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**Predicting Authenticity:  
The effects of self-monitoring, self-presentation styles, and biological sex.**

A thesis  
submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
of  
*Master of Social Science in Psychology*  
at  
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by  
**Stefanie Christina McGregor**



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## Abstract

The field of authenticity research is quickly expanding, and much research has investigated the antecedents of authenticity; however, some factors have only been theorised. This thesis project aims to take two concepts theorised to affect authenticity, which are self-monitoring levels and self-presentation styles and explore their relationship to it. Sex is known to influence self-monitoring and self-presentation styles and was therefore included as a moderating variable. Expanding our knowledge into the factors that affect authenticity allows us to construct interventions to help increase individuals' authenticity and well-being. In this cross-sectional study ( $N = 388$ ), respondents rated themselves on scales measuring their authenticity, self-monitoring and self-presentation styles. Via the regression analyses, we found that the respondent's age played a significant role in their authenticity level. The self-presentation styles, exemplification and supplication, were found to have negative relationships with authenticity. Sex moderated the relationship between self-promotion and authenticity, so that the non-significant positive relationship was stronger for women than men. The respondent's sex also moderated the relationship between intimidation and authenticity, making the non-significant negative relationship stronger for women. All other findings were non-significant, indicating that self-monitoring and ingratiation do not significantly predict authenticity regardless of whether sex was a moderator or not.

*Keywords:* authenticity, self-monitoring, self-presentation styles, biological sex

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## Introduction

Authenticity, the feeling of being true to oneself, is positively related to a range of well-being outcomes, including healthy psychological functioning, enhanced job performance, mindfulness, and self-esteem (Chen & Murphy, 2019; Toor & Ofori, 2009). Additionally, more authentic individuals tend to have higher well-being (Sutton, 2020). However, to fully understand the effects of authenticity, it is essential to examine the factors that influence a person's sense of authenticity. These factors include an individual's level of self-monitoring, changing one's behaviour situationally (Dobbins et al., 1990; Smith, 2017; Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010), and their self-presentation styles used to achieve social goals (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022; Sievers et al., 2015). Theories propose that self-monitoring and self-presentation styles play a role in authenticity (Leary, 1996; Pillow et al., 2017). In fact, self-monitoring has been shown to have a negative relationship with authenticity (Pillow et al., 2017), while the authenticity of self-presentation styles depends on the situation (Dormanen et al., 2020). It is also essential to consider moderating variables, like a person's biological sex, as past literature has found sex differences in self-presentation styles (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007) and self-monitoring outcomes (Flynn & Ames, 2006).

This thesis project aims to expand the understanding of factors that affect authenticity, both by replicating past research and by testing previously proposed theories. The findings could also provide information for developing interventions that might increase authenticity and well-being. To do this it will focus on two research questions. The first is examining the interaction between self-monitoring level and authenticity, and how biological sex moderates the relationship. While the second research question investigates the interaction between self-presentation styles and authenticity, and how biological sex moderates the interaction.

## **Authenticity**

### ***Definitions and conceptualisations***

The concept of 'authenticity' traces back to ancient Greek philosophy (Wang, 2016). Since then, there have been many conceptualisations of authenticity, generally centred around themes of self-awareness and self-expression (Roemer et al., 2021). Therefore, a broad definition of authenticity is the awareness of one's core values and other self-relevant cognitions, such as beliefs and feelings, and behaving cohesively with these values in everyday life (Harter, 2005; Wang, 2016).

While there is some agreement on how authenticity should be defined, the way researchers conceptualise authenticity varies greatly. One conceptualisation of authenticity is the trait theory approach, which posits that as long as a person exhibits the same behaviours across different contexts, they are authentic. However, this conceptualisation has drawn criticism for being inflexible to situational factors and a problematic understanding of authenticity (Sutton, 2020), as it requires a rigid, unchanging self-concept across contexts (Sheldon et al., 1997). In contrast, the coherence approach proposes that as long as individuals integrate their behaviour, even when contradictory, into a coherent self-concept, they are authentic (Harter, 2005; Sutton, 2020). This emphasis on the importance of expressive behaviour aligning with individual core values makes it the preferred conceptualisation for researchers (Harter, 2005; Toor and Ofori, 2009) and this project due to its compatibility with the Integrated Authenticity Scale.

### ***The importance of authenticity***

Research has positively linked authenticity with various psychological well-being measures (Chen & Murphy, 2019; Toor & Ofori, 2009). It is associated with better well-being across a range of organisational and personal contexts (Sutton, 2020) and age groups (Harter, 2005), regardless of biological sex (Theran, 2011). Moreover, Sutton (2020) states

that behaving authentically in everyday life provides a sense of well-being and engagement. Authentically living everyday life could also help protect against mental health problems, as being authentic appears to be linked with fewer depressive symptoms and higher self-esteem (Toor & Ofori, 2009; Wenzel & Lucas-Thompson, 2012). In addition, adolescents' inauthenticity with their parents acts as a predictor of increased depressive symptoms (Theran, 2011), indicating that inauthenticity may negatively affect a person's mental health (Roemer et al., 2021). Authenticity is also associated with positive work outcomes, including higher job performance and satisfaction, as well as increased commitment to the organisation, leading to lower staff turnover (Sutton, 2020). Moreover, authenticity is associated with greater customer satisfaction and employee mindfulness, which increases well-being (Toor & Ofori, 2009). The evidence indicates that authenticity is essential for an individual's well-being and beneficial to organisations.

## **Self-Monitoring**

### ***Definitions and conceptualisations***

The original self-monitoring definition, proposed by Mark Snyder (1974), classified self-monitoring as a personality trait underpinned by "an acute sensitivity to the cues in a situation, which indicate what expression or self-presentation is appropriate and what is not" (p. 527). Self-monitoring refers to the ability and willingness to read situational and social cues and appropriately change one's expressive behaviour (Dobbins et al., 1990; Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010; Singh et al., 2002; Smith, 2017). The differing self-monitoring levels, which remain stable throughout an individual's life, likely stem from how much they value and craft their social image through self-presentation (Brinthaupt, 2008; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Sasovova et al., 2010). According to Flynn and Ames (2006), self-monitoring can impact interpersonal relationships, affecting cooperation, communication and relationship building.

Despite this, self-monitoring levels do not appear to be related to mental health, including measures of neuroticism, anxiety, or depression (Brinthaup, 2008).

### *The spectrum of self-monitoring levels*

Smith (2017) emphasised that self-monitoring levels exist on a spectrum from high to low self-monitoring. It is essential to acknowledge that neither end is perfect and that for group survival, societies need people who can adjust their behaviour and those who stand true to their principles (Fiske, 2014).

Individuals on the higher end of the spectrum are sensitive to cues and contexts and are more concerned with others' perceptions of them. Due to their willingness and ability to change their self-presentation style to fit the situation (Flynn & Ames, 2006; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000), they are likely to have excellent control over their expressive behaviour (Fang & Shaw, 2009; Sasovova et al., 2010; Smith, 2017). They also invest considerable thought and energy into planning and adjusting their self-presentation script, meaning they prefer well-defined situations (Ickes et al., 2006). Although higher self-monitors behave with greater variation across contexts (Brinthaup, 2008), there is consistency in their background self-presentation. For example, they may always project the appearance of being outgoing and friendly, regardless of the situational context (Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010; Sasovova et al., 2010).

Higher self-monitors prioritise aspects of their social self, meaning that they closely monitor the thoughts, feelings and actions of others, along with the structure of people's social networks (Brinthaup, 2008; Sasovova et al., 2010). They also utilise their self-presentation to gain social status within their surrounding social hierarchies, as they tend to focus on navigating unequal relationships (Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010). As a result, they choose specific friends and partners based on who will allow them to get ahead and how attractive they are (Dobbins et al., 1990; Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010). Higher self-monitors

often perform well in jobs, have higher levels of career success (Fang & Shaw, 2009) and frequently emerge as group leaders (Dobbins et al., 1990; Fang & Shaw, 2009; O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011). They also favour self-promotion, embellishments, and entitlement in their self-presentation (Flynn & Ames, 2006).

On the other end of the spectrum, lower self-monitors are less sensitive to or interested in situational and social cues and therefore do not alter their behaviour regularly (Dobbins et al., 1990; Leary, 1996; Sasovova et al., 2010). They may also be less responsive to external cues; however, it is unclear whether this is by choice (Dobbins et al., 1990).

Lower self-monitor's expressive behaviour is dictated by their internal attitudes and dispositions (Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000), regardless of appropriateness and potential negative consequences (Sasovova et al., 2010). Due to this, lower self-monitors tend to behave more consistently across situations (Flynn & Ames, 2006; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Ickes et al. (2006) point out that they spend less energy planning their self-presentation scripts and are less concerned with physical appearance. They are also more concerned with ensuring that their relationships are equal from the start (Fuglestad & Snyder, 2010).

## **Self-Presentation**

### ***Definitions and conceptualisations***

Self-presentation, also sometimes referred to as impression management (Kim, 2008), is an individual's attempt to get others to think of them in a particular way based on their desired goal in that situation (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022). While self-monitoring refers to a person's ability and willingness to read a situation and change their behaviour to be situation-appropriate (Snyder, 1974), self-presentation styles are adopted to craft a social image and achieve a goal (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022). Additionally, a person's level of self-monitoring usually affects their preferred self-presentation style (Flynn & Ames, 2006). Leary (1996)

argues that while people generally aim to make a positive impression, the purpose of self-presentation is to act as tools used to gain reward and improve subjective well-being (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022; Fiske, 2014). There are three methods used to increase subjective well-being through self-presentation: Maximising the rewards from social relations, enhancing the individual's self-esteem, and establishing the individual's desired identity (Fiske, 2014). Establishing the individual's desired identity improves well-being as it verifies the individual's self-concept (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022; Schlenker, 2011), which means that self-presentation, much like authenticity, can play a role in an individual's well-being. Except that to fulfil its purpose, self-presentation must be flexible and situationally appropriate (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022; Fiske, 2014).

Self-presentational goals control the way individuals behave and present themselves around others, providing guidelines for action (Danielewicz-Betz, 2022; Leary, 1996). Moreover, as self-presentation must be situationally appropriate, it is not rigid (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Leary et al., 1994). However, like any other cognitive process, self-presentation styles can be automatic or controlled (Schlenker, 2011). The automatic self-presentation styles are used in familiar situations, whereas individuals will switch to more controlled processes in unfamiliar situations. Due to the nature of controlled processes, using self-presentation styles that come less naturally will deplete an individual's regulatory resources (Schlenker, 2011; Vohs et al., 2005), which causes later self-regulation to be challenging (Vohs et al., 2005). Subsequently, this suggests that using inauthentic self-presentation may be difficult for individuals to sustain.

### ***The Jones and Pittman Taxonomy***

While researchers categorise self-presentation styles in various ways, the Jones and Pittman taxonomy approach (1982) covers the five most common styles of self-presentational behaviours (Fiske, 2014). This grouping of self-presentation styles allows these behaviours to

be researched (Fiske, 2014), and it is also the foundation for the Impression Management Style Scale (Bolino & Turnley, 1999). Jones and Pittman (1982) established five theoretical groupings: ingratiation (appearing likeable), intimidation (appearing dangerous), self-promotion (appearing capable), exemplification (appearing highly moral) and supplication (appearing helpless). Importantly, these categories are not mutually exclusive (Jones & Pittman, 1982), as individuals often manage multiple impressions at once (Leary & Allen, 2011) and may use a range of self-presentation styles to achieve a particular goal.

### **The interaction with authenticity**

The literature agrees that although authenticity is dependent on an individual's self-concept, it is also subject to societal norms and relational factors (Erickson, 1995). Erickson (1995) argues that when a person's internal state does not match the 'appropriate' societal behaviour, they begin to feel, and others may also perceive them, as inauthentic (Eagly, 2005). It is important to note that acting outside norms and expectations can have negative social and economic consequences (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Priebe & Van Tongeren, 2021). Consequently, it can become challenging to balance acting in line with one's internal state while also minimising the consequences of behaving outside the constrictions of socially assigned roles.

### ***Self-monitoring and authenticity***

Self-monitoring literature has frequently theorised that individuals higher in self-monitoring are more inauthentic than those lower in self-monitoring (Kudret et al., 2016; Pillow et al., 2017). According to Pillow and colleagues (2017), this stems from the dominant discourse that people who self-monitor are "social chameleons", whose only aim is to gain social status, whereas lower self-monitoring individuals are more principled. Nevertheless, the authors argue that the ability to self-monitor does not require individuals to discard their core values and act outside of them. So, while higher self-monitoring individuals are

potentially more likely to act inauthentically, it is not guaranteed (Pillow et al., 2017). An interesting research project by Pillow and colleagues (2017) found that the 18-item Self-monitoring Scale had a significant, small negative correlation with their chosen measure of authenticity. While this thesis project will be similar to Pillow and colleagues' (2017) research, it will use a different authenticity scale. In addition, it will consider how an individual's biological sex moderates the relationship between self-monitoring and authenticity.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Self-monitoring levels will negatively predict authenticity.*

### ***Self-presentation styles and authenticity***

The literature agrees that although an individual will use self-presentation styles tactically, the behaviour is not intentionally deceptive (Leary, 1996). While research is limited, Dormanen et al. (2020) found that people report presenting themselves more authentically in familiar and fun situations. Conversely, when people feel pressure to conform, are being evaluated or fail to meet expectations, they report that their self-presentation is less authentic. Since many organisational settings favour masculine self-presentation styles, women may feel pressured to act inauthentically, negatively impacting their well-being (Dormanen et al., 2020). According to Erdoğmus et al. (2018), many factors related to self-perception predict more inauthentic self-presentation, both online and in person. For example, young adults with higher self-esteem score higher in authentic self-presentation than their lower self-esteem counterparts (Erdoğmus et al., 2018).

Understanding how self-presentation styles interact with authenticity will allow the examination of which self-presentation styles individuals feel are more authentic. This project will contribute to filling the gap in the literature regarding the interaction between authenticity and self-presentation style, moderated by biological sex. Therefore, allowing for a better understanding of the factors that play a role in authenticity.

*H<sub>2a</sub>: Self-promotion will positively predict authenticity.*

*H<sub>2b</sub>: Ingratiation will positively predict authenticity.*

*H<sub>2c</sub>: Exemplification will positively predict authenticity.*

*H<sub>2d</sub>: Intimidation will positively predict authenticity.*

*H<sub>2e</sub>: Supplication will negatively predict authenticity.*

### **The interaction with biological sex**

The literature across all concepts frequently uses the term 'gender' when referring to biological sex, however, this project will be using the terms 'biological sex' and 'sex' synonymously.

#### ***Authenticity and biological sex***

There is an underlying assumption that authenticity is gender-neutral (Liu et al., 2015). Indeed, Wenzel and Lucas-Thompson (2012) found no statistically significant sex differences regarding dispositional authenticity. Regardless, understanding how authenticity develops may indicate how sex and social role expectations could be a moderating factor in adult authenticity. Harter (2005) stated that the development of authenticity begins in childhood, and it is not until adolescence that people question their own authenticity, especially females. This may be due to the expectation placed on adolescents to create a self that fits with each of their different social roles, some of which may appear contradictory to one another. For example, they may be happy with a group of friends, but depressed around their family or pleasant in the workplace, but rowdy in school. During the later years of adolescents, people tend to understand that these seemingly opposite selves across various contexts are normal and often make sense (Harter, 2005).

Furthermore, the demands of constructing oneself in line with others' beliefs and expectations could compromise one's authenticity (Harter, 2005). As a matter of fact, the internalisation of traditional gender roles in young women and inauthentic behaviour are

linked (Wenzel & Lucas-Thompson, 2012). Harter (2005) also found that adolescent girls who believed that women should display only stereotypical feminine traits, opposed to a more androgynous presentation, tended to display two distinct versions of themselves. In private they presented their more authentic selves, while in public their self was culturally scripted based on social expectations of who they felt they are supposed to be (Harter, 2005). Overall, regardless of age, receiving validation, support, and positive regard for who we are, especially from those close to us, is associated with higher authenticity (Harter, 2005). This area of research emphasises the importance of considering sex when examining authenticity, as both are influenced by social expectations.

### ***Self-monitoring and biological sex***

The research on sex differences for self-monitoring levels has been inconclusive (Flynn & Ames, 2006). Despite this, there are apparent sex differences in the usefulness of self-monitoring in organisational settings. Flynn and Ames (2006) conducted a study that found that higher self-monitoring women were considered more valuable and influential. They also did better in negotiation scenarios than lower self-monitoring women. In contrast, men's perceived level of influence in the group did not change depending on their self-monitoring level. Regarding perceived contribution, lower self-monitoring men rated higher than higher self-monitoring men, while higher self-monitoring men also did worse in the negotiation scenarios (Flynn & Ames, 2006). Another study by Anderson and Thacker in 1985 found that higher self-monitoring women have higher success rates (O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011). This research suggests that even though it is unclear what the sex differences in self-monitoring levels are, it is still worth examining self-monitoring with sex in mind.

*H<sub>3</sub>: Sex will moderate the relationship between self-monitoring levels and authenticity, such that the relationship will be stronger for women than for men.*

### *Self-presentation styles and biological sex*

Societal norms dictate how each sex should behave (Leary, 1996; Singh et al., 2002) and rewards children for creating a specific public image from early childhood, which continues into adulthood (Leary, 1996; Vohs et al., 2005). For example, the expectation for men is to be more agentic, meaning they present themselves as dominant and ambitious. While the norms demand for women to be more communal, meaning they are expected to present themselves as sensitive and caring (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Leary, 1996; Singh et al., 2002). However, while early socialisation sets the stage, the differences in self-presentation styles are maintained through punishment. Guadagno and Cialdini (2007) termed this the "backlash effect", referring to the negative social and economic consequences individuals face when they violate their expected roles. In organisational settings, women who ingratiate will do better than those who do not, which is not the case for men (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007). In contrast, a woman who confidently states her opinion, a typically masculine behaviour, is likely to be assessed negatively by others (Priebe & van Tongeren, 2021; Singh et al., 2002). Female managers frequently feel a conflict between their identity as a woman and the masculine-coded self-presentation styles they must display to be promoted (Singh et al., 2002).

Past research has demonstrated that there are sex differences in self-presentation styles. Guadagno and Cialdini (2007) found that men use a wider range of self-presentation styles than women and use them more frequently. Men also tend to favour more assertive and dominant self-presentation techniques, such as self-promotion, while women favour more cooperative and submissive techniques, such as opinion conformity (Flynn & Ames, 2006; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Singh et al., 2002). Priebe and van Tongeren (2021) found that women tend to present themselves in a deflated way more frequently than their male counterparts. They theorised that this was to avoid upsetting the male-dominated social

hierarchy, as an inflated self-presentation style in a woman is a threat (Priebe & van Tongeren, 2021). These findings raise concerns as organisational settings often favour male-coded self-presentation styles (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007). According to Singh and colleagues (2002), corporate women under thirty expressed discomfort using masculine self-presentation styles, while those over thirty had seen the benefits for their male counterparts and put their discomfort aside.

*H<sub>4a</sub>: Men will score higher than women on the self-promotion subscale.*

*H<sub>4b</sub>: Women will score higher than men on the ingratiation subscale.*

*H<sub>4c</sub>: Men will score higher than women on the exemplification subscale.*

*H<sub>4d</sub>: Men will score higher than women on the intimidation subscale.*

*H<sub>4e</sub>: Women will score higher than men on the supplication subscale.*

*H<sub>5a</sub>: Sex will moderate the relationship between self-promotion and authenticity, such that the relationship will be stronger for men than for women.*

*H<sub>5b</sub>: Sex will moderate the relationship between ingratiation and authenticity, such that the relationship will be stronger for women than for men.*

*H<sub>5c</sub>: Sex will moderate the relationship between exemplification and authenticity, such that the relationship will be stronger for men than for women.*

*H<sub>5d</sub>: Sex will moderate the relationship between intimidation and authenticity, such that the relationship will be stronger for men than for women.*

*H<sub>5e</sub>: Sex will moderate the relationship between supplication and authenticity, such that the relationship will be stronger for women than for men.*

## **Method**

This project utilised a quantitative, non-experimental design and collected data using an online survey. This data collection occurred from the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2022.

## Participants

The total participant number for this project, after the data was cleaned, was 388, therefore, meeting the requirements for the minimum sample size  $n = 300$  to achieve 95% statistical power regarding the detection of a small effect size ( $f = 0.10$ ). Of these participants 13.1% chose not to answer the ethnicity question. Those that did answer identified as the following: 35.1% of participants identified as White or Caucasian, 22.4% as New Zealand European, 7.7% as Asian, 5.7% as Black or African American, 3.6% as either African or Latin American, 2.6% as Pasifika and 2.1% as Māori. Another 7.7% of participants identified as Multiracial, Native American, European, or other. Participants' ages ranged from 17 to 71, with the mean age being 33.98 years. The biological sex of the participants was 34.3% male ( $n = 133$ ) and 65.7% female ( $n = 255$ ). It is important to note that any respondents who did not identify as either male or female were removed during the data cleaning stage as detailed below.

Another important note is that current employment was not a prerequisite for the University of Waikato student sample, therefore 18.3% of respondents are missing the data for their employment sector and duration. Respondents, worked in a range of industry sectors, with the main ones being retail (14.2%), hospitality (13.7%) and office or clerical work (12.9%). Of the remaining respondents, 10.3% selected other and the rest (30.6%) were spread across manufacturing, construction, education, and health care to name some, with none of the remaining sectors exceeding 8.5%. The mean amount of time spent in their current industry sector was 7.28 years, ranging from 0.5 years to 48 years.

## Procedure

The Research and Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology at the University of Waikato approved this project and designated FS2022-01 as the approval number (see appendix A). Participants were recruited through the University of Waikato's online

Introduction to Psychology Research Program (IPRP) and Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk). IPRP allows first-year psychology students at the university to get their first experience of psychological research, thereby enabling researchers to access a large sample of participants. While M-Turk is an online research platform, on which working-age Americans receive financial compensation for participating in research.

The participants completed the questionnaire, at a time and in a location of their choosing. To participate in the study an information sheet and consent statement (see appendix B) had to be read and agreed to. At the end, the questionnaire provided the participant with a debriefing statement outlining the study (see appendix C). The full project questionnaire started with work related demographic questions (industry sector and sector tenure) and included seven scales measuring authenticity, well-being, psychological capital, emotional labour, self-monitoring levels, self-presentation styles and the big five personality traits. To minimise any order effect, the research team split the scales into two sets of roughly the same number of items, and then the order of scales presentation was randomised. An attention check question and an item measuring individualism separated the blocks of measures. To conclude, respondents answered further demographic questions, including sex, ethnicity, and age in years, followed by a data quality check. This thesis will only report on data collected from the following measures.

## **Measures**

### ***Authenticity***

Authenticity was measured using the Integrated Authenticity Scale (IAS), which is an 8-item self-report measure, where respondents rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Almost always). An example of an item on the IAS is item 4. "I feel like I don't know myself particularly well." While there are two subscales, "authentic self-awareness" and "authentic self-expression", the scale was treated as a unitary measure of authenticity,

which is supported by the creators (Knoll et al., 2015). Scoring requires recoding negatively worded items and then calculating the participant's mean IAS scale score.

### ***Self-monitoring***

Self-monitoring was measured using the 18-item Self-monitoring Scale. The original Self-monitoring Scale consisted of 25 items (Snyder, 1974); however, the shortened 18-item Self-monitoring Scale (SMS) has been found to be more accurate and is therefore recommended (Gangestad & Snyder, 1986). It asks the respondents to answer "true" or "false" to various statements, such as item 9 "I am not particularly good at making other people like me." Although there has been some discussion surrounding the structure of the SMS, it was designed to measure self-monitoring as a unitary construct. Gangestad and Snyder (2000) continue to support this and as this study aims to understand self-monitoring as a single construct, this is the approach taken here. Scoring requires negatively worded items to be recoded and then summing all the participant's item scores together for a total self-monitoring score.

### ***Self-presentation styles***

Self-presentation styles are measured using the Impression Management Styles Scale (IMSS), which is a 22-item self-report measure of self-presentation styles based on Jones and Pittman's taxonomy model for self-presentation styles. The creators worded the items to ensure that the respondents rated themselves based on how frequently they behaved in this way, specifically to make a good impression (Bolino & Turnley, 1999). The 22 items of the IMSS are split across five subscales and ask the respondents to answer on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Never behave this way) to 5 (Often behave this way). The subscales and relevant example items are: self-promotion ("Let others know that you are valuable to the organisation."), ingratiation ("Compliment your colleagues so they will see you as likeable."), exemplification ("Arrive at work early to look dedicated."), intimidation ("Use intimidation

to get colleagues to behave appropriately.”) and supplication (“Act like you need assistance so people will help you out.”). This scale does not require reverse coding; scoring requires adding the scores for the items that make up each subscale.

### **Data Cleaning**

This project utilised five criteria to maximise data quality. First, as participant inattention in online questionnaires is a potential threat to the overall data quality (Greszki et al., 2014), respondents who did not correctly answer the attention check question were excluded. Second, given that the number of participants who did not select male or female was too small to allow for comparative analysis, these participants were excluded. Third, participants' response time is linked to data quality, so respondents who completed the questionnaire faster than 50% of the median completion time were excluded (Greszki et al., 2014). Any participants who took longer than an hour were also removed to maintain the cross-sectional nature of the research project. Fourth, any response with more than 5% of data missing was excluded (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). For participants with less than 5% missing data, missing item scores were replaced using the participant's mean scale score, as is recommended for the construction of scale scores (Tsiriktsis, 2005). Finally, a Mahalanobis distance analysis was conducted to identify and exclude any multivariate outliers, using a cut-off of  $p < .001$  (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). A total of 119 responses were removed from the raw data set, leaving 388 usable responses.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was pre-registered on AsPredicted (see Appendix D) and conducted using IBM Software Group's SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. To start off with, the descriptive statistics, including the Cronbach's alpha, were computed for all of the scales, as well as a confirmatory factor analysis for the IMSS to confirm the structure of the subscales. Next, Pearson correlations were computed to establish the relationships

between authenticity and self-presentation styles, and authenticity and self-monitoring. In addition, independent t-test analyses were conducted to examine whether there were sex differences in self-presentation styles to replicate past research findings. Then multiple, separate moderated regression analyses were computed to determine whether self-monitoring level and self-presentation style predict an individual's authenticity and whether the individual's sex moderates the predictive strength and direction. The moderated regression analyses had the participants age and current sector tenure as control variables.

## **Results**

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Table 1 presents all the descriptive statistics for the variables in this study: authenticity (IAS), self-monitoring (SMS) and self-presentation styles (IMSS). While the kurtosis values for all scales and subscales were within the generally recommended, acceptable range of -1 to 1 (Muthén and Kaplan, 1985), the skewness values were more varied. Most of the scales had skewness values that fall into the acceptable range of -1 to 1, besides, the intimidation and the supplication subscales which were positively skewed. However, as the sample is large the skewness is unlikely to pose any issue for the data analyses (Kim, 2013). Hence, the intimidation and the supplication subscales were treated as if they were normally distributed, and it was decided that the use of parametric tests was acceptable.

### **Factor Analysis**

A confirmatory Factor Analysis using direct Oblimin rotation was conducted on the self-presentation styles to determine whether the items loaded onto the five subscales, as proposed by Bolino and Turnley (1999). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value, which determines the adequacy of the sample, was .893, putting it above the .5 cut-off commonly used and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at  $p < .001$  (Field, 2018). It was found there were

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for authenticity mean scores, self-presentation styles mean scores and self-monitoring total score for the entire sample (N = 388).*

Scales	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Self-Promotion	2.66	.87	.21	-.45	(.87)						
2. Ingratiation	3.24	.94	-.39	-.32	.424**	(.76)					
3. Exemplification	2.72	.91	.15	-.49	.371**	.582**	(.87)				
4. Intimidation	1.68	.84	1.25	.75	.332*	.123*	.300**	(.90)			
5. Supplication	1.69	.87	1.16	.23	.220**	.132**	.202**	.580**	(.92)		
6. SMStotal	26.16	3.77	.11	-.45	.124*	.028	.058	.097	.116*	(.73)	
7. IASmean	3.66	.66	-.14	-.15	.094	-.059	-.212**	-.115*	-.304**	-.106*	(.80)

*Notes.* \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ , *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation, Cronbach alpha reliability on the diagonal in the parentheses

indeed five factors, with each of those having an Eigenvalue of one or higher, therefore meeting the Kaiser criteria (Field, 2018). The items also loaded onto those five factors as expected, with each item only loading onto one factor above the 0.4 cut-off.

### **Reliability Analyses**

To determine the reliability of the scales the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) for each was computed and can be found in table 1. All scales had a Cronbach alpha value larger than the .70 cut-off suggested by Andy Field (2018), indicating that they all have adequate reliability. Although the reliability of the self-monitoring scale and the supplication subscale would be improved if items were removed, it was decided to retain them. This was done to maintain direct compatibility with other research using these scales.

### **Correlation Analyses**

Pearson's correlations were calculated, as seen in table 1, to identify relationships between authenticity, self-monitoring, and self-presentation styles, and to determine whether regression analyses would yield any significant results. All scales, except two of the self-presentation styles (ingratiation and self-promotion) were significantly correlated to authenticity. Exemplification, intimidation, and supplication were all negatively correlated to authenticity, with varying effect sizes. Supplication and exemplification had small effect sizes and intimidation had a medium effect size (Field, 2018). Self-monitoring and authenticity had a small, but significant negative correlation,  $r = -.106$ ,  $p = .036$ .

### **Independent Sample T-test Analyses**

Independent sample t-test analyses were computed to determine whether there were sex differences in self-presentation styles, as seen in Table 2. There was no significant sex difference between males and females on self-monitoring, contrary to hypothesis 4a. All other self-presentation styles had significant gender differences, though not always in the predicted direction. As predicted in hypothesis 4b, women scored significantly higher than

**Table 2**

*Independent sample t-tests examining gender differences across the self-presentation styles for the entire sample (N = 388).*

	Males (n = 133)		Females (n = 255)		t	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Self-Promotion	2.65	.93	2.67	.85	-.130	.896	.87
Ingratiation	3.05	.97	3.33	.91	-2.88	.004	.93
Exemplification	2.59	.88	2.79	.92	-2.02	.044	.91
Intimidation	1.85	.96	1.58	.76	2.83	.005	.83
Supplication	1.89	.99	1.58	.78	3.20	.002	.86

*Notes.* M = mean, SD = standard deviation, significance cut-off  $p < .05$

men on the ingratiation subscale,  $t(386) = -2.88, p = .004, d = .93$ . Men also scored significantly higher than women on the intimidation subscale, which aligns with hypothesis 4e,  $t(219.32) = 2.83, p = .005, d = .83$ . Women scored significantly higher than men on the exemplification subscale, unlike the prediction in hypothesis 4c,  $t(386) = -2.02, p = .044, d = .91$ . Unlike what was predicted in hypothesis 4d, men scored significantly higher on the supplication subscale than women,  $t(217.93) = 3.20, p = .002, d = .86$ .

### **Moderated Regression Analyses**

The moderated regression analyses, as seen in table 3, were computed using interaction terms, created from centred variable, in SPSS. The reason the variables were centred was to ensure that the scales scores were standardised as the scales were different, with the aim of making the analyses more effective (Field, 2018). Although the results are all displayed in one table, the moderated regression analyses were conducted separately for each scale and subscale. The participants ages and their current sector tenure were entered as control variables for each regression analysis, in Block 1, as past literature suggested they may play a role in authenticity (Harter, 2005; Singh et al., 2002). After which, each variable was entered into Block 2, following the same procedure for each model: variable (eg. self-

**Table 3**

*Regression analyses for the effect of self-monitoring and each self-presentation style on authenticity, moderated by sex (N = 388).*

	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
<u>Controls</u>	.160**				
Age			.017	6.209**	[.012, .023]
Sector Tenure			.001	.108	[-.009, .010]
<u>Self-Monitoring Model</u>	.174	.014			
Self-Monitoring			-.013	-1.388	[-.031, .005]
Sex			-.014	-.187	[-.157, .130]
Interaction			.059	1.720	[-.008, .126]
<u>Self-Promotion Model</u>	.187	.026*			
Self-Promotion			.049	1.269	[-.027, .125]
Sex			-.24	-.339	[-.166, .117]
Interaction			.097	2.985*	[.033, .161]
<u>Ingratiation Model</u>	.166	.005			
Ingratiation			.010	.278	[-.063, .084]
Sex			-.009	-.119	[-.155, .137]
Interaction			.046	1.364	[-.020, .113]
<u>Exemplification Model</u>	.194	.034*			
Exemplification			-.130	-3.445**	[-.204, -.056]
Sex			.004	.056	[-.138, .146]
Interaction			.031	.898	[-.036, .097]
<u>Intimidation Model</u>	.189	.029*			
Intimidation			-.068	-1.586	[-.152, .016]
Sex			-.059	-.801	[-.203, .086]
Interaction			.073	2.259*	[.009, .137]
<u>Supplication Model</u>	.232	.072**			
Supplication			-.172	-4.190**	[-.253, -.091]
Sex			-.085	-1.190	[-.225, .055]
Interaction			.062	1.946	[-.001, .126]

*Notes.* \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ ,  $\beta$  = unstandardised beta, *CI* = Confidence Interval

promotion), sex and interaction term (eg. self-promotion and sex). Importantly, for the biological sex variable, males were coded as 1 and females were coded as 2.

While sector tenure did not significantly predict authenticity, the respondents age did positively predict authenticity,  $\beta = .017$ , 95% CI [.012, .023],  $p < .001$ . Interestingly, although the relationship between self-monitoring and authenticity was significant, once controlled for age, it was found that self-monitoring did not significantly predict authenticity. Also, the regression analysis did not find that biological sex moderated the relationship significantly. Therefore, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 3 were not supported by the findings of the regression analysis. Conversely, while self-promotion does not significantly predict authenticity, disproving hypothesis 2a, when sex is added as a moderator the strength of the relationship increased. Unlike what was proposed in hypothesis 5a, the moderated regression demonstrated that the predictive relationship between self-promotion and authenticity was stronger for women than men,  $\beta = .097$ , 95% CI [.033, .161],  $p = .003$ . Ingratiation was not found to significantly predict authenticity, as was expected from the correlation findings, and sex did not moderate the predictive relationship significantly either. This means that hypothesis 2b and 5b are not supported by the regression analysis findings. Exemplification negatively predicted authenticity,  $\beta = -.130$ , 95% CI [-.204, -.056],  $p < .001$ , unlike the positive interaction proposed in hypothesis 2c, therefore disproving the hypothesis. Furthermore, sex did not significantly moderate the predictive relationship between exemplification and authenticity, disproving hypothesis 5c. The regression analysis found that while intimidation did not significantly predict authenticity, when moderated by sex the predictive relationship became significant,  $\beta = .073$ , 95% CI [.009, .137],  $p = .025$ . Disproving hypothesis 5d, the moderated predictive relationship was stronger for women than for men. Finally, supplication was found to negatively predict authenticity,  $\beta = -.172$ , 95% CI

[-.253, -.091],  $p < .001$ , supporting hypothesis 2e. However, sex was not found to significantly moderate the predictive relationship, therefore hypothesis 5e was not supported.

## **Discussion**

This thesis project examined the predictive strength of self-monitoring levels for authenticity, considering sex as a moderator. It also investigated the predictive strength of self-presentation styles for authenticity moderated by sex. Finally, it examined sex differences in self-presentation styles within the sample. While some of the findings were as expected, aligning with the proposed hypothesis, many were not. The following section will discuss these results, their practical and theoretical implications, and what future research might be beneficial.

### **Age and authenticity**

Past research proposes that age could play a role in authenticity (Harter, 2005), which coincides with this research, finding that it accounted for a significant amount (16%) of the variance. These findings support Harter's (2005) theory, stating that authenticity begins in childhood and our relationship with it develops throughout adolescents, continuing into adulthood. The developmental nature of authenticity also suggests a potential for change in an individual's level of it. Harter (2005) argued that this change occurs because people begin to integrate the different parts of their self into a cohesive version of who they are. Our results support this argument, as they indicate that the older a person is, the more they have integrated parts of them into a cohesive self and thereby have a higher level of authenticity.

### **Self-Monitoring and authenticity**

The literature found that the relationship between self-monitoring levels and authenticity is generally negative (Pillow et al., 2017). Some have argued that self-monitoring individuals can be "social chameleons", and sometimes less authentic (Kudret et al., 2016). Based on this, we hypothesised that self-monitoring would negatively predict authenticity and

that sex would moderate the relationship, such that it was stronger for women than men. Unlike the hypothesis, the individual's self-monitoring level did not significantly predict authenticity. In addition, the individual's sex did not alter the relationship significantly, and therefore did not have the expected moderating effect.

This project did find a significant small negative correlation between authenticity and self-monitoring, similar to Pillow and colleagues (2017). However, self-monitoring did not significantly predict any further variance in authenticity than age alone. Furthermore, when examining the research conducted by Pillow and colleagues (2017), it is unclear whether they controlled for age in their later regression analysis. Therefore, the variance in authenticity they explained using self-monitoring may have been better explained using age.

### **Self-presentation styles, authenticity, and sex differences**

This study examined sex differences in the use of five self-presentation styles. It also investigated the effects of self-presentation styles on authenticity and whether sex altered these relationships. The results demonstrated that women used ingratiation and exemplification more frequently than men, while men used intimidation and supplication more. Furthermore, supplication and exemplification negatively predicted authenticity, while sex moderated the relationship with authenticity for self-promotion and intimidation, such that it was stronger for women. Therefore, indicating that women's use of self-promotion and intimidation were a better predictor of authenticity than men's use of the same styles.

### ***Sex differences in self-presentation styles***

Past literature has suggested that men favoured assertive self-presentation styles, while women favoured more submissive styles (Flynn & Ames, 2006; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Singh et al., 2002), which is how the sex differences hypotheses were formulated. The sex differences are likely due to socialisation, which rewards each sex for sticking to their prescribed norms and punishes them if they deviate (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Leary,

1996). These preferences for certain styles will be further exacerbated when self-presentation styles do not work as well for one sex as they do for the other, meaning they are less likely to utilise that style again. For example, women probably find that intimidation is not as effective for them as ingratiation, prompting them to use ingratiation more frequently, while the contrary is true for men. This study's findings regarding sex differences in self-presentation styles found that this theory is probable for ingratiation and intimidation. However, it did not hold for exemplification, supplication and self-promotion.

This deviation from the past literature poses an interesting question regarding what might have been the cause. One of the likely reasons is the differences between the current and past samples. For example, unlike past research participant samples, who are usually American university students (Heinrich et al., 2010), slightly less than half of this sample consisted of New Zealand university students, while the rest consisted of American working people. Since the average age of working people is above that of university students, more of the current sample of women may have overcome their distaste for masculine-coded self-presentation styles, such as exemplification. This explanation is plausible, as according to Singh et al. (2002), older women are more comfortable using masculine self-presentation styles than younger women. Also, when one considers Singh et al.'s (2002) findings that women frequently believe their work ethic will get them recognised in an organisational setting, more so than men, then this study's findings make sense.

The reasons for the deviation in the use of supplication are a little more unclear, especially considering the sample of working-age Americans. Supplication is a feminine-coded self-presentation style, and according to Guadagno and Cialdini (2007), these are not as effective in organisational settings as masculine-coded styles. Then again, it could be that past research only examined the effectiveness of supplication when women used it, due to its coding, and did not examine whether it was more effective when men utilised it. If it is more

effective for men, then this may explain why men in our sample were more likely to use supplication than a sample made up of men with less work experience, such as university students.

The fact that self-promotion, a self-presentation style frequently attributed to men (Guadagno and Cialdini, 2007), did not have any sex differences in terms of use was another interesting finding. The lack of a sex difference in self-promotion is probably because this sample differed from past samples. New Zealand is known to have a social phenomenon called "tall poppy syndrome", which refers to a social expectation that people do not boast about themselves and their achievements, or they will be cut down to size (Marques et al., 2022). However, since self-promotion is boasting about oneself, it stands to reason that this phenomenon may play a role in the lack of sex differences. This might be the case as there is a lack of research into gender differences about who is allowed to be boastful and who is not. Therefore, it could be that New Zealand women are more boastful than their male counterparts, evening out the sex differences for self-presentation.

### ***Self-presentation styles and authenticity***

Leary (1996) asserted that self-presentation styles are behavioural expressions of a person's sense of self and are not necessarily inauthentic. This assertion was the basis for almost all the simple regression hypotheses investigating the self-presentation style's ability to predict authenticity, except for supplication. Interestingly, the self-presentation styles that significantly predicted authenticity, supplication and exemplification did so negatively. Indicating that the more an individual used these self-presentation styles, the less authentic they felt. We expected supplication to negatively predict authenticity, as the wording of the items required respondents to make themselves appear more helpless than they were, requiring them to be inauthentic. Contrastingly, exemplification was hypothesised to positively predict authenticity, based on the literature. Subsequently, it may be that within our

sample, those who used exemplification did so because they felt it was required of them to succeed. This is a plausible explanation of our findings, as Leary (1996) was talking about the use of self-presentation in day-to-day life. In contrast, this study asked participants to answer in a workplace context. Therefore, much like Dormanen and colleagues (2020) suggested, they utilised self-presentation styles that felt inauthentic, as they perhaps think that they are constantly being evaluated when in a workplace.

Unlike the hypothesis, sex only moderated the relationship between self-promotion and authenticity, and intimidation and authenticity, with both being moderated in such a way that the relationship was stronger for women than men. Women using self-promotion felt more authentic than men using the self-presentation style, while the contrary was true for intimidation, where women felt less authentic than men. Interestingly, as women are not socialised to use self-promotion as much, they might feel more authentic when they do. Conversely, men presumably use it because they believe they should and therefore feel less authentic. Also, self-promotion and intimidation are both masculine-coded self-presentation styles. However, their differing effects on women's authenticity might be explained by the fact that self-promotion can still be adjusted to fit into the communal presentation expected from women (Guadagno and Cialdini, 2007), while intimidation does not fit. Because of this, intimidation feels more inauthentic to women than it does to men, as men can fit it within their expected norm of being agentic (Guadagno and Cialdini, 2007).

### **Theoretical Implications**

This research project presents new information on the factors that play a role in an individual's authenticity. While past literature had theorised that the relationship between authenticity and self-presentation styles would be positive (Leary, 1996), this project demonstrated that there either was no relationship, or the relationship was negative. For example, self-promotion, ingratiation, and intimidation had no significant relationship with

authenticity, while supplication and exemplification had a significant negative relationship with authenticity. These findings indicate that, unlike what the literature suggested, the use of some self-presentation styles may negatively affect how authentic people feel they are. In addition, self-monitoring showed no significant relationship with authenticity. This finding contradicts other researchers who have suggested that self-monitors are social chameleons and that self-monitoring sits on the opposite end of the same continuum as authenticity (Kudret et al., 2016; Pillow et al., 2017). Based on our findings, authenticity and self-monitoring are two separate continuums independent of one another, meaning that self-monitoring does not influence how authentic a person feels.

In addition to that, examining these relationships when moderated by sex revealed that women's authenticity is more likely to be affected by some self-presentation styles. Therefore, suggesting that although authenticity as a standalone concept is gender-neutral (Liu et al., 2015; Wenzel & Lucas-Thompson, 2012), sex may play a significant role in authenticities interaction with other variables. This research project also demonstrated the importance of controlling for age when examining authenticity, as age predicted a significant amount of the variance in authenticity. Even though not all the relationships were as hypothesised, this project still provides valuable insight into potential antecedents of someone's authenticity. Thus, building on the existing literature and revealing future avenues of beneficial research in authenticity.

### **Practical Implications**

The first practical implication of interest in this project was the central role of age in a person's authenticity. As mentioned earlier, it supports the theory that authenticity is developmental (Harter, 2005); therefore, a person's perception of their own authenticity can change. This potential for change is an exciting and hopeful supposition. If authenticity and increased well-being are linked, as suggested by research (Harter, 2005; Sutton, 2020;

Theran, 2011), then the possibility that a person's authenticity and, by extension, their well-being can increase throughout their lifetime is worth further exploration. Especially if researchers can determine why older people feel more authentic than their younger counterparts, such as older people potentially avoiding the use of self-presentation styles that make them feel inauthentic, as this may allow the development of better interventions to increase younger people's authenticity and, by extension, their well-being.

Secondly, the results suggest that more awareness to how our self-presentation styles affect authenticity would be beneficial, especially for woman. For example, women feel more authentic when using self-promotion than men and they feel less authentic when using intimidation than men do. It might also be worth considering whether using supplication to achieve short-term self-presentation goals is worth the lower level of authenticity associated with it. Especially since supplication has the largest negative effect size compared to all other significantly related self-presentation styles. Overall, people's feeling of authenticity is likely to increase if they avoid exemplification and supplication. However, women's authenticity will also benefit from self-promotion and the avoidance of intimidation. These are crucial considerations when not only an individual's authenticity is affected but also their overall well-being.

### **Limitations**

While we took steps to increase the reliability and minimise any limitations within this research project, there were some areas where this was not feasible. The first was regarding the order effect of the questionnaire. While the research team randomised the two sets of scales, the same scales were in the first and second sets for all respondents. Therefore, there was still some order effect in place, as it was impossible to minimise the impact of the order effect further, at least within the questionnaire-building software we used. Finally, we

included an attention check question in the middle of the two sets to hopefully re-engage the respondents.

The second limitation of this study was that all the measures were self-report. The self-report nature is a limitation for many reasons, including the social desirability effect, where respondents answer in the way they think they should, or a lack of introspective abilities within the respondents. To mitigate the impact of the social desirability effect and encourage honesty in the respondents' introspection, we made it clear to all participants that their answers would be completely anonymous to everyone. Moreover, all the scales used in this project are valid measures that have been tested by other researchers. The constructs measured in this thesis project are also difficult, if not impossible, to measure in any other way than self-report measures.

Thirdly, the data sample used in this project was quite limited. Although the project used two population samples, first-year psychology students at the University of Waikato and working-age Americans using M-Turk, most participants (58%) identified as variations of Caucasian. The ethnicity of the participants may have played a role in their levels of self-monitoring and their choice of self-presentation style, but also how authentic they perceive themselves. Furthermore, due to the minimal reports of other gender identities amongst respondents, only male and female comparisons could be made.

### **Future Research**

Future research should conduct the same study on a more diverse sample, regarding ethnicity and gender identity. The current project was especially limited on gender identity, due to the lack of gender-diverse people who responded to the questionnaire. As socialisation was discussed as a reason for individuals' choice in self-presentation style, conducting the same research on a gender diverse sample would allow us to see the effect of socialisation on the relationship between self-presentation and authenticity. Along the same

note, having more ethnic diversity within the sample would also allow comparisons into the effects of socialisation in non-western countries versus western countries on the relationships. This research would require reducing the proportion of participants who only have European heritage and increasing the recruitment of participants from other ethnicities within societies where western traditions are the norm. However, it also includes the examination of these variables in samples where non-western values are the norm, as western standards will not have influenced them as heavily.

Another potential future research direction could be examining the relationship between age and authenticity more closely. As this project has established, age was a significant predictor of authenticity, supporting Harter's (2005) theory that authenticity is developmental. It could be beneficial to map out the developmental stages of authenticity, if there are any, and examine what causes them. In addition, future research into why older people scored higher on their perceived authenticity than younger people and potential triggers in their life could inform future interventions. These interventions may enable people feeling less authentic to increase their authenticity and, by extension, their well-being.

## **Conclusion**

Although there are areas that require further examination and there is space to expand this project, especially in terms of diversity, this study has laid the foundation for future research. The findings suggest that age and self-presentation style, to varying degrees, affect how authentic a person feels. Authenticity is developmental, meaning our feeling of being authentic will usually increase as we age. This increase is especially probable if people avoid exemplification and supplication self-presentation, as those have been shown to predict feelings of inauthenticity regardless of sex. Reflecting on our authenticity, especially when using self-presentation styles, may help us in making small changes to feel more authentic.

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## Appendix A

### Ethical Approval

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

Dr Anna Sutton

School of Psychology

21 February 2022

Dear Anna

**Re: FS2022-01: Refinement of the Self-Awareness Outcomes Questionnaire**

Thank you for submitting your revised application to the ALPSS Human Research Ethics Committee. We have reviewed the final electronic version of your application and the Committee is now pleased to offer formal approval for your research activities as detailed therein.

We encourage you to contact the committee should issues arise during your data collection, or should you wish to add further research activities or make changes to your project as it unfolds. We wish you all the best with your research. Thank-you for engaging with the process of Ethical Review.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Oleg Medvedev'.

Dr Oleg Medvedev, Convenor  
*Division of Arts, Law, Psychology & Social Sciences Human Research Ethics*

## Appendix B

### Consent Form

#### **Project title: Authenticity and well-being.**

You have been invited to participate in this research study investigating the role of authenticity in well-being. We want to find out how authenticity can be beneficial in the normal course of our lives. This will help us to identify the benefits of developing authenticity and better understand how it might help us to navigate difficult times.

This research project is being supervised by Dr Anna Sutton, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Waikato, New Zealand and carried out by graduate students under her supervision. The findings will be published in peer-reviewed journals.

#### Participants role

You will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires asking you about your typical thoughts and behaviours, as well as your well-being. The average time for completing is estimated to be 20-25 minutes. However, you will receive credits equivalent to 40 minutes of research participation for completing this study, so please take your time in working through the questionnaires.

This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers and there are no risks involved in taking part in this research. Please be as honest as you can.

#### Confidentiality and participants' rights

All data is anonymised meaning no personal information can be linked between yourself and the data that has been given. You can withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason by simply closing your browser window.

#### Storage of data

Data will be stored for a minimum of 5 years after completion of this research project. The data will be stored securely by Dr Anna Sutton and the research investigators of this project will have access to this data. If required for paper publication, anonymised data may be shared in public repositories.

#### Funding

This project has no external funding.

For further information if you have any questions related to the research project, please email the researcher: Dr Anna Sutton (anna.sutton@waikato.ac.nz).

#### Ethics approval

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences at the University of Waikato. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email alpss-ethics@waikato.ac.nz, postal address, Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

#### Consent

By proceeding with the online survey, you are agreeing that:

- (1) you have read and understood this information
- (2) questions about your participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily
- (3) you are aware of the potential risks
- (4) you are taking part in this research study voluntarily
- (5) anonymised data may be shared in public research repositories.

Participants have to either click "I agree to participate" or close the browser tab

## Appendix C

### Debriefing Statement

Dear Participant,

We greatly appreciate you taking the time to participate in the research we are conducting. The questionnaire you have completed asked how strongly you agreed with a range of questions or whether you found them to be true or false for you. The questions asked stem from a range of tested scales that will provide us with information on the following measures:

- Authenticity
- Psychological Capital
- Well-being
- Self-presentation styles
- Self-monitoring level
- Emotional labour
- Big Five personality traits
- Individualism

Research has shown that authenticity, which is commonly defined as having a sense of self-awareness and being able to express oneself in line with one's values (Knoll et al., 2015), relates to well-being measures across a range of contexts (Sutton, 2020). The purpose of this study, as stated in the introduction and consent form is to further investigate the role of authenticity in wellbeing and to determine whether authenticity should be included as a psychological capital construct. Psychological capital is a collection of personal resources that enhance our lives and includes hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). The data we have collected from you will allow us to investigate how authenticity is beneficial in everyday life, why the development of authenticity is important, as well as how authenticity may allow us to navigate difficult times.

Your anonymised data will be used in honours dissertations and Master theses, as well as peer-reviewed research publications. The first three projects (one Master thesis and two honours dissertations) will examine the effect of self-monitoring levels and self-presentation styles on an individual's sense of authenticity and wellbeing. While the other three projects (one Master thesis and two honours dissertations) will examine whether authenticity should be included as a psychological capital construct, by considering its influence on emotional labour and wellbeing. The other information we collected from you, includes your ethnicity, biological sex, age, the sector that you have most recently been employed in and the duration of that employment, as well as your self-rating on the collectivism vs individualism scale. This information will be used to describe the participant sample, but it will also be used in a variety of data analyses as control variables. If you would like to learn more about the research or you have any concerns/queries, please feel free to contact Stefanie McGregor (Master's student) at [scm36@students.waikato.ac.nz](mailto:scm36@students.waikato.ac.nz) or Dr Anna Sutton (Supervisor) at [anna.sutton@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:anna.sutton@waikato.ac.nz)

Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Dr Anna Sutton

Samantha Carey, Stefanie McGregor, Andreia Rodrigues Cró, Richard Potter, Sophie Ardley and Zane Sheeran

#### References

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## Appendix D

### Pre-Registration Form



### CONFIDENTIAL - FOR PEER-REVIEW ONLY

#### Self-presentation, self-monitoring, authenticity and sex - Interaction analysis (#93973)

Created: 04/12/2022 05:59 PM (PT)

This is an anonymized copy (without author names) of the pre-registration. It was created by the author(s) to use during peer-review. A non-anonymized version (containing author names) should be made available by the authors when the work it supports is made public.

**1) Have any data been collected for this study already?**

No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

**2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?**

Question 1. Is there a relationship between self-presentation style and authenticity, and how is the relationship moderated by sex?

Question 2. Is there a relationship between self-monitoring level and authenticity, and how is the relationship moderated by sex?

**3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.**

The key dependent variable is authenticity, which will be defined as the awareness of one's core values, and the ability to behave in line with these core values in one's day-to-day life. Authenticity in this study will be measured using the integrated-authenticity scale questionnaire, which measures the variable on two subscales: 'self-awareness' and 'self-expression' matching the proposed research definition for authenticity

**4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?**

There are no conditions, all participants will be expected to complete the same online questionnaire.

However, there are two independent variables within this study, which are self-presentation style and self-monitoring level. Self-presentation styles will be defined as the process of getting others to think of us in a particular way, according to how we want to be seen. While self-monitoring level will be defined as the ability to read and interpret situational cues and alter our behaviour accordingly. These are measured on two tested and validated scales, titled 'Impression Management Styles Scale' and '18 Item Self-monitoring Scale'.

The Impression Management Styles Scale measures the participant's self-presentation styles across five subscales: self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation and supplication.

While the 18 Item Self-monitoring Scale measures the degree to which people monitor, control and regulate their behaviour. While this scale does not have official subscales, factor analysis has suggested that it measures self-monitoring across two dimensions: Other-directedness and Public Performance.

**5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.**

The data relating to each question will be examined separately. The first data analysis will be to run a correlation analysis between self-presentation styles and authenticity, as well as self-monitoring levels and authenticity.

If there is a relationship between self-monitoring levels and self-presentation styles with authenticity, the next step will be to run two separate moderated multiple regression analyses. This will determine whether self-presentation styles or self-monitoring levels can predict an individual's authenticity and whether sex affects the strength of these relationships.

**6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.**

This research will use the Mahalanobis distance analysis to identify any multivariate outliers in the data.

It will exclude any participants that fail the attention check question.

It will also likely exclude any participants that fail to check either male or female in the sex demographic category unless the sample selecting "other" and "Prefer not to say" is large enough to act as a separate group for analysis.

Any participants whose completion time is 50% faster than the median completion time will be excluded.

Finally, this research will exclude any participant who has more than five per cent of their data missing.

**7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.**

A power analysis has been conducted to determine the minimum number of participants required, which showed that 300 participants will be the smallest possible sample that will allow significant data analysis.

**8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)**

A secondary analysis will be completed, which will examine the interaction between sex and self-presentation styles. This will be done using an independent t-test analysis, which will compare men and women in regards to their self-presentation styles, to determine if there are sex differences in which presentation style they tend to use.