It yields a single score
which is thought to reflect the degree to which an individual fears appearing incompetent. The higher a person's score, the more "fearful" he is purported to be (Good and Good, 1973).

The FAIS is useful for measuring the "fearful" aspects of competence. These aspects can be compared to self-estimated IQ, obtained IQ, accuracy of self-estimated IQ, and GPA. Because the FAIS has had only limited application it was necessary to examine some psychometric characteristics of the FAIS. This examination was done to determine whether the FAIS performed reliably in the present sample.
Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Competence may be defined as the successful exploration and manipulation of the environment. Competence begins at a biological level and develops into a social, interpersonal construct. According to White (1972, p. 210) there are two major types of competence: actual and subjective. Actual competence is a continuous process whereby a person manifests successful coping with his environment. Subjective competence is a "sense of competence". It is an individual's perception of his actual competence. An individual may perceive that he is more competent than he actually is.

Although the terminology used by Goffman differs from that used by White, the two theorists have similar views on competence. The term face-work is used by Goffman (1955, pp. 213-231; 1967, p. 12) to label the behaviors associated with competence. The person who is adept at face-work deals successfully with his environment. Such a person has perfected a variety of social skills which have been prescribed by society. Among these skills are poise, abilities, restraint, assertiveness, and knowledge. Each of these skills is "role" and situation-specific (Goffman, 1959, p. 44, p. 56).

What Adler terms common sense is comparable to the concepts of face-work and competence. When a person usefully applies his common sense he generally appears, feels, and is competent. In order
for a person to usefully apply his common sense he must have good self-esteem, well-ordered goals, reason, and social interest (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, pp. 157-159).

White, Goffman, and Adler each believe that people are motivated to appear, be, and feel competent. This motivation begins within the individual and is later supported by others with whom the individual interacts (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, p. 113; Goffman, 1959, p. 43; White, 1972, p.210). White (1972, p. 272) and Adler (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, p. 138) cite the need to "belong" as the basic motive behind competence. Goffman (1955, pp. 213-231) cites "personal emotions" (such as fear, pride, avoidance of hostility, compassion, and the expression of power) as motives behind competence.

Competence is believed to be critically important to the maintenance of self-esteem. However, for some persons competence is difficult to achieve, and the self-esteem of these persons is damaged. When a person's self-esteem is damaged he most likely feels or has appeared incompetent. This type of person may have feelings of inferiority, compensatory behaviors, neurotic anxiety, the tendency to avoid threatening situations, and the tendency to make false claims about his abilities. The person with damaged self-esteem may also develop a fear of appearing incompetent (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, pp. 109-110; Goffman, 1955, pp. 213-231; and White, 1966, p.12, 1972, p. 214, p. 294).

The fear of appearing incompetent may be associated with a variety of situations. The present study focuses on the fear of appearing incompetent in an academic situation, the university setting. In the university setting intelligence is a critical variable.
White (1972, p. 353) believes that IQ, learning, and competence are contingent upon each other. The more a person learns, the more competent he is likely to appear, feel, and be. Hence, a person’s self-estimated IQ and his obtained IQ both influence learning and competence in the university setting.

Goffman (1967, p. 107) also believes that IQ and knowledge influence how competent a person is, feels, and appears. The person whose self-estimated IQ or obtained IQ is below societal standards may develop a fear of appearing incompetent.

Adler considers intelligence from a somewhat different point of view. In the broadest sense there are two types of intelligence: common and personal. Common intelligence, i.e. common sense, leads to and maintains competence. Personal intelligence may lead to neurosis and incompetence. Common sense and IQ are integrally related, but they are not equivalent nor particularly contingent upon each other. A person may have above average common sense but have a below average IQ, and vice versa. Correlates of IQ (such as GPA) may not correlate positively with common sense. It is possible that GPA would not correlate positively with competence or the fear of appearing incompetent (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, pp. 150-151; Tyler, 1974, pp. 26-27).

Brim (1954) examined self-estimated IQ and its relationship to GPA and obtained IQ. Brim (1954) asked 103 under-graduate students to be participants. The self-estimates of IQ were gathered in the following manner: The participants were asked to assume that they were among “100 randomly selected college students” of their same class standing. The participants were then asked to estimate the
rank they thought they would have among the "100 randomly selected college students." The estimated ranks ranged from 1 (highest) to 100 (lowest). Each rank was based on what the participant believed his IQ to be.

The participants' obtained IQs and GPAs were acquired from school records. The obtained IQs were scores on the American Council Psychological Examination. The GPAs were the participants' current college GPAs. Brim (1954) found that (1) participants tended to over-estimate their IQs, and (2) there was no significant relationship between self-estimated IQs and GPAs (r = .20, p < .05).

Brim's findings may be interpreted from the viewpoints of White, Goffman, and Adler. The tendency to over-estimate IQs may reflect a fear of appearing incompetent. The participants may have falsely claimed to have more intelligence than they actually believed they had. However, it would have been just as possible for participants to under-estimate or accurately estimate their IQs in order to appear competent. The lack of a significant relationship between GPA and self-estimated IQ may indicate that the self-estimated IQs were based on a preferable or "ideal" IQ rather than GPA or classroom performance. It is also possible that self-estimated IQs were based on the fear of appearing incompetent and the need to preserve self-esteem (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, p. 248; Goffman, 1967, p. 107).

Bailey, et al. (1974) also studied self-estimated IQ. In this study the relationships between self-estimated IQ, obtained IQ, "ideal" IQ, and choice of friend were examined. There were 50 participants in the study who rated their IQs as being either "far below average, below average, average, above average, or far above
average" in relation to others of their same class standing. The participants then rated their "ideal" IQs as being "far below average, below average, etc." After the participants' ratings of their IQs had been gathered each participant was administered the Otis-Lennon Test.

The discrepancy between the self-estimated IQ rating and the "ideal" IQ rating was calculated for each participant. Participants who indicated that they wanted an "ideal" IQ higher than their self-estimated IQ were classified as "low acceptance". Participants who indicated that they were satisfied with their self-estimated IQ (ie. those who had only a small discrepancy between their self-estimated IQ and their "ideal" IQ) were classified as "high acceptance" (Bailey, et al., 1974).

The Otis-Lennon Test scores of the "low acceptance" and "high acceptance" groups did not differ significantly. The Otis-Lennon Test scores of the "low acceptance" group correlated positively with the respective self-estimated IQs (r = .53, p < .01). There was no significant relationship between the Otis-Lennon Test scores and the self-estimated IQs of the "high acceptance" group (r = -.10, p > .05) (Bailey, et al., 1974).

Bailey, et al. (1974) also found that participants in the "low acceptance" group tended to have Otis-Lennon Test scores that were very close to their self-estimated IQs. The participants in the "high acceptance" group tended to greatly over-estimate their Otis-Lennon Test scores.

Another dimension of the Bailey, et al. (1974) study involved choice of friend. The participants were asked to estimate the IQ of
of a friend in the same manner in which they had estimated their own IQs. Participants in the "low acceptance" group tended to have friends whom they rated as being brighter than themselves. Participants in the "high acceptance" group tended to have friends whom they rated as being less bright than themselves.

Bailey, et al. (1974) interpreted these findings as follows: the "low acceptance" group associated with friends with whom they could identify and vicariously fulfill their need for higher intelligence. The "high acceptance" group associated with friends who would not cause them to "lose face" and thereby damage their self-esteem.

An alternate interpretation consistent with the views of White, Goffman, and Adler is: Persons in the "low acceptance" group may have desired higher IQs because they feared appearing incompetent. Such persons may have equated IQ with competence. Persons in the "high acceptance" group may have chosen non-threatening friends so they would be less likely to appear incompetent (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, pp. 109-112; Goffman, 1959, p. 43).

The findings of Bailey, et al. (1974) and Brim (1954) may indicate that the fear of appearing incompetent affected participants' self-estimated IQs and the estimated IQs of friends. The participants may have over-estimated IQs to protect self-esteem and to appear competent. Participants in the "high acceptance" group over-estimated their IQs, but denied being dissatisfied with their self-estimated IQs. These "high acceptance" participants may believe that if they present themselves as being bright that they will also appear competent. To safeguard their presentation of brightness, these persons chose to associate with "less bright" persons. These types of
associations protect the facade of brightness (Goffman, 1959, p. 43).

Participants in the "low acceptance" group perceived their friends to be brighter than themselves (Bailey, et al., 1974). This finding may indicate the presence of a deliberate, self-demeaning attitude among "low acceptance" persons. These people may intentionally present themselves as less bright and therefore less competent than their friends. This type of presentation is an avoidance coping style where persons deny their actual ability. As long as "low acceptance" persons deny their ability, their ability may not be tested. These persons can maintain their self-esteem and feel competent because they are not threatened. Ironically, they manage to appear as competent as they desire because little is usually expected of them (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, p. 245; Goffman, 1959, p. 47; White, 1972, p. 272).
Chapter III
Statement of Problem

The differences between the studies of Bailey, et al. (1974) and Brim (1954) prohibit the reaching of definite conclusions. Although the treatments, procedures, and findings differed, these studies constitute the basis of research on self-estimated IQ. These studies show that students are able to estimate their IQs with varying degrees of accuracy. Students do seem to have some perception of their own IQs as well as the IQs of friends. However, present understanding of self-estimated IQ is quite limited.

The present study treated self-estimated IQs and FAIS scores as indices of self-esteem. The relationship of self-estimated IQ to FAIS scores, obtained IQs, and GPAs was investigated. Aspects of over-estimating and under-estimating IQs were also examined.

FAIS scores and self-estimated IQs were expected to correlate positively. It was assumed that the more "fearful" a person is of the academic setting, the more incompetent he is likely to feel. It was also expected that the more incompetent a person feels, the more likely he is to try to disguise his incompetence. Therefore, a person's fear of appearing incompetent would be reflected in his self-estimated IQ (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, p.245; Goffman, 1959, p. 44; White, 1972, p. 214).

Obtained IQ and FAIS scores were expected to correlate nega-
tively. The rationale for this hypothesis was that as knowledge and abilities increase IQ also increases. As IQ increases, the fear of appearing incompetent should decrease (Tyler, 1974, pp. 44-45; White, 1972, p. 343).

GPA and FAIS scores were expected to correlate negatively. It was presumed that the student is aware that his GPA is or is not what others would expect it to be. The student perhaps knows whether or not his GPA is satisfactory by his own personal standards. If a student's GPA is not satisfactory by his and/or others' standards, his FAIS score should reflect this dissatisfaction. Logically it followed that the lower the FAIS score, the higher the GPA (White, 1972, p.340).

It was hypothesized that the mean FAIS score of over-estimators would not differ significantly from the mean FAIS score of under-estimators. A person may make false claims about his abilities by either over-estimating or under-estimating his IQ. In effect he may either deny abilities that he has, or pretend to have abilities that he lacks. Each of these false claims may be a type of avoidance designed to make the person appear competent (White, 1966, p. 12).

The mean self-estimated IQ was not expected to be significantly higher than the mean obtained IQ. This hypothesis was in contradiction to the findings of Bailey, et al. (1974) and Brim (1954) who each reported a tendency for participants to over-estimate their IQs. However, the positions of White, Goffman, and Adler do not indicate that most persons would over-estimate their IQs. White (1972, p. 272), Goffman (1967, p. 107) and Adler (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, pp. 211-212) believe that persons may choose a variety of
coping techniques in order to appear competent. A person may deliberately over-estimate, under-estimate, or even accurately estimate his IQ. The accuracy of his estimation depends upon (1) his understanding of IQ, (2) his emotional needs, and (3) his fear of appearing incompetent. Because these variables may influence the mean self-estimated IQ, it was not expected to be significantly higher than the mean obtained IQ.

The proportion of over-estimators was not expected to differ significantly from the proportion of under-estimators. A person may over-estimate, under-estimate, or accurately estimate his IQ in order to appear competent. Any given person is as likely to estimate one way as he is another (White, 1966, p. 12). The proportions were therefore not expected to differ significantly.

Summary of Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. FAIS scores and self-estimated IQs were expected to correlate positively.

Hypothesis 2. FAIS scores and obtained IQs were expected to correlate negatively.

Hypothesis 3. It was hypothesized that FAIS scores and GPAs would correlate negatively.

Hypothesis 4. The mean FAIS score of over-estimators was not expected to differ significantly from the mean FAIS score of under-estimators.

Hypothesis 5. It was predicted that the mean self-estimated IQ would not differ significantly from the mean obtained IQ.

Hypothesis 6. The proportion of over-estimators was not
expected to differ significantly from the proportion of under-estimators.
Chapter IV

Methods

Sample. The participants were students enrolled in under-graduate psychology classes at Western Kentucky University (WKU). Each participant had volunteered to be administered an IQ test and to receive feedback on the results of the IQ test. A total of 72 participants were involved in the study. There were 25 males and 47 females.

Instruments. The data were gathered by two instruments and by interviewing procedures. The instruments employed were the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (SBIS) and the FAIS. The SBIS used in the study was the revised 1972 norms edition.

The FAIS was published in 1973. It was designed to objectively measure an individual's fear of appearing incompetent. The FAIS consists of 36 true-false statements that were derived from Goffman's face-work theory. Each statement is designed to represent a situation wherein a person might fear appearing incompetent (Good and Good, 1973).

The FAIS is a self-report, paper-and-pencil scale that may be group or individually administered. It is scored manually, and one point is given for each "fearful" response. A total score may be obtained by summing the number of "fearful" responses. The FAIS items and a scoring key for "fearful" responses are given in Appendix A (Good and Good, 1973).
The FAIS was standardized on a sample of 355 under-graduate psychology students. FAIS scores ranged from 0 to 36. The overall mean score was 15.00, and the standard deviation was 7.28. The standardization sample was divided by sex. The mean FAIS score for males was 13.90, and the standard deviation was 7.30. The mean FAIS score for females was 16.01, and the standard deviation was 7.12 (Good and Good, 1973).

The mean FAIS scores of males and females were found to differ significantly ($t = 2.76, p \leq .05$). This difference indicated that females tended to have significantly more "fearful" responses than males (Good and Good, 1973).

Item reliability coefficients were derived from the standardization data. The coefficients ranged from .29 to .59. The mean item reliability coefficient was .44 (Good and Good, 1973). A minimum reliability coefficient of .32 was necessary for variance to be accounted for at the .05 level of significance. It is therefore likely that at least one item (the item whose item reliability coefficient was .29) was not accounting for significant variance and should have been omitted. Nevertheless, the mean item reliability coefficient probably indicates that most FAIS items accounted for significant variance ($p \leq .01$). On the basis of this mean reliability coefficient, most of the FAIS items were sufficiently reliable (Guilford, 1954).

The internal consistency of the FAIS in the standardization sample was also determined. The Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 yielded a moderately high coefficient of .89 (Good and Good, 1973). This coefficient may be interpreted to mean that the FAIS adequately
measured a unitary construct (Guilford, 1954).

The performance of the FAIS in the present sample was generally comparable to its performance in the standardization sample. The over-all mean FAIS score in the present sample was 14.33. This mean did not differ significantly from the over-all standardization mean (t = .72, p < .05). The range of the FAIS scores in the present sample was 1 to 35, and was practically the same as the standardization range.

The internal consistency of the FAIS in the present sample was also nearly equivalent to the internal consistency based on the standardization sample. The reliability coefficient (from the Kuder-Richardson Formula 21) was .85 for the present sample. The internal consistency of the FAIS has thus far been stable (Guilford, 1954).

The present FAIS performance differed from the standardization performance in one major respect: it did not discriminate between the mean scores of males and females. In the present sample the mean FAIS score for males was 13.75, and the mean FAIS score for females was 14.65. A t test revealed no significant difference between these two means (t = .50, df = 65, p < .05). It is believed that this lack of significant difference may have resulted from a sampling bias. The females, whose mean FAIS score was lower than expected, may represent a different type of volunteer than those who were in the standardization sample. Perhaps females who volunteer to be administered IQ tests tend to have a lower fear of appearing incompetent than females in the general population of under-graduate psychology students. Further sampling is needed to determine the source of this aspect of the FAIS' performance. Additional statistics concerning
the performance of the FAIS in the present sample are given in Appendices B and C.

**Procedures and Treatments.** All administration of treatments and interviewing was done by graduate clinical psychology students (examiners). The data were gathered during the fall semester of 1975 at the WKU Psychological Clinic. Each participant received comparable treatments although the time intervals between treatments varied across participants. The treatments consisted of the following: (1) gathering the self-estimated IQs, (2) obtaining the GPAs, (3) administering the SBISs, and (4) administering the FAIS.

The examiners first asked the participants to give a self-estimate of their IQ. After recording the self-estimated IQ the examiners asked the participants to state their current college GPA. The interviewing procedures used to gather these data are given in Appendix D.

After recording the GPA the examiners administered the SBIS. When the SBIS had been administered the examiners made an appointment with each participant for feedback of SBIS results.

When the participants arrived for feedback they were asked to complete a short survey. The examiners gave each participant a copy of the "Survey of Student Attitudes" and told the participants to follow the instructions at the beginning of the survey. The "Survey of Student Attitudes" was actually the FAIS. The title "Survey of Student Attitudes" was substituted to minimize the possible effects of a socially desirable response set. When the participants had completed the "Survey of Student Attitudes" the examiners explained the results of the SBIS. The examiners did not explain the nature or
purpose of the "Survey of Student Attitudes", but a de-briefing was given following the feedback session (see Appendix D).

Statistical Analyses. The statistical procedures employed to test the hypotheses involved \( t \) tests and Pearsonian correlations. The rejection region for each hypothesis was \( p \leq .05 \). A \( t \) test for significant difference between the means of independent samples was used to contrast group means. This \( t \) test was used to contrast the mean self-estimated IQ and the mean obtained IQ. It was also used to contrast the mean FAIS score of under-estimators and the mean FAIS score of over-estimators.

Over-estimators were participants whose self-estimated IQs were one or more standard errors of measurement above their obtained IQs. Under-estimators were participants whose self-estimated IQs were one or more standard errors of measurement below their obtained IQs. One standard error of measurement was equal to 5 points. The standard error of measurement was used to determine over-estimation and under-estimation because it is the statistic conventionally used to delineate measurement error in individually administered tests. Hence, self-estimated IQs that fell within one standard error of measurement of their obtained IQs were considered accurate estimates of IQ (Guilford, 1954).

A \( z \) statistic was employed to test for significant difference between independent proportions. This statistic was calculated to contrast the proportion of over-estimators with the proportion of under-estimators.

The Pearsonian \( r \) statistic was computed to measure the extent of the relationship between the following variables: (1) FAIS score
and GPA, (2) FAIS score and self-estimated IQ, and (3) FAIS score and obtained IQ.
Chapter V
Results

FAIS scores and self-estimated IQs correlated positively as predicted. This relationship was significant at the $p < .01$ level. The coefficient acquired from this analysis is given in Table 1.

Table 1
Pearsonian Correlations Between Major Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs of Variables</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAIS scores &amp; Self-estimated IQs</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIS scores &amp; Obtained IQs</td>
<td>-.46</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIS scores &amp; GPAs</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FAIS scores and obtained IQs were expected to be negatively related. A moderate, negative coefficient supported this hypothesis. This relationship was significant at the $p < .01$ level. The derived coefficient is given in Table 1.

As predicted, FAIS scores and GPAs correlated negatively. However, this relationship approached zero and was not significant. The coefficient that was obtained is given in Table 1.

There was no significant difference between the mean FAIS score
of over-estimators and the mean FAIS score of under-estimators. This finding was anticipated; the derived $t$ is given in Table 2. The $t$ did not reach significance at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 2
Tests of Significant Difference Between Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAIS of over-estimators &amp; FAIS of under-estimators</td>
<td>+.36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-estimated IQ &amp; Obtained IQ</td>
<td>+1.01</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A $t$ test also revealed no significant difference between the mean self-estimated IQ and the mean obtained IQ. As expected, the $t$ was not significant at the $p < .05$ level. The obtained $t$ is given in Table 2.

As hypothesized, the proportion of under-estimators did not differ significantly from the proportion of over-estimators ($z = 1.31$, $p < .05$). The percentages of over-estimators, under-estimators, and accurate estimators are given in Table 3.

Table 3
Percentages by Type of Estimator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Estimator</th>
<th>$N$</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over-estimators</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-estimators</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate estimators</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$z = 1.31$, $p < .05$, n.s.
Discussion

The correlation between FAIS scores and self-estimated IQs was significantly positive as predicted. This correlation may indicate that as the fear of appearing incompetent increases the self-estimated IQ also increases. How much more "fearful" participants become and how much more exaggerated their self-estimated IQs become cannot be determined from the present data.

Obtained IQs and FAIS scores correlated negatively as predicted. This correlation may indicate that an increase in abilities and knowledge accompanies a decrease in the fear of appearing incompetent. Possibly, what a person knows (rather than what he claims to know) determines the extent of his "fearfulness."

The correlation between FAIS scores and GPAs was expected to be negative and significant, but it approached zero. GPA may not be related to self-esteem or to the ability to appear competent. A person's GPA also may not reflect his perception of common sense.

As anticipated, the mean FAIS scores of over-estimators and under-estimators did not differ significantly. It was assumed that participants would use the self-estimated IQ as a way to appear competent and to protect self-esteem. A person could therefore overestimate, under-estimate, or accurately estimate his IQ and still feel that he had appeared competent. The lack of significant difference supported this inference.
The mean obtained IQ and the mean self-estimated IQ did not differ significantly. This finding reflected the participants' ability to accurately estimate their IQs. The lack of significant difference may have been due to the nature of the sample. The participants came from classes where IQ is usually discussed, and an understanding of IQ may have caused the self-estimates to be more accurate. The procedure used to gather self-estimated IQs may have given some participants additional information about IQ and encouraged them to make estimates closer to the mean. Nevertheless, when participants had some understanding of IQ they tended to make non-threatening estimates of their IQs.

As expected, the proportion of over-estimators did not differ significantly from the proportion of under-estimators. This finding may indicate that when competence is involved that the probabilities of over-estimation and under-estimation are about equal. The percentages in Table 3 show that participants were nearly twice as likely accurately estimate their IQs than they were to over-estimate or under-estimate their IQs. These findings supported the positions of White, Goffman, and Adler who believed that persons may select a variety of coping styles in order to appear competent.

The present study attempted to deal with self-estimated IQ as a personality construct by treating it as an index of self-esteem. However, this treatment was purely theoretical. Much additional research is needed to further the understanding of self-estimated IQ.

More college students are examining their school records and thereby learning their scores on IQ tests and a variety of other tests. Such scores have traditionally been kept from students
because it was feared that damage to self-esteem might result. Recent legal changes have permitted students to have access to test scores and it is now necessary for research to focus on the effects this access will have on self-esteem.

By increasing our understanding of self-estimated IQ as well as students' perceptions of their scores on other tests the following may be accomplished: (1) better techniques for feedback of test results, (2) better understanding of the validity and reliability of the tests involved, and (3) more awareness of students' needs, abilities, and interests. Increasing students' understanding of test results can be greatly beneficial to teachers, students, counselors, and the college community as a whole.
Appendix A

SURVEY OF STUDENT ATTITUDES

Read each statement carefully and decide whether it is true as applied to you or false as applied to you. Circle T if you think the statement is true or F if you think the statement is false.

T F 1. I would never worry about the possibility of being judged a fool in some activities. (F)

T F 2. I would very much like to be less apprehensive about my capabilities. (T)

T F 3. I would not be prone to worry about my supervisory abilities if I were in a supervisory position. (F)

T F 4. I tend to be concerned about not being effective enough in my dealings with others. (T)

T F 5. After having had a conversation with someone, I have a tendency to worry about having said something that was inappropriate. (T)

T F 6. I am not prone to be apprehensive or worried about my ability to do a task well. (F)

T F 7. I am prone to worry sometimes that others will think I am not intelligent enough for my job. (T)

T F 8. I am frequently prone to take actions to counteract previous bad impressions which I believe I have made. (T)

T F 9. I would never be at all apprehensive or worried about my adequacy in handling business transactions. (F)

T F 10. After completing an assignment or task, I am prone to have doubts about whether I did it right. (T)

T F 11. I am never concerned about the possibility that others may regard me as being somewhat odd or strange. (F)

T F 12. I rarely worry about being considered by others to be uninformed or ignorant about certain things. (F)

T F 13. I am occasionally concerned about the possibility of being considered to have inappropriate friendships. (T)

T F 14. I have a tendency to worry that others will consider my behavior in some activities to be inappropriate or tactless. (T)
Appendix A (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>15. I am almost never concerned about the possibility of being regarded as spastic or clumsy around others. (F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16. I have a tendency to worry that others may regard me as not knowing what is really going on in the immediate social situation. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17. I tend to worry about the possibility of displaying inappropriate etiquette at a formal social event. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18. I would never worry about my adequacy in sexual relationships. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>19. I would never worry about the possibility of failing to meet the work standards at my place of employment. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20. I might be inclined to avoid criticizing someone else's judgement for fear of appearing to be in the wrong. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21. I tend to worry that others may think I am not keeping up with my work. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>22. I am rarely concerned about my adequacy in physical or athletic events. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23. If I were functioning in a professional field, I would not worry about my relationships with my fellow professionals. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24. I am prone to worry that others may regard my beliefs and opinions as incorrect or funny. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>25. I tend to worry that others may think that I am not keeping well enough informed about the developments in my field. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26. I am prone to worry about my adequacy in classroom work or activities. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27. I would never worry about the possibility of saying something inappropriate in a new social situation. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28. I tend to worry that others may think that I don't know what I'm doing. (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>29. I have a tendency to worry that others will laugh at my ideas. (T)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A (Continued)

T F 30. I am rarely concerned about whether others will take me seriously enough. (F)

T F 31. I am prone to worry that my parents or friends may regard me as irresponsible or undependable. (T)

T F 32. If I were functioning as a salesperson, I would not worry about the possibility of appearing to be clumsy in my handling of clients or customers. (F)

T F 33. I tend to fear that others may see me as not sufficiently self-disciplined. (T)

T F 34. I tend to worry that others may think I am not devoting enough energy or enthusiasm to my work. (T)

T F 35. I would never worry about the possibility that others might feel I have poor judgement in some situations. (F)

T F 36. I would never worry about appearing to be over my head or beyond my capabilities in my line of work or my course of study. (F)
Appendix B

Amplification of Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Obtained IQ</th>
<th>Estimated IQ</th>
<th>FAIS</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
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<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Females</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Males</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-all Mean</td>
<td>111.21</td>
<td>109.35</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Mean</td>
<td>110.72</td>
<td>107.65</td>
<td>14.65</td>
<td>3.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Mean</td>
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<td>112.28</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>2.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over-all SD</td>
<td>9.48</td>
<td>12.07</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female SD</td>
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<td>.54</td>
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<td>Male SD</td>
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<td>.50</td>
</tr>
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<td>Range</td>
<td>85-131</td>
<td>50-135</td>
<td>1-35</td>
<td>1.9-4.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Amplification of FAIS Scores by Type of Estimator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Over-estimators</th>
<th>Under-estimators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. Females</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Males</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-all Mean</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>12.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Mean</td>
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<td>13.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Mean</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>9.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-all SD</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female SD</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male SD</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Interviewing Procedures

The examiners encouraged each participant to "guess" what he thought his IQ was. The examiner stated:

What do you think your IQ is?

If the participant was unable to "guess", the examiners stated:

Well, most people have an IQ around 100. Most students at WKU have an IQ of about 113. Now, what do you think your IQ is?

After acquiring the self-estimated IQs the examiner stated:

What is your present college grade-point average?

At the conclusion of the feedback sessions most of the participants were told that a study was being conducted to see how accurately students can estimate their IQs. They were also told that the survey they had completed dealt with the fear of appearing incompetent.
References


